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The Dispute Regarding the Role of Analogy in the Natural (Rational) Affirmation of God’s Existence and the Definement of His Nature

Introduction

The title of this work suggests several fundamental issues regarding the divine entity of God. At the outset, it should be noted that the analyses undertaken are placed within the framework of natural theology.

This type of cognition presents two central problems. One is proving the existence of God, and the other one is the definement of His nature. The influence of analogy is a disputable point in both cases. Most authors restricted the contribution of analogy solely to the explanation of the nature of God, that is, defining who He is. However, they excluded analogy when it comes to proving God’s existence, as they simply did not concern themselves with said matter, taking God’s existence as something unarguable. This raises questions. What areas of studies assured those scholars? Was it metaphysics? Faith? Revelation? That is likely and, if so, they denied the human intellect the possibility of rationally concluding and proving God’s existence.

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Representatives of the realist philosophy strand of existential Thomism maintain that both the problem of proving God's existence and the definement of His nature are closely connected. Moreover, one cannot speak of the nature of God before one has demonstrated His existence. How could one enumerate the characteristics of a non-existing being or a being whose existence one is not certain of? Hence analogy plays an important role in the cognition of God, even more so in the confirmation of His existence. Without analogy, it is not possible to speak of God's existence or His nature. There is no other way of adjudicating about God than analogy. It is the theory of analogy, crucial to the realization of the subject, that allows for a natural, inherent knowledge of God.¹

One issue remains to be resolved, which is the type of analogy to be used. Will one and the same analogy apply to both the explanation of the existence of God and the description of his nature? If so, which one? If more than one must be chosen, then which one would be used to prove God's existence and which one to facilitate the description of His nature? These questions ought to be answered, and I will attempt to do so in this work.

The possibility of the application of natural theology

Reflections on the natural (innate, rational), meaning philosophical knowledge of God, in the historical sense, have ever since the Renaissance been leaning more towards the statement that purely intel-

¹ See also Andrzej Maryniarczyk, "Wprowadzenie. Dlaczego potrzebny powrót analogii do filozofii?" [Introduction. Why is a return of analogy to philosophy necessary?], in *Analogia w filozofii* [Analogy in philosophy], ed. A. Maryniarczyk, K. Stępień, P. Skrzydlewski (Lublin: PTTA, 2005), 7–9.

lectual knowledge of God is not possible. This idea was spread and propagated by Martin Luther and, in later periods, by his influential followers, up to a form heavily radicalized by Karl Barth. During times closer to contemporary ones, the negative outlook on natural theology can be observed among Catholics.² Thinkers stated that, for the human mind, God is an unknowable being and all knowledge of Him is a matter of faith. The void between natural theology (*ratio*) and revealed theology (*fides*) was becoming more prominent, with the second one being used most commonly. Theology was said to be enough in the matter of the cognition of God. A thesis, still repeated today, stating that there are two truths—the truth of reason and the truth of faith—became popular. The problem of God was omitted in rational research (metaphysics) and was moved to the area of theology. The questioning of metaphysics was closely linked to the negation of the vision of God that had been developed for the purpose of metaphysics. To the claim that the god of metaphysics had died, Friedrich Nietzsche added that the god of theology had also died, as theology is based on metaphysics.³ It was believed that not only was there no synthesis between *fides* and *ratio*, as the Middle Ages wanted and as John Paul II proposed, but *fides* was set as an opposition to *ratio*. The result of this

² See also Marian Jaworski, “Współczesne formy negacji teologii naturalnej” [Modern forms of the negation of natural theology], in *Studia z filozofii Boga, religii i człowieka* [Studies in the philosophy of God, religion and man], vol. 2: *Pisma z filozofii religii* [Writings on religious philosophy], ed. J. Sochoń et al. (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2002), 241–242.

³ See also Stefan Świeżawski, *Dzieje filozofii europejskiej XV wieku*, vol. 4: *Bóg* [European philosophy in the 15th century, vol. 4: God] (Warsaw: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej – “Collectanea Theologica”, 1979), 260–271; John Paul II, *Fides et ratio* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998); Jaworski, *Współczesne formy negacji teologii naturalnej* [Modern forms of the negation of natural theology], 241–249; Włodzimierz Dłubacz, *O kulturę filozofii. Zagadnienia podstawowe* [About the culture of philosophy. Basics] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Polihymnia, 1994), 197–206.

approach was the negation, or serious weakening, of *fides* and *ratio*. Therefore, according to these tendencies, from the position of rational inquiry, we are unable to arrive at justifiable theses about the existence of God and His nature, while religious knowledge is unverifiable and of little value. On this account, in the question of the knowledge of God, both fields are redundant or insufficient, due to the lack of rationality.

