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Karol Wojtyła: A Thomist or a Phenomenologist?

Although the figure of St. John Paul II is known worldwide, he still remains so rich that not everything about him has been discovered or said, at least in their proper proportions. He is known above all as the Pope who led the Catholic Church for almost 27 years, as one who worked diligently for peace in the world, and as the author of many important ecclesiastical documents. But he was also the author of many books and poetical works and a superb speaker who could reach millions of hearts and minds the world over. He is less well known as an intellectual, as a thinker, and as a philosopher. But it was in this last field, still as Karol Wojtyła, that he dealt with some very important issues, addressing them in lectures, discussions, and articles. The recovery of his strictly philosophical contributions is worth undertaking, because they enrich not only philosophy itself but—to the degree that Wojtyła’s philosophy is a universal philosophy—they enrich both Christian and general culture.

Wojtyła’s philosophical writings are not among the easiest to read. This is not something unusual: philosophy is a difficult discipline. Some authors, however, are nevertheless particularly difficult. In Wojtyła’s case, it is a matter of a kind of intellectual concentration that a given text demands from a reader. It is a kind of concentration acquired

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after many years of philosophical study, which means that those texts may simply be too difficult for philosophical novices. But the theoretical and practical eloquence contained in those texts makes it a worthwhile effort to extract and render it accessible to a broader audience, because it can play an important role in both the lives of individuals and society.

One of the most important questions that can be posed to someone examining the philosophical works of Karol Wojtyła is the one found in the title: is he a Thomist or a phenomenologist?¹ The question is justified because we can find in Wojtyła's works both threads pointing to phenomenology and threads pointing to Thomism. This raises the further question: which are the most important?

One can also ask: how did Wojtyła see the question? How was it seen by those who knew his views and expressed their opinions in their discussions, articles, and books? How was it seen by those who edited Wojtyła's works?

Was Wojtyła a Thomist or a phenomenologist? These are the possible answers: 1) he was a Thomist; 2) he was a phenomenologist; 3) he was both a Thomist and a phenomenologist, meaning one with an inclination toward both Thomism and phenomenology; 4) he was none of them, meaning one who sought to go beyond both Thomism and phenomenology.

In order to determine which of these responses is most adequate, we have to take account not just of Wojtyła's most important works but also their publishers and dates of publication because—as we shall see—these factors were not without influence as to which tendency was seen as dominant.

¹ See Douglas Flippen, "Was John Paul II a Thomist or a Phenomenologist?," *Faith & Reason* 31, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 65–106.

It is also important to note at this juncture that philosophy differs from many other disciplines in that it is marked not just by the pluralism of philosophical systems but by rivalry between them. While there are generally recognized principles and laws in mathematics, this same phenomenon does not exist in philosophy. The multiplication table stands for all mathematicians: 2×2 is always 4. In philosophy, however, different philosophical schools can have different views about many questions, even those concerning the most basic principles and laws, such as the laws of identity and contradiction. For example, the supreme law for Parmenides was that of identity, while for Hegel it was that of contradiction. One cannot reconcile one with the other, although that does not bother some philosophers.

One cannot, in turn, underestimate the role that ideology, which forms the background of many political systems, can play in the acceptance of a philosophy. Thomism was a far greater threat for Marxism than was phenomenology. Marxists, who controlled the education system in Poland after the Second World War, would promote phenomenology over Thomism in schools. Likewise, in liberal circles emerging from Protestantism and tinged with atheism, Thomism would have been seen in less friendly terms than phenomenology. Lastly, even though philosophy arises at its sources from a fascination with wisdom, individual predilections play a large role in the case of concrete philosophers. Someone likes Plato and Platonism more, while another prefers Aristotle and Aristotelianism. A philosophy and philosophical system can be liked or disliked, even if this is not stated up front. The moment of subjective choice has to play an important role, given that not just dozens but hundreds of schools have appeared in the history of philosophy.

The philosophical work of Karol Wojtyła can also be subjected to these three criteria. Having his philosophy on one's side could be worthwhile when he became Pope. Alternatively, one might do every-

thing one could do so that his philosophy was not widely known. Lastly, one could perform a certain amount of “retouching” of his philosophy, by changing this and that on the level of presentation or interpretation and even—sometimes—on the level of publication.

