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## Specific Research Elements in Andrzej Maryniarczyk’s Realistic Metaphysics

In the history of scientific thought one notices the existence of various research conceptions which constitute the process of philosophical explanation of reality. Depending on the philosophy practiced, its nature is influenced by various determinants resulting from the adopted method of philosophizing and the research attitude. Therefore, referring to the research method, it becomes possible to develop a specific philosophical system characteristic for a given conception.

One of the contemporary philosophers who presented an original conception of philosophizing was Andrzej Maryniarczyk (1950–2020). He drew his scientific inspirations from classical philosophy, especially from the rich heritage of Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophy. What was of particular importance to him was classical philosophy in the version of existential Thomism, which constitutes an adequate method of cognition of the world and man. In the philosophy he practiced one may discern references to the thought of the French philosopher Étienne Gilson, thanks to whom a renaissance of Thomistic thought was noticed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more on this, see Étienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1952).

Maryniarczyk was also a promoter of the achievements of the Lublin School of philosophy in Poland, as well as worldwide.<sup>2</sup> One of the fundamental programs of this school was to build a new version of metaphysical philosophy based on classical realistic metaphysics. Referring to the program of the School (in particular to the philosophical conception of Mieczysław A. Krąpiec and Stanisław Kamiński), he aimed at developing a modern conception of philosophy, which would be distinguished by methodological autonomy, maximalism, realism and cognitive universalism. However, what distinguished the metaphysical philosophy of the Lublin School in a special way was the elaboration of a new way of comprehending being, the presentation of methods of its justification and the construction, on this plane, of a system of metaphysical explanation of reality. All these factors—according to Maryniarczyk—determined the practice of metaphysics in the Lublin School.<sup>3</sup>

In this research perspective, Maryniarczyk indicated an innovative approach to many philosophical issues. Referring to methodological achievements of realistic metaphysics, he developed and indicated the significance of the method of separation in the philosophical explanation of the world. On this basis, he showed the specificity of the system of metaphysics as a cognitive response to the existence of reality, which is expressed in the analogical-transcendental cognition. He also performed a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the philosophical theory of creationism (*creatio ex nihilo*), which has been mainly interpreted in the theological order since the thirteenth century. In this last issue Maryniarczyk, referring to the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas,

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<sup>2</sup> Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *The Lublin Philosophical School*, trans. Hugh McDonald (Lublin: PTTA, 2010), 77–129.

<sup>3</sup> Andrzej Maryniarczyk, “Philosophy as Metaphysics in the Lublin Philosophical School,” in *The Lublin Philosophical School. History—Conception—Disputes*, ed. Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik, Paweł Gondek (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2020), 109–111.

showed the ontic foundations of this theory and the specificity of the very act of creation. These issues do not remain merely forms of supplementing realistic metaphysics as its detailed development. They are crucial problems for comprehending metaphysical research and affect the ontic value and methodological coherence of such an approach. Conducting a critical reflection on these issues will allow us to present the specific character of realistic metaphysics practiced by A. Maryniarczyk.

### **Metaphysical Separation as a Philosophical Method of Cognition of Reality**

The method of metaphysical separation is the basic element which shows the essence of realistic metaphysics in Maryniarczyk's approach.<sup>4</sup> For it determines the specificity and the manner of justifying metaphysical statements, as well as it presents the methodology of metaphysics.<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that separation becomes in Maryniarczyk's metaphysics the fundamental method of separating the subject and explaining reality. The very term 'separation' indicates a method, as well as a type of cognition, thanks to which necessary and at the same time universal factors of being are separated (Lat.: *separatio*), without which no being can exist.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Maryniarczyk deals with detailed analyses of the method of realistic metaphysics in the book entitled *Metoda metafizyki realistycznej* [The Method of Realistic Metaphysics] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Maryniarczyk based his analyses of the method of metaphysics, among others, on the texts of St. Thomas Aquinas, first of all, quoting fragments of Thomas's commentary to the treatise *De Trinitate* by Boethius. In this context he made an attempt to develop it anew and to show the significance of the method of separation for realistic metaphysics. See S. Thomae Aquinatis, *In librum Boethii de Trinitate questiones quinta et sexta*, ed. P. Wyser (Fribourg 1948).

<sup>6</sup> Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *The Realistic Interpretation of Reality*, trans. Hugh McDonald (Lublin: PTTA, 2015), 132–133.