Despite those beliefs, we should remember that revealed theology does not exclude, nor does it form a contrast to natural theology. On the contrary, one can describe them as complementary. There is only one truth. The truth about the existence of God and His nature is, or may be, the result of a rational reflection on the world. Although He is not a being directly perceived, a cognitive view of God is possible. This way, the unnecessary retreat into fideism or scepticism and agnosticism can be avoided.

The correct concept of the cognition of reality is a required fundament of the natural cognition of God. God, as has been mentioned above, cannot be known directly. His cognition is a secondary stage to knowing reality and obtaining a true picture of the world and of man.⁴ In this case, contemporary ways of thinking (idealism, subjectivism, agnosticism, scepticism, pragmatism, enlightenment rationalism, scientism, and nihilism) propose a false vision of the world and man. They do not raise metaphysical questions or ignore already existing answers. In metaphysically-inclined philosophy, the most important questions are: Why does something exist that does not grant itself existence? Why does it exist at all? Who is man, what is his nature, what is the meaning and purpose of human life? What or Who is the first

⁴ See also Urszula Michalak, "Jak mówić współczesnemu człowiekowi o możliwości racjonalnego poznania Boga" [How to talk to modern man about the possibility of a rational cognition of God], *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne* 9 (2000), 49.

cause that initiated the existence of man and of the whole world? These questions are deliberately avoided in the present day, and no answers are sought in their place. In the absence of an answer, erroneous theories and *a priori* ideologies are created, which have no grounding in existence.⁵

The consequence of the crisis of the truth about the world and man is a propagation of theses surrounding the improbability of a rational cognition of God. If said tendencies dominate in the current culture, one has to advocate for taking on the burden of thorough, demanding and objective work surrounding the cognition of reality. The result of said work will be an insight into the structure of an entity and knowledge of its constituent elements and of causes that led to its existence, including reaching the definitive cause of all entities. In other words, at the basis of the rational cognition of God and establishing his nature lies the philosophy of existence, which is a contemplation of reality with the aim of knowing the objective truth. This truth can be described as objective because it does not lose the link to already existing reality. The philosophy of existence, followed by Aristotle and, more closely, by Thomas Aquinas, will be the core of the philosophy of God. In order to research the second one, it is important to know what philosophical foundation it follows. The area of such cognition has no ties to the aforementioned attractiveness, modernity, technical progress, utility, or measurable gain; it deals only with the truth. It does not concern itself with changeable facts and events; it dives deep into the unchangeable structure of being.⁶

Andrzej Maryniarczyk SDB, a distinguished Polish researcher of metaphysics, considered proficiency in intellectual metaphysics, different from scientific cognition, as art, and pitied its less prominent

⁵ See also Michalak, "Possibility of a rational cognition of God", 49–55.

⁶ See also Michalak, "Possibility of a rational cognition of God", 56–57.

use, as well as a significant lack of metaphysical knowledge. He argued that gaining such an ability is required not only in the field of philosophy, but in every field of human life. “Only a working human mind trained in metaphysical cognition” can discover, name and describe the richness, diversity, and complexity of, as well as the relationships between, existing things. He believed that this type of metaphysical cognition allows one to “reach not only the closest root of all things but also the finite one. This allows man to be truly fulfilled as a thinking being.”⁷ Additionally, if a man reaches his potential, it means he is on a good path to happiness. John Paul II stated that it is not only a need, but a must to

return to Saint Thomas Aquinas, that is, to the philosophy of being. [...] If we do not set out from such ‘realist’ presuppositions, we end up in a vacuum.⁸

In summary, only by employing metaphysical realism and the realism of epistemology can the rational explanation of the existence of God become possible.

It should be acknowledged that metaphysical realism is a worldview that states that the things and people around us exist in reality, that means, regardless of any other subject, autonomously, sovereignly, and independently. Their existence, despite idealism, is described as necessary and granted, hence it is not necessary to prove their existence. Epistemological realism, however, is a belief that describes the existing world, contrary to agnosticism or scepticism, as intelligible or rational, knowable.

⁷ See also Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *O przyczynach, partycypacji i analogii* [About the reasons, participation and analogy] (Lublin: PTTA, 2005), 9–11.

⁸ See also John Paul II, *Memory and Identity. Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2005), 12.