Let us begin with the title of this article. “Phenomenology” is an ideologically neutral term. As a neologism, it refers to a more closely undefined knowledge (-logy) about phenomena. “Thomism,” on the other hand, refers to a concrete figure, St. Thomas Aquinas, a figure criticized for centuries by opponents of Catholicism, be they Protestants or atheists. So, being a “Thomist”—a proponent of St. Thomas’s philosophy—one can take upon himself, willingly or unwillingly, a certain odium with which Aquinas himself has been encumbered. One might thus be treated as the advocate of a closed philosophical system that has an answer—albeit a schematic, uninteresting, and outdated one—for everything. (After all, it’s been around for over seven centuries!) One must reckon with all these things when one encounters a negative attitude toward Thomism. That is why, at first, one who is unaware of the context behind the controversy over Wojtyła, will prefer seeing him amidst phenomenologists rather than Thomists. Since we are interested in establishing the authentic position of Karol Wojtyła, it is worthwhile disenchanting such prejudices at the start.

The basic context of the question as to whether Wojtyła is a Thomist or a phenomenologist is not that of an overall philosophical system but that of philosophical anthropology, of his theory of man as a person. Wojtyła was dissatisfied with all the theories of man in each of the major schools of philosophy up to that time. The construction of a personalistic philosophical anthropology was, above all, the purpose underlying his work, *Osoba i czyn* (*The Person and the Act*, 1969).²

² Wojtyła’s *Osoba i czyn*, in English translation by Andrzej Potocki “as revised by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka,” is entitled *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979). That translation is erroneous. The Polish word “czyn” is a Slavic word

Preparation for such a philosophical anthropology could, however, already be found in his lectures at the Catholic University of Lublin during the period 1954–1957.³ Although, at that time, the question was one of ethical theory, an anthropological theory also surfaced in the background.

The publication of *Osoba i czyn* triggered a discussion about the book that assumed its final, written form published in 1974, “Dyskusja nad dziełem Kardynała Karola Wojtyły *Osoba i czyn* (The Discussion about Cardinal Karol Wojtyła’s Work *The Person and the Act*).”⁴ Thanks to that text, we can see Wojtyła’s concrete responses to the questions and doubts posed about the book.

There are, therefore, three publications connected with the question of whether Wojtyła is a Thomist or a phenomenologist: *Wykłady lubelskie* (*The Lublin Lectures*), *Osoba i czyn* (*The Person and the Act*), and “Dyskusja nad dziełem Kardynała Karola Wojtyły *Osoba i czyn* (The Discussion about Cardinal Karol Wojtyła’s Work *The Person and the Act*).” Undoubtedly, *Osoba i czyn* is the main axis of the controversy. But there is a problem here: we have three different editions of this book at our disposal, in which the perspective of the answer to our question changes.⁵

that means something that has happened or been done. The English word “act” is taken from the Latin “actio” and, in the grammatical gerund form used in the title, means an activity that has not ended but is still ongoing. In Linde’s *Słownik języka polskiego* [*Dictionary of the Polish Language*] (Lwów: Zakład Ossolińskich, 1854), the German word “Akt” is translated into Polish as “czyn” and “uczynek” (deed), and the word “czyn” is defined as “what is done” (*ibid.*, 393), i.e., a past perfective, not a continuous present form. The proper title of *Osoba i czyn* in English should read: *The Person and the Act*. For more, see Małgorzata Jałoch-Palicka, “Thomas Aquinas’ Philosophy of Being as the Basis for Wojtyła’s Concept and Cognition of Human Person,” *Studia Gilsoniana* 3 (2014): 127–129.

³ Karol Wojtyła, *Wykłady lubelskie* [*The Lublin Lectures*] (Lublin: TN KUL, 2006).

⁴ *Analecta Cracoviensia*, no. 5–6 (1973–1974): 49–272.

⁵ 1st edition (Kraków: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, 1969); 2nd edition (Kraków: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, 1985); 3rd edition (Lublin: TN KUL, 1994).

In *Wykłady lubelskie* (*The Lublin Lectures*), ethical problems are subordinated to historical considerations: the act and ethical experience (Scheler, Kant, Thomas Aquinas, and the Aristotelian-Thomist theory); good and value (Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Kant, and Scheler); the question of norms and happiness (Plato, Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Hume, Bentham, Kant, and Scheler).⁶

Wojtyła in those lectures unequivocally cuts himself off from the positions of Kant and Scheler with regard to that important element of their ethical systems that obligation represents. Kant places obligation up front in his ethics, putting the category of good to the side. Subsequent authors whom we associate with the phenomenological school, with Scheler in the lead, followed in Kant's footsteps. Wojtyła advances various criticisms with regard to obligation. The experience of obligation is not, according to Wojtyła, the "proper ethical experience." In undertaking his critique of human knowing, Kant cuts it off from the knowledge of reality, which includes the knowledge of the real experience of morality.⁷

Secondly, obligation takes on, in the field of law, the appearance of respect, but that respect does not constitute the internal but only the eternal aspect of moral experience. Obligation is not, therefore, the essence of morality, which we experience from the inside.⁸

Thirdly, shifting the accent from the act to obligation results in putting the act and its influence on whether a person becomes good or

⁶ Wojtyła, *Wykłady lubelskie* [*The Lublin Lectures*].