Metaphysical separation as the fundamental method of metaphysical elucidation of reality is a complex process.<sup>7</sup> Thanks to separation, one forms the object of metaphysical cognition, i.e., being understood as something that exists. The basis for this method are existential judgments, thanks to which the object of metaphysics is distinguished. They provide the grounds for constructing a fundamental type of metaphysical cognition, which is a guarantee of cognition of really existing things. This cognition has a judicial character; it emphasizes the grasp of the totality of being and points to such elements that constitute its existence. In this context, separation can be defined as a cognitive attitude, which expresses itself in an intellectual response to the fact of existence of things by stating and becoming aware of their existence. According to Maryniarczyk, separation conceived of in this manner as a method of metaphysics is accomplished in three basic stages.<sup>8</sup> At the first stage, existential judgments point to the real scope of cognition. This scope is determined by concretely existing objects. In this way, the fact of existence of being is affirmed (e.g., ‘John exists’). Thus one accomplishes cognitive contact with reality, which determines the real object context of this cognition. The second stage of metaphysical separation is the analysis of cognitive content, captured in existential judgments. Through this analysis, one obtains information about the necessary and universal factors of being, namely, the content of what is real. What exists is John, that is, it has content-determined individual essence. In the third stage of separation, a transition is made from categorical grasps of essence and existence to transcendental ones. Thus, in the concrete John, such factors are pointed out which constitute the existence of this concrete John, but also his existence as a really existing

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<sup>7</sup> Maryniarczyk uses the term ‘method’ to denote a set of ‘conceptual-creative’ activities that aim to form the concept of being as being.

<sup>8</sup> Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *Discovery of the Internal Structure of Being*, trans. Hugh McDonald (Lublin: PTTA, 2018), 225–227.

being. It is in this context that the proper object of metaphysics, namely being, is formed.<sup>9</sup>

As already noted, the method of metaphysical separation is closely related to the conception of separation cognition. It is a specific type of metaphysical cognition, which is a development of spontaneous cognition, in which one notices the necessary factors that determine the existence of being. The results of this cognition are verbalized in the content of existential judgments (e.g., ‘something exists’). They are an expression of cognitive contact with reality. Thanks to them, metaphysical cognition is consolidated in really existing reality. The foundation of separation cognition, according to Maryniarczyk, is constituted by judgments, which put the human being in direct contact with a real being, without any intermediary. Therefore, existential judgment is a form of superintelligible cognition (Lat.: *surintelligibile*), in which the act of cognition comes into contact with the act of existence. In view of the absence of cognitive intermediaries, the existential judgment becomes an infallible and indisputable act.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the existential judgment is the starting point for further developed cognition. In this context, the method of metaphysical separation as a cognitive tool is a guarantor of realistic cognition, providing the necessary knowledge of the totality of the existing thing.<sup>11</sup> As Maryniarczyk notes, the method of separation should not be underestimated in the field of realistic metaphysics, because such an action may contribute to the demolition of the entire cognitive realism that constitutes the essence of metaphysics. Consequently, this method needs to be understood as the essential and fundamental tool we utilize on the plane of realistic metaphysics.

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<sup>9</sup> Maryniarczyk, *The Realistic Interpretation of Reality*, 139–141.

<sup>10</sup> See Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Metaphysics. An Outline of the Theory of Being*, trans. T. Sandok (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> Maryniarczyk, *The Realistic Interpretation of Reality*, 142–144.

## System of Metaphysics

The method of metaphysical separation is closely related to the system of metaphysics, playing a pivotal role in it. A. Maryniarczyk was in favour of systemic practicing of philosophy (metaphysics). He asserted that the fundamental argument in understanding philosophy as a system is the cognized reality, which exists in a systemic fashion. Therefore, the formulation of such a system is important in order to explain reality. The author's main considerations on the system of metaphysics are discussed in the dissertation entitled "The System of Metaphysics. Analysis of Object-Oriented Cognition,"<sup>12</sup> in which the main thesis states that metaphysics is an autonomous cognitive system connected with the notion of being and the process of making it explicit. In the context of metaphysics, the process of making being explicit retains its specific, systemic character, which is conditioned by the existential aspect of reality. According to Maryniarczyk, the conception of being and the way it is made explicit determine the conception of the system of metaphysics.

As part of the process of making being explicit, the following elements-factors constituting the scheme of the system of metaphysics are distinguished. Maryniarczyk includes transcendentals and first principles in the first group. Within metaphysics transcendentals are expressions showing the systemic fashion of existence of being, revealing the deepest foundations of the whole knowledge about being (reality). Through the individual transcendental elements, the universal and comprehensive knowledge of being analogously existing is expressed. Within the system of metaphysics, these elements may appear as new aspects of metaphysical experience, indicating the necessary, objective and boundary (transcendental) aspects of being. Moreover, these factors

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<sup>12</sup> More on this see Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *System metafizyki. Analiza „przedmiotowo-zbornego” poznania* (Lublin: RW KUL, 1991).

determine the rational order of the systemic explanation of reality in the general-existential aspect.