Ontology, known as First Philosophy or metaphysics, deals with real beings. Those only exist concretely, singularly. With this understanding of reality, ontology, past and present, poses the question, “thanks to what” factor is it a “reality”? Thanks to what is something an entity and something real? What determines that this existing thing is real and concrete, plural and diverse? Understanding the existing world and determining the place of man in this world is the main question in philosophical cognition. A proper

understanding of reality—writes Mieczysław A. Krąpiec—necessarily leads (under the threat of falling into absurdity!) to the cognition of the Absolute, and thus to the existence of God as the source of being, the source of pluralistic contingent reality, which is sometimes not “convenient.”⁹

The philosophy of God has roots in ontological realism, which is the basis for arriving at the concept of the absolute being. In other words, ontology leads to indirect cognition of the Absolute. Metaphysics, known in medieval times and at the beginning of the modern period as the Queen of Sciences, has had less positive reviews for a couple of centuries. It is underappreciated, ridiculed, and taken for granted. According to Stefan Swieżawski,

[A] certain tendency can be seen throughout the field of philosophy, a tendency that is systematic and has its end goal. It is prominent in some fields and relates to the distortion of the image or lowering of the status of general philosophy, most prominently in the case of metaphysics. We need to realise that.

⁹ Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, “Rola filozofii w kształceniu humanistycznym” [Philosophy’s role in teaching humanities], *Człowiek w Kulturze* 15 [Man in culture 15] (2003), 37.

There are various opinions that state that metaphysics

is synonymous with irrationality, some uninformed, far from any science-based evidence dealing with untestable matters. [...] Unfortunately that mean and dangerous misunderstanding of the word ‘metaphysics’ and misrepresentation of what philosophy in its deepest meaning actually is have taken roots.¹⁰

Society does not understand philosophy’s role in the intellectual culture of humans. False charges of slipping away from reality and breaking ties with realism, taking instead the road to abstract and fiction, unnecessary to man, are ascribed to her. It is said that the meaning of entity in the philosophy of Aquinas, instead of deepening the knowledge about what is real, drives humans further from, or even causes them to lose all ties to, reality.

In actuality, metaphysics is a science no less concrete than any other, concerning itself with reality and diving deep into its ontic status. It is an attempt to reach the final argument for its existence, and therefore it is closely linked with human life. It is a type of contemplation of reality that makes it possible to find the first reason for all that is real, the reason for all that exists, even if it cannot exist in and of itself. A non-being cannot be a reason for being. If, however, there is something the nature of which does not grant it existence, then there must be an outside factor that allows for that entity to exist. In argumentation for the existence of any entity, one cannot carry on for eternity; there must be a first, original reason. Its negation means the negation of the experienced reality, which is absurd, because that reality exists, it is a fact. Metaphysics answers the question: how can an enti-

¹⁰ Stefan Swieżawski, *Św. Tomasz na nowo odczytany* [A new interpretation of St. Thomas] (Poznań: W drodze, 1995), 76.

ty that cannot grant itself existence exist? The nature of this entity requires acceptance of the existence of an Absolute, Necessary Entity, the nature of which is existence and which grants existence to all beings but itself.¹¹

That simple, yet not ordinary, right-minded way of perceiving the world is logical and cohesive. It is a successful aim at contemplating and understanding the world. Let us try to apply (metaphysical) philosophy to said problem, in a broadened manner, fit for human minds. What is the core of this philosophy? It is the existential concept of being.

The existential concept of being as the starting point for metaphysics

At this point in this debate, we should remember that, from the point of view of realistic philosophy, God is not an entity directly perceived by humans, and therefore cannot be an object of metaphysics. If God belonged to metaphysics, then His existence would have to be taken as a certain fact. This, however, is not the case. Aristotle had already demonstrated that no science proves the existence of its subject.¹² Therefore, the subject of metaphysics is a directly experienced reality, i.e. entity as an entity, and God can be known (understood) as the cause and principle of all entities.¹³ However, one question arises: what con-

¹¹ See also Michalak, "Possibility of a rational cognition of God", 57–63.

¹² See also Aristotle, "Analityki wtóre" (English version; *Posterior Analytics* translated by G. R. G. Mure) in *Kategorie, Hermeneutyka, Analityki pierwsze, Analityki wtóre, Topiki, O dowodach sofistycznych*, [Categories, Hermeneutics, First Analytics, Second Analytics, Topics, On Sophistical Evidence] Polish translation, foreword and commentary by K. Leśniak (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990), 55 b–56 b.

¹³ See also Piotr Jaroszyński, *Metafizyka czy ontologia?* [Metaphysics or ontology?], (Lublin: PTTA, 2011), 77–82.

ception of an entity is preferred and what is the path of metaphysical procedure?