⁷ "Thus the consequence of a critical Kantian gaze on reality is that morality escapes from concrete human life, from that life which constitutes the object of sensory knowledge. In that case it is understandable that the experience of obligation is not a proper ethical experience." *Ibid.*, 56.

⁸ "A feeling of respect for the law is nothing other than an experience of obligation. That experience does not belong to the internal structure of the human act itself. If it thereby confers an ethical character on it, it is only from the outside, through that fact that it occurs concurrently in him." *Ibid.*, 54.

evil in secondary place. Self-consciousness of one's status as man-as-a-thing-in-itself remains in first place for Kant. But such self-consciousness cannot, according to Wojtyła, decide about the essence of morality.⁹

This means that Kantian ethics neither explain nor can solve the problem of human morality. It is not the proper path by which to reveal man as a person, including as a subject of morality.

Wojtyła also looks critically at Scheler's views. He criticizes him for not taking into account causality—behind which stands the concrete person—when he analyzes human moral behavior in the context of “realizing objective values.” This leads to the erasure of the person as a subject of morality because, without causality, he has no responsibility. One can at most speak of some kind of content of experiences, but that content is not yet constitutive of the moral act and of man as a subject of morality.¹⁰ Scheler offers, in effect, less an ethics than a “study of the psychology of values.”¹¹

Summarizing the positions of both Kant and Scheler, Wojtyła says that “in Kant, the ethical act has been most foundationally deconstructed” while, in Scheler, “it still has not been built.”¹²

On the basis of these examples, we can say that Wojtyła sought support neither in Kantianism nor phenomenology for his concept of ethics. This is confirmed when, dealing with the views of St. Thomas Aquinas, he concludes: “We must recognize the solutions, which Kant

⁹ “A person does not become good or evil through his acts . . . Through the experience of pure obligation one only becomes aware of one's supra-sensory being, that *homo noumenon*, which is found beyond the boundaries of all experience.” *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁰ “[I]n the realization of objective values, the person does not act as an efficient cause, which means he is not the efficient cause of good or evil, and in consequence those same values do not appear as certain properties of the person, as his characteristics, but only as the content of experience.” *Ibid.*, 51.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹² *Ibid.*, 55.

and Scheler provide, to be inadequate scholarly objectifications of the ethical experience. We must, on the other hand, accept St. Thomas Aquinas's solution as the only one commensurate with an interpretation of the ethical experience of the person."¹³

In the work that is key for our subject, *Osoba i czyn*, Wojtyła deals with ethical problem from the viewpoint of the possibility of building a philosophical anthropology. It is therefore from the anthropological viewpoint that he refers to various philosophers and philosophical schools.

He regarded his position not as a confrontation between Thomism and phenomenology or between a Thomist and a phenomenologist but as one between a philosophy of being and a philosophy of consciousness. That would be the deepest and most logical approach to the problem from the viewpoint of the history of philosophy and its object (including metaphysics). Wojtyła understood that the undertaking was difficult:

The task is even harder as we find ourselves in the current of a philosophical tradition which has shown over the centuries a significant division. One can speak even of two philosophies or at least of two basic methods of philosophizing. We can call one "the philosophy of being," the other "the philosophy of consciousness." In this work, however, we will attempt to overcome this division . . . in the very concept of the person. We owe a deeper knowledge of man from the point of view of consciousness to the philosophy of consciousness, and that will certainly lead to a richer vision of the person and the act.¹⁴

It was, therefore, a matter of using the achievements of the philosophy of consciousness, whose object is, after all, human conscious-

¹³ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹⁴ Karol Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn [The Person and the Act]*, 1st edition (Kraków: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, 1969), 22.

ness, in order to build a theory of man, but not at the price of rejecting or forgetting the philosophy of being. Wojtyła explains:

While remaining on the foundation of the theory of being, we want to make use of that enrichment. The attempt at a legitimate unification, in the concept of the person and the act, of these understandings [provided by the philosophy of being and of consciousness], which emerge from the experience of the person in both these aspects, must in some way become an effort at unifying two philosophical orientations or, in some sense, two philosophies.¹⁵

This meant that certain criticisms of both philosophies (the philosophy of being and of consciousness) would be put forth by Wojtyła, and then, after the finding of solutions, would it be possible for him to unify them constructively, perhaps in an original way.

In the case of the philosophy of being, it was the issue of a certain schematization in its approach to the person, i.e., the lack of a philosophical anthropology as an anthropology. It was also an issue of the dominance of metaphysics which, with regard to the person, did not sufficiently take into account what is proper to him and differentiates him from other beings. Having that in mind, Wojtyła directs his criticisms both against the Aristotelian (*animal rationale*) and Boethian (*rationalis naturae individua substantia*) definitions of man. The content of those definitions was too impoverished when it came into contact with the richness of man that the philosophy of consciousness revealed. Furthermore, the classical definitions lacked a sufficient emphasis on the uniqueness of each person.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁶ “The person is a concrete man . . . *individua substantia*, as Boethius says in the first part of his famous definition. Concreteness is in some way at the same time unity and unrepeatability, which is individuated in every case. But something more than the idea of individuality is contained in the concept of person; the person is something more than an individuated nature . . . That fullness is not just concreteness but rather unity and unrepeatability.” *Ibid.*, 76.

But the philosophy of consciousness, primarily of Kant and Scheler, was also criticized, as were positivism and phenomenism. The criticisms were of their views on the person and the theory of morality that affected philosophical anthropology.

Through his analysis of moral experience, Wojtyła sought to reveal man as a person.¹⁷ But that was something that could not be adequately achieved in the Kantian system, in Scheler's philosophy, or in positivism. That moral experience was more adequately developed in classical philosophy, particularly in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and in St. Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*. Modern and contemporary philosophies had divorced themselves from anthropology, its place was taken by psychology and the sociology of morals.¹⁸

Wojtyła decidedly stresses that one cannot separate anthropology from ethics, particularly in an integral system which aims at a full explanation of what it is that makes human morality precisely human and what is an act—especially a moral act—that reveals the person and allows him to be understood in full.¹⁹

Wojtyła does not deny our gratitude to the philosophy of consciousness for a more basic understanding of man from the viewpoint of consciousness,²⁰ but that does not mean that he is rejecting a philosophy of being. On the contrary, it is on that basis that he undertakes an analysis of what derives from experience, which at the same time reveals the content that the philosophy of consciousness has uncovered. This is the place where Wojtyła performs his division, which does not, however, lead to a dualistic vision of the person, because we experience ourselves as one who is one being. It is also on that basis that Wojtyła declares his aspiration to try to overcome the division which is a hos-

¹⁷ “[T]he study of the act, in which the person is revealed.” *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 15, 29–30.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15–16.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

tage of different philosophical traditions.²¹ But it is also here that he clearly declares—in the effort to reconcile the philosophies of being and consciousness—that that which will serve as the foundation for the solution is the philosophy of being: “While remaining on the foundation of the theory of being, we want to make use of that enrichment”²² that the philosophy of consciousness offers us. That methodological and philosophical declaration, which appears in the introduction of *Osoba i czyn*, seems to leave no doubt that philosophy of being is the philosophy that plays the most important role.

Wojtyła maintained that position in the discussions that took place after the publication of *Osoba i czyn*, when participants straightaway put the question of philosophical priority: philosophy of being or of consciousness? Wojtyła made it clearer that his project of unifying both schools (the Thomistic and phenomenological orientations, the philosophies of being and consciousness) was a minimalist, not a maximalist project. It was not maximalist in terms of addressing the whole philosophical system, but rather minimalist, dealing only with the philosophy of man.²³ But what is important is that Wojtyła did not intend to reduce the philosophy of being to a philosophy of consciousness, which is what recognition of the priority of phenomenology over the philosophy of being would entail. Wojtyła distances himself from such an approach:

In any case, there is nothing in *Osoba i czyn* about unifying those two philosophies, especially of unifying the philosophies of being and of consciousness as a reduction of the whole of reality to the subject’s consciousness and its content.²⁴

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, 23.

²³ Karol Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn [The Person and the Act]*, 3rd edition (Lublin: TN KUL, 1994), 355.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 355–356.