However, in the history of philosophy, in realistic metaphysics, the preferred and dominating version is the essential concept of being, demonstrated in this work, an existential concept of an entity. A subject of this metaphysical ponderation is also a gathering of real entities that exist concretely and uniquely. On the one hand, there is no doubt about their actual existence. On the other hand, their contingency, i.e. the non-necessity of existence, is a fact as well.¹⁴ In these contemplations, nothing that is real can be omitted, because metaphysics concerns itself with all entities that are real and exist in reality. It does not deal with non-existent things. With such an understanding of reality, it raises the question that deals with being an entity, a real being: what assures that, despite its contingency, the entity is real? All entities are examined in terms of the ultimate reason for their existence, with an attempt to reach the First Cause of existence.

The existential aspect of an entity demonstrates itself as the most important one, because it is the cause of all entities being real.¹⁵ It has to be mentioned that existence itself cannot be a fully constituted entity, for there are no beingless existents, which the transcendental *res* confirms. Existence alone is not sufficient for something to be described as an entity; it must be ascribed to its proper content. Also, content alone is not a real entity, because it lacks the releasing factor: existence. Only existence with, and next to, content makes a concrete,

¹⁴ See also Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *Odkrycie wewnętrznej struktury bytów* [The discovery of the inside structure of entities] (Lublin: PTTA, 2006), 198.

¹⁵ This has been covered in my work: Kazimierz Gryżenia, "Analogia w określeniu miejsca i statusu Boga w rozważaniach metafizycznych" [Analogy in defining the place and status of God in metaphysical considerations], in *Filozof wpatrzony w naturę i to co Boskie* [A philosopher admiring nature and that which is from God], ed. T. Duma et al. (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicum, 2020), 229, 232–234.

real entity. Existence itself is a necessary element of being, an element that makes it real, although is also viewed as facultative, incidental. The fact of existence is a mystery; it is difficult to comprehend because none of the perceivable entities have in itself the right of existence. Existence is not the result of the essence of these entities; what a certain entity is does not grant its existence. If an entity is not its own cause, then said cause must be from the outside. Somebody else must have granted said existence, because we cannot deny the fact that it exists. This situation then makes us reach a conclusion that this final and outside source of being must be a drastically different entity, one of a different nature, an obligatory, self-existent (*Ipsum Esse*) – an Absolute or a God. It is a being that exists *in se et per se*; at its core there is existence. The *raison d'être* of its existence is in itself, and it can grant this existence to other beings. Every being, therefore, has a close relationship with the Absolute, because its existence is a derivative, an effect of the existence of the Absolute.¹⁶

The cognition and characterization of the Absolute as *Ipsum Esse*, as one perfect act of creation, is a concluding part of the metaphysical reflection on the unquestioning of an entity as an entity and the successful culmination of this reflection. It is a bottom-up analysis, where the starting point is a reality of the direct perception, the unnecessary entity, and the end result is the concluded reality, the Necessary Entity, the ultimate reason for all things. Thomas Aquinas has reached the understanding of, or better, reason for, the concept of the necessary existence via *a posteriori* cognition, using the method of Five Ways, the basis of which is a multispectral analysis of concrete and real entities given to humans directly in empiric experience. The concluding

¹⁶ See Jaroszyński, *Metafizyka czy ontologia?* [Metaphysics or ontology?], 80–82; Mieczysław Gogacz, *Historia filozofii w poszukiwaniu realizmu* [The history of philosophy in search of realism] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2011), 42–43, 47–49.

thesis regarding the existence and the nature of an entity, being the First Cause, can be formulated only on the basis of the qualities of entities given directly. They point towards radical discrepancies between both of those realities. The differences seen can be demonstrated in the form of pairs of terms or expressions, from which the first one describes entities of this world, and the second one, the absolute being. That is:

contingent (unnecessary) entity and Essential entity;
 entity that is an effect and entity that is a cause;
 complex entity and Simple entity;
 being composed of essence and existence (possibility and act)
 and Being as Pure Act;
 entity having existence and entity as existence;
 essence and existence are not identical with each other
 and the identity of essence with existence;
 essence is distinct from existence and essence is existence;
 creation and Creator;
 entity existing by participation (*per participatum*) and entity existing in
 and through itself (*in se et per se*);
 entities of the world we perceive and Being
 that is Transcendent to the world.¹⁷

The above clearly and compellingly demonstrates radical differences between two types of existence, meaning the transcendence of the

¹⁷ See also Maryniarczyk, *Odkrycie wewnętrznej struktury bytów* [The discovery of the inside structure of entities], 192; “Aktualność tomizmu” [The timeliness of Thomism], in *Rozumieć filozofię i naukę* [To understand philosophy and science], ed. P. Gondek (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Instytut Edukacji Narodowej, 2000), 278–279; Kazimierz Gryżenia, *Analogy in Modern Scholasticism. A Study of Francisco Suarez’s Metaphysics* (Berlin–Lausanne–Bruxelles–Chennai–New York–Oxford: Peter Lang, 2023), 207–209.