What, then, is the problem? The problem is the second edition of *Osoba i czyn*, in which there is an effort to strengthen phenomenology and weaken the philosophy of being. That edition appeared in 1985, i.e., about seven years after Wojtyła's election as Pope. We learn from the editor's note that it was not personally prepared by the Pope but only accepted by him. We read that the second edition was corrected and supplemented in terms of footnotes and subtitles by Andrzej Półtawski in agreement with the author.

Every work can be corrected and supplemented. But, considering the nature and scale of changes made in the second edition of the book, it is clear that the effort to provide the corrections and supplements could not be undertaken by the author himself who, as Pope, simply lacked the time for such time-consuming academic activities. It is also clear that the changes are significant, as they involve basic questions, including those with which this paper deals.

For the average reader who knew only the second edition of *Osoba i czyn*, the changes were practically unnoticed. Happily, a third edition appeared in which the number and types of changes are scrupulously noted. 76 notes, subtitles, and about 900 editorial changes were added to the second edition. They included stylistic changes and changes in form and structure, including restructuring of paragraphs, limits on differentiations, terminological changes, and editing of certain fragments in terms of reduction or expansion. All those changes are noted in the third edition, thanks to which the reader can now compare the first and second editions. He can make these comparisons only if he has patience, because the total number of changes makes the second edition into a new book. Consequently, a comparison of the two editions is a particularly tiring activity, because there are too many changes. The third edition, in turn, although valuable to the researcher for having identified the differences between the first and second editions, also introduces new traps because, as we read, "stylistic and technical"

changes have been introduced into it, including a stylistic unification of titles and subtitles.²⁵

In summary, the third edition is its own compilation of the two previous editions, of which only the first edition had Wojtyła as its immediate author. The two subsequent editions are the effects of editorial changes. That is why, in reading the second or third editions, we must constantly keep in mind the question: is this Wojtyła's text, or the editors'?

In what direction do those various changes, "improvements," and expansions go? Some certainly had a technical and stylistic character, but there were also those that had a substantive character. We will attempt to extract the latter for their influence upon the problem we are addressing.

Subtitles usually facilitate the reading of a long text and afford the possibility of a quick grasp of a certain whole unit. On the other hand, subtitles can incline a reader to a certain kind of interpretation, leading even to manipulating the text by suggesting a meaning that is not found in that text.

We encounter the latter situation in the third edition. In it there appears, for example, the subtitle: "The Non-Identity of the Empirical and Phenomenological Approaches."²⁶ The snag in this, however, is that the fragment enclosed by that subtitle speaks neither of phenomenology nor the phenomenological approach. Wojtyła does not, in the case of man's knowledge, agree with either the phenomenological or empirical approach, but he does not say that the proper method is the phenomenological method. The subtitle, however, suggests this and, therefore, strengthens the case for a stronger influence of phenomenology on Wojtyła's views than was the case.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 49.

²⁶ Noted in Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn* [*The Person and the Act*], 3rd edition, 57.

But there are even more important changes. They involve the omission of certain fragments and the addition of new ones, particularly in the discussion of the relationship between the philosophies of being and consciousness.

The most significant change affects the text that is a very important explanation of the difficult situation in which the author of *Osoba i czyn* found himself because of the confrontation of two such different philosophical traditions whose influences result in the division of the philosophical image of man. Wojtyła's ambition was to build an image of man as a unity, but that task was difficult. He explains:

The task is even harder as we find ourselves in the current of a philosophical tradition which has shown over the centuries a significant division. One can speak even of two philosophies or at least of two basic methods of philosophizing. We can call one "the philosophy of being," the other "the philosophy of consciousness."²⁷

Wojtyła then indicates that those two aspects should not be absolutized and opposed to each other, but the division should be "overcome"—not by a theory of knowledge, where that division is most apparent, but by the concept of man. He further stresses that we owe much to a philosophy of consciousness that lets us see the richness of "the vision of the person and the act," but he "remains on the basis of a philosophy of being."²⁸ Unfortunately, it is precisely this important fragment that was simply left out of the second edition. Why? The editor of that edition does not explain.