Absolute in relation to the world we live in. It is, in a way, only one side of the story. The other one is the immanence of the Absolute. At first glance, this appears to be a contradiction. How can one not contradict the other? In actuality, transcendence and immanence can be described simultaneously. Nicholas of Cusa would say that it is an example of *coincidentia oppositorum*, the unity of the opposite. Transcendence, as one may think, has been given sufficient argumentation; let us focus on the problem of immanence, although it has been parenthetically mentioned. It was brought up that every entity that is real is also coincidental; its existence is not granted, it can be lost, but the undeniable truth is that it exists. It exists in the form of a “loan,” getting its existence from an adequate cause. Because of that, every entity in this world has a direct relationship and application to the Absolute. Its existence is a link to the Absolute being that “divided” itself and gave away a part of itself, a part of what it is. Every entity that does not grant itself existence, but still does exist, gets that right from the Absolute, which has the same right. Only an absolute known as God can be the reason and the rule of an entity. If every entity is an entity because of its existence, and it is granted said existence by God, then the name “entity” first and foremost applies to God, and then secondly to coincidental entities. God and coincidental entities by sheer fact of existence are “similar.” They are considered beings, but in an analogical sense, where the primary analogate is God and all other beings are secondary analogates.¹⁸

Based on the reflection presented above, it was discovered that an acknowledgement of the contingency of things and establishing a new

¹⁸ See also Maryniarczyk, *Odkrycie wewnętrznej struktury bytów* [The discovery of the inside structure of entities], 168–169, 191–192, 205; Jaroszyński, *Metafizyka czy ontologia?* [Metaphysics or ontology?], 80–82; Bohdan Bejze, “Analogia w metafizycznym poznaniu Boga. Wśród zagadnień spornych z zakresu metafizyki” [Analogy in the metaphysical cognition of God. Among the contentious issues in metaphysics], *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 11 [Annals of Philosophy 11] (1963), vol. 1, 47, 51.

structure of every entity and existence, that is the most basic of all of the existing compounds, are important parts of Thomas's metaphysics. This agrees with the Christian view on the creation of the world. The required relationship between entities and existence and the analogical way of the existence of things, allows us to reach the conclusion of the existence of an Absolute Being (*Ipsum Esse*), which makes the existence of the contingent entity under consideration possible. The object of metaphysics is therefore the entity as such, real entity, and God appears as the principle and cause of all being.

Analogy in the process of coming to know God

The discussion about analogy's part in the natural (philosophical) cognition of God is focused on two big issues. The first one is a rational proof of God's existence, the second one is describing His nature. It seems that in light of these contemplations, the use of analogy in the philosophical process of the cognition of God is indispensable. In this theory, there are discrepancies, even among followers of the ideas of Thomas Aquinas. Difficulties do not lie mainly in the analysis of the problem of the description of the nature of God, that is, describing what or who He is. In this aspect, almost everyone agrees that using analogy is necessary and the analogy adopted is the analogy of attribution. The problem of the argumentation for the existence of God is different. Two ideas were formed in light of said problem. One of them simply omits analogy or does not speak of it. Those who agree with this opinion focus themselves on the description of God's nature and do not speak of the problem of God's existence, assuming that the existence of God is something certain; or they believe that the existence of God can be assumed on the principle of causality, without apparent use of analogy. The second belief states that analogy is a necessary tool for

not only making conclusions about the nature and attributes of God, but also for proving God's existence.¹⁹

At the base of the aforementioned discrepancies lies the way we perceive entities. This is the deciding factor when it comes to the structure of analogy and its epistemological use. These are the essential and existential concepts of an entity. The first one is represented by scholars who believe that analogy should be excluded in the process of proving God's existence. With the essential concept of being, analogy does not play a role in proving God's existence, nor does it play a role in an accurate discussion of His attributes.²⁰

Those who are for analogy playing a role in proving God's existence adopt a different, existential concept of entity.²¹ According to them, this exact concept of entity is enough of a necessary proof to render analogy useful in getting to know God. Therefore, one can state that analogy is an indispensable tool not only in proving God's existence, but also in determining His nature. This will be an analogy of transcendental proportionality, the structure and use of which is spe-