When we take this fragment into account, we see clearly that the philosophy of being, not the philosophy of consciousness, lies at the basis of Wojtyła's concept of man. This statement is unequivocal and most understandable. Wojtyła is not studying consciousness for con-

²⁷ Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn* [*The Person and the Act*], 1st edition, 22.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

consciousness's sake, nor building an epistemology that would assume the role of metaphysics. He is dealing with philosophical anthropology which affords an image of man that appeals to metaphysical categories. Without metaphysics, there is neither philosophical anthropology nor man as a being. The philosophy of consciousness might reveal a whole series of data about man's consciousness, but the philosophy of consciousness does not deal with what Wojtyła calls the "metaphysical reduction," the reaching of the reasons for what is given in experience. That is precisely what metaphysics deals with.²⁹ One cannot build a concept of man on the basis of phenomenological experience alone, because the phenomenological method does not lead to the discovery of ontic reasons. It does not lead to the discovery of the individual as individual, one and unrepeatable.

But this does not mean that metaphysics as philosophical anthropology cannot make use of the achievements of phenomenology, because it is also a matter of "demonstrating how phenomenology and metaphysics explore the same object, and that phenomenological and metaphysical reductions do not cancel each other out."³⁰

Phenomenology aims to isolate nature in the person, whereas metaphysical reduction "aims at the full integration of nature in the person."³¹ This means that only metaphysics leads to the unification of those two elements in the human being. Phenomenology reveals those elements as two different elements, but it is unable to lead to the demonstration of their unity.

²⁹ In this context Fr. Krąpiec, O.P., used the term "decontradiction" (*uniesprzecznianie*). For finding the ultimate cause of being of a thing makes the thing free from the contradiction (absurdity) of its being. See Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Metafizyka. Zarys teorii bytu* [*Metaphysics: A Sketch of a Theory of Being*] (Lublin: RW KUL, 1995), 42.

³⁰ Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 3rd edition, 128; 1st edition, 83.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1st edition, 85.

Since the intention of the author of *Osoba i czyn* was to build a philosophical anthropology, the dominant element lies on the side of a philosophy of being, not of consciousness. The latter plays a very important auxiliary role by manifesting a whole series of data essential to the personal life of man. But those data in themselves do not explain what their deeper source is. The nature of that source is metaphysical.

It should be underscored that Wojtyła reckoned with how many dangers might be introduced at the anthropological level by applying phenomenology in the metaphysical field. Scheler deprived the person of his objectivity and unity by introducing a fluid concept of the center, which would have encompassed the whole of consciousness not differentiated among individual people. That would have led to some form of pantheism. Wojtyła did not want to attempt the “absolutizing of consciousness.”³² Husserl, in turn, recommended that phenomenological research start from *epoché*, i.e., suspension of existential judgment.³³ That approach was unacceptable to Wojtyła. Man as a personal being has to be one being and an existing being, because his experience indicates that. Blurring subjectivity and detaching it from existence shows itself therefore to be an essential inadequacy of the phenomenological method in revealing the attitude of being man as a person. That was, after all, the purpose of the research as well as the reason for using the phenomenological method in it—but as a starting point, not an end point.

Wojtyła was a philosopher of being, who was able to make use of the philosophy of Aristotle and of St. Thomas Aquinas along with phenomenological method. His philosophy contributed an original ap-

³² *Ibid.*, 35. The paragraph is rewritten in the 3rd edition.

³³ “I am exercising the ‘phenomenological’ *epoché* which also *completely shuts me off from any judgment about spatiotemporal factual being.*” Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, I, trans. Fred Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1982), 61.

proach that bore fruit in a deeper concept of man as a person. It is a metaphysico-anthropological concept that is supplemented by the data that the philosophy of consciousness provides. But it is not the philosophy of consciousness that allows for the presentation of an integral concept of man. It is the philosophy of being.

Translated by John M. Grondelski



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SUMMARY

The author seeks to answer the question of whether Karol Wojtyła was a Thomist or a phenomenologist. He lists four possible answers: 1) Wojtyła was a Thomist; 2) Wojtyła was a phenomenologist; 3) Wojtyła was both a Thomist and a phenomenologist, meaning one with an inclination toward both Thomism and phenomenology; and 4) Wojtyła was none of them, meaning one who sought to go beyond both Thomism and phenomenology. In order to determine which of these responses is most adequate, the author not only analyzes Wojtyła's most important works, but also takes into account their publishers and dates of publication. He concludes that 1) Wojtyła was a philosopher of being, who was able to make use of the philosophy of Aristotle and of St. Thomas Aquinas along with phenomenological method, and 2) his philosophy contributed an original approach that bore fruit in a deeper understanding of man as a person.

KEYWORDS

Karol Wojtyła, Thomism, phenomenology, anthropology, person, Lublin school of philosophy, personalism, philosophy of consciousness, philosophy of being.

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