¹⁹I have written about this more in detail in this publication: Gryżenia, *Analogy in Modern Scholasticism*, 209–222. See also Bohdan Bejze, “Zastosowanie analogii w dowodzeniu istnienia Boga” [Using analogy to prove God's existence], *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 6 [Annals of Philosophy 6] (1958), vol. 1, 149–154, 151–152, 158; Bejze, “Analogia w metafizycznym poznaniu Boga” [Analogy in the metaphysical cognition of God], 43–46; Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Język i świat realny* [Language and the real world] (Lublin: RW KUL, 1985), 317; Zofia J. Zdybicka, “Analogia i partycypacja w wyjaśnianiu rzeczywistości” [Analogy and participation in explaining reality], in *Analogia w filozofii* [Analogy in philosophy], ed. A. Maryniarczyk, K. Stępień, P. Skrzydlewski (Lublin: PTTA, 2005), 87–102; Maryniarczyk, *O przyczynach, partycypacji i analogii* [About the reasons, participation and analogy], 82–86.

²⁰See also Gryżenia, *Analogy in Modern Scholasticism*, 211–213; “Analogia w określeniu miejsca i statusu Boga w rozważaniach metafizycznych” [Analogy in defining the place and status of God in metaphysical considerations], 236.

²¹See also Bejze, “Zastosowanie analogii w dowodzeniu istnienia Boga” [Using analogy to prove God's existence], 149–173.

cific. The objective basis for this analogy is, as has been acknowledged, the existential concept of entity, which in all incidental entities sees the actual composite of essence and existence, where existence is the act that makes a being real. The non-necessity of this existence points to the necessity of accepting God as a simple being, existing by virtue of its essence and being the ultimate reason for every existence. The radical difference of this being in relation to every effectual being was indicated a little earlier. Bohdan Bejze emphasizes that the judgment of the existence of such an entity is

“[t]he expression of our conviction, achieved as a result of the metaphysical translation of the world, that there is a Cause of this world, i.e. a God distinct from it: since the world is non-self-contained, therefore there is its Cause, as a Self-contained Being.²²

The analogy of an entity, reflected on in this work as well as in another one of my publications²³ and which points to the direction of *Ipsum Esse Subsistens*, is known as the analogy of transcendental proportionality or transcendental analogy. In the structure of this analogy, the analogon is existence, which is always unbreakably linked to the content, forming together a concrete, real entity. This mutual link of existence and content is described as a “being.” Existence is therefore perfection in transcendence and proportionally the same that realizes itself internally in all that exists. If the analogon is not existence, then analogates that take on the role of an analogon are all entities that are

²² Bejze, “Analogia w metafizycznym poznaniu Boga” [Analogy in the metaphysical cognition of God], 49. See Bejze, “Zastosowanie analogii w dowodzeniu istnienia Boga” [Using analogy to prove God’s existence], 163–164.

²³ See Gryżenia, “Analogia w określeniu miejsca i statusu Boga w rozważaniach metafizycznych” [Analogy in defining the place and status of God in metaphysical considerations], 238–241. This work will be cited later.

open to us in everyday experience. They are called secondary analogates of transcendental analogy and come from the existence of an Absolute, the primary analogate. It can be observed that concepts which exclude analogy in the philosophical cognition of God focused only on one aspect of entities: essence. However, the concept that distinguishes and prefers transcendental analogy as an indispensable tool in ascertaining the existence of God sees its basis in being taken holistically (essence and existence), that is, in being as it actually exists, and as the object of metaphysics.²⁴

This understanding of an entity is the reason for the way one understands analogy and its use in cognition. Transcendental analogy, which comes from the analogical understanding of an entity, takes part not only in the process of proving God's existence, but also in describing his nature, though the first objective is its main role. That analogy underlines and affirms metaphysical and cognitive realism and assures a natural, philosophical way of getting to know God. It is an analogy in which analogical perfection exists in a proportional way in all analogates, though it realizes itself fully only in one numerical primary analogate: God. The incredibly important and irreplaceable role of this analogy is shown in how, when acknowledging God, it protects us from anthropomorphism and agnosticism.

²⁴ See Bejze, "Zastosowanie analogii w dowodzeniu istnienia Boga" [Using analogy to prove God's existence], 153–156, 162–164, 170–173; Bejze, "Analogia w metafizycznym poznaniu Boga" [Analogy in the metaphysical cognition of God], 45; Gryżenia, *Analogy in Modern Scholasticism*, 218–222; Krąpiec, *Język i świat realny* [Language and the real world], 310–319; "Analogia w filozofii" [Analogy in philosophy], in *Analogia w filozofii* [Analogy in philosophy], ed. A. Maryniarczyk, K. Stępień, P. Skrzydlewski (Lublin: PTTA, 2005), 458–460; *O rozumienie filozofii* [To understand philosophy] (Lublin: RW KUL, 1991), 218–227; Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *Realistyczna interpretacja rzeczywistości* [A realistic interpretation of reality] (Lublin: PTTA, 1999), 11–13, 25–32, 77–81.

Only analogical knowledge—writes Stefan Swieżawski—very limited and very imperfect can be a sure way of cognition. Thanks to it we can understand that at the bottom of the secret that lies upon us is reality and not a void.²⁵

Transcendental analogy is one of the types of analogy of relevant proportionality and it differs from it because in its structure, it allows the possibility of a primary analogate, like in the analogy of attribution.²⁶ What is the said analogate in one and the other analogy?

The primary analogate in the structure of analogy

It is already known that the analogy of transcendental proportionality is an expression of the analogical mode of the existence of things. This means that each thing is complex and that in each thing there is a relationship between the necessary transcendental elements, beginning with essence and existence. The discovered proportion between these elements makes possible the use of the following expressions: as “John has to his existence” so “the apple tree has to its existence,” so “the

²⁵ Swieżawski, *Św. Tomasz na nowo odczytany* [A new interpretation of St. Thomas], 96.

²⁶ See Bohdan Bejze, “Analogia proporcjonalności i jej odmiany. Z zagadnień metafizycznej teorii analogii” [The analogy of proportionality and its varieties. From issues of the metaphysical theory of analogy], *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 10 [Annals of philosophy 10] (1962), vol. 1, 105–118; Kazimierz Gryżenia, “Wkład filozofów polskich w rozumienie analogii proporcjonalności” [The contribution of Polish philosophers to the understanding of the analogy of proportionality], *Lumen Poloniae* (2008) no 2, 26–35.

rose has to its existence,” and so on. Thanks to this proportion, we pronounce every being an “entity.” A. Maryniarczyk writes:

If, therefore, we call John, a tree, a rose, an entity, it is not because they are the same thing, but because they exist and have some content. In other words, because we have perceived a similarity in their structure, which concerns a similar (analogous) proportion between their elements of content and existence, we call them entities.²⁷

Controversies surrounding the aforementioned analogy relate to its structure and the problem of the existence and understanding of the primary analogate. This relates to the analogy of attribution. The analogate’s existence in this type of analogy does not raise any questions. This is not the case with the analogy of proportionality, which excludes existence, unless it is the analogy of metaphorical proportionality. A lesser-known analogy of transcendental proportionality, in the sense described above, has a primary analogate that can only be the Absolute Entity, God. Both analogies, that of attribution and that of transcendental proportionality, are similar in their structure; in both there exists a primary analogate. Discrepancies concern the understanding of the primary analogate.²⁸

Bejze’s understanding of the analogy of attribution is the following:

The analogy of attribution takes place when the meaning of the term describing different designatums can formally apply only to one of

²⁷ Maryniarczyk, *O przyczynach, partycypacji i analogii* [About reasons, participation and analogy], 83. See also Krąpiec, *Język i świat realny* [Language and the real world], 265–267, 284, 304–308.

²⁸ See also Krąpiec, *Język i świat realny* [Language and the real world], 310–319; *Teoria analogii bytu* [The theory of the analogy of entity] (Lublin: RW KUL, 1993), 33–40, 210–218; Gryźenia, *Analogy in Modern Scholasticism*, 222–226.

them, that is why it is called the primary analogate. In the case of the rest of the designates, secondary analogates, the common term is stated because of certain relations that link all analogates with the primary analogate. The most commonly cited example of an analogical attributive statement is using the term 'healthy.' This term describes the state of live organisms. We also speak of healthy air, food, medicine, skin, if all those are linked to a healthy organism as the primary analogate.²⁹

In the structure of the analogy of attribution, there is always something "unitary and identical," the primary analogate, and other things, secondary analogates, that remain in a relation of attribution to the primary analogate. An analogical word, e.g. "health," can mean many designatories, but applies correctly and formally only to one. To the others, it applies only if they are attributed to the same one as well. The primary analogate in relationship with secondary analogates is something more ancient in the ontic and epistemic sense. Understanding secondary analogates depends on the content of the primary analogate. In other words, the content described with the analogical name is realized internally only with the primary analogate, and in other analogates only by outside ascription and definition of those enumerated last in relation to the primary analogate. The content of the primary analogate is the reason for understanding secondary analogates. The cognition process can be done "top-down," from the primary analogate to secondary analogates, from the primary form to the subsidiary one.³⁰ Authors who accept the existence of God and think of only explaining God's nature use an analogy of attribution that suits them in demonstrating relationships between incidental entities and the Necessary Entity, where God, as the Creator, is the primary analogate, and inci-

²⁹ Bejze, "Analogia w metafizycznym poznaniu Boga" [Analogy in the metaphysical cognition of God], 50.

³⁰ See also Krąpiec, *Język i świat realny* [Language and the real world], 247–260.

dental beings are secondary analogates. There remains, however, an unresolved doubt as to where such knowledge of God and entity dependence comes from.

A different understanding of the primary analogate presents itself in the field of transcendental analogy. In the structure of this analogy, entities in the reality that surrounds us are secondary analogates, and the primary analogate is the Transcendental Entity, the Absolute, God. The primary analogate presents itself in the understanding of the secondary analogates that are the starting point of the philosophical process of knowing. Any claims that are made about God are possible only on the basis of finite entities. In the order of cognition, one starts from finite beings as secondary analogates and God, as a secondary one, is the primary analogate. Confirmation of the existence of God as a primary analogate is possible thanks to prior analysis of the finite entities as secondary analogates. The direction that is taken can be described as bottom-up.

Philosophy is a “way in” to the process of finding the root cause of all beings.³¹

God presents himself as a culmination and capstone of the metaphysical contemplation of reality.

³¹ Andrzej Maryniarczyk, “Czy św. Tomasz z Akwinu „ochrzcił” Arystotelesa?” [“Did St. Thomas Aquinas ‘baptize’ Aristotle?”], in *Blaski Christianitas*, ed. A. Stempin (Poznań, Archeological Museum in Poznań, 2018), 106. See Krąpiec, *Teoria analogii bytu* [Theory of the analogy of entity], 203–208, 210–230, 452, 460; *O rozumienie filozofii* [To understand philosophy], 218–227; Bejze, “Zastosowanie analogii w dowodzeniu istnienia Boga” [Using analogy to prove God’s existence], 170; Carlo Giacon, *La seconda scolastica*, vol. 1: *I grandi commentatori di San Tommaso* [Grand ideas of Saint Thomas] (Milan: Fratelli Boccia, 1944), 124–129; Zdybicka, “Analogia i partycypacja w wyjaśnianiu rzeczywistości” [Analogy and participation in explaining reality], 89–90; Gryżenia, *Analogy in Modern Scholasticism*, 224.

Conclusions

Ultimately, having established all the issues suggested at the beginning, one can reach the conclusion that natural theology is possible and does not have to be in opposition to revealed theology, on the basis of the correct concept of entity, that is, the existential concept of entity. Metaphysically, researching this reality that has a constricted and participatory existence reaches, at the cost of avoiding the absurd, the conclusion that the Necessary and Transcendental Entity must exist. It is known as God, who makes the fact of the material existence perceived by humans true. Analogy finds its purpose in the process of confirming God's existence. It is an indispensable tool for getting to know God, it is an analogy of transcendental proportionality, in which the world of coincidental entities is that of secondary analogates. Transcendence has the function of the primary analogate. In a process of this type of understanding, nothing is preconceived. The existence of the God-Absolute is not supposed, and the end conclusion in the form of the logical confirmation and rational proof of God's existence has a purely existential character. The next step of this process is the description of the nature of this entity. This happens also analogically, on the basis of characteristics seen directly in a certain reality. This must be an analogical statement, not univocal, because the First Entity is transcendental, of another nature.



The Dispute Regarding the Role of Analogy
in the Natural (Rational) Affirmation of God's Existence
and the Definement of His Nature

SUMMARY

At the beginning of the article, I speak of two ways of reflecting on God: natural and revealed theology. It is a disadvantage that two of them are often pitted against each other. I demonstrate their complementarity, with a focus on the abilities to research natural theology, that is, the philosophy of God. Next is analogy's part in the cognition of God. Here, there are two issues to consider: finding proof of God's existence and describing his nature. Most authors believe that analogy plays a part only in describing God's nature and speak for the analogy of attribution. Demonstrating the existence of God is generally not addressed, taking the fact of God's existence as already granted. Therefore, analogy ceases to be a focus. However, representatives of realist philosophy, existential Thomism, hold a different belief. They state that analogy can, and should, be applied in the argumentation for the existence of God and for describing His nature. The only problem that still exists is choosing which type of analogy to administer. This very analogy is the analogy of transcendental proportionality. It has been thought of, and is in fact possible, only on the basis of the existential conception of being, which is to be found in the views of St. Thomas Aquinas. It is similar in its structure to the analogy of attribution, as in both there is a primary analogate and secondary analogate. However, its primary analogate is radically differently understood than in the analogy of attribution.

Keywords: natural theology, revealed theology, metaphysics, the existence of God, nature of God, existential conception of being, analogy, analogy of transcendental proportionality, analogy of attribution

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