Maryniarczyk includes metaphysical notions related to the complexes of being in the second group of the system of metaphysics. This group indicates a change in the perspective of metaphysical cognition—from the transcendental perspective to the categorical one.<sup>13</sup> These elements, cognitively expressed in the form of metaphysical notions (such as: substance, matter, essence, existence, etc.), describe boundary states of existence of an contingent being, determined temporally and spatially. Against this background, Maryniarczyk distinguishes general manners of existence, which he defines as “object states of existence of the contingent being,” accomplished by means of ‘penetration’ of the experience of being.<sup>14</sup> The indicated penetration constitutes a form of separation cognition (in other words, judicial cognition), by virtue of which we affirm the fundamental states of existence of the contingent being.

The last group of elements of metaphysics is constituted by wisdom elements that describe the essence of cognition and metaphysical knowledge. Among these elements the following methods are distinguished: separation, analogy and participation.<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that each of these elements shows the nature of metaphysical cognition from a different aspect. Separation in the system of metaphysics guarantees the wisdom dimension of metaphysical cognition, constituting a method of separating being from non-being. Whereas, according to Maryniarczyk, analogy is a method of cognition of the ultimate cause of exist-

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<sup>13</sup> Transcendentals being universal properties of being show reality as a-temporal, a-material, a-spatial, etc., so that cognition applies to everything that exists, while categorical expressions of being show the contingency of being as mutable, material, concrete.

<sup>14</sup> Andrzej Maryniarczyk, “Is There a ‘System’ of Metaphysics?,” in *Atti del IX Congresso Tomistico Internazionale*, vol. 2: *Noetica, critica e metafisica in chiave tomistica* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1991), 245.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

ence of being and in metaphysics it fulfills the function of systematic metaphysical cognition. The last third element is participation treated as a manner of wise understanding of being, showing the existential dimension of metaphysical cognition. All the above-mentioned methods within the framework of wisdom elements constitute the crowning of metaphysical cognition, what is more, they reveal the specific nature of the system of metaphysics, which is expressed in the fact that the basis of its understanding is the manner in which being exists.<sup>16</sup>

Undoubtedly, by distinguishing these elements, one can perceive the peculiarity of the system of metaphysics, which manifests itself in the characteristic properties of this system, such as realism, openness, autonomy and coherence. First of all, the system of metaphysics is characterized by realism. In Maryniarczyk's opinion, thanks to the directness of the approach to the object, which is constituted by the existing reality, the realism of the system of metaphysics is perceived. Therefore, the system of metaphysics is not a model of reality, but it is an expression of the 'recognition' of reality in transcendental and necessary relations. In addition, the system of metaphysics refers to analogical cognition, agreeing with the given being-concrete, in which the necessary and transcendental relations are realized proportionally. Therefore, analogy (analogous cognition) becomes the main systemic factor for building realistic metaphysics. Another characteristic of the system of metaphysics that Maryniarczyk mentions is openness. Openness of the system of metaphysics consists in dissemination or transfer of cognition (based on analogy) to the whole existing reality, which means that the horizon of possibilities of human cognition is opened. Within the framework of openness, one discovers transcendental and objective reasons for its existence.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Maryniarczyk, *System metafizyki. Analiza „przedmiotowo-zbornego” poznania*, 253–275.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 279–310.



Autonomy of the system of metaphysics, on the other hand, is built on the way it is distinguished and becomes visible first of all in the context of other systems. Metaphysics at the stage of separation does not take as its own object of study the results (systems) defined by other sciences. Metaphysical cognition must be distinct from other types of knowledge, which means that it has its own object, method and goal. The autonomy of metaphysics is closely related to cognitive maximalism.<sup>18</sup> As Maryniarczyk points out, the maximalist attitude to philosophizing imposes such a system which not only captures all the issues of metaphysics, but also strives to formulate a philosophical method of solving various types of non-philosophical problems in the existential order. The purpose of completing the characterization of the system of metaphysics is to point out the aspect of its coherence, which is built on the act of existence as the element unifying all reality, as well as on analogy in existence and participation.<sup>19</sup> By virtue of these factors it is possible to present the specific nature of metaphysics as a coherent philosophical system.

The aforementioned properties reveal the ontic foundations of the system of metaphysics, which unveil the nature of the system of metaphysics and seem to protect it from reduction to other systems. This approach is a guarantor of the distinctiveness, autonomy and peculiarity of the system of metaphysics. Naturally, the presented characteristics of the system of metaphysics involves some imperfections. Nevertheless, the presented interpretation sets the stage for the search for more advanced methodological and logical tools improving the system of metaphysics.

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<sup>18</sup> Stanisław Kamiński, "The Methodological Peculiarity of the Theory of Being," in *On the Methodology of Metaphysics*, trans. Maciej B. Stępień (Lublin–Roma: PTTA, 2018), 207–209.

<sup>19</sup> On this see Andrzej Maryniarczyk, *On Causes, Participation, and Analogy*, trans. Hugh McDonald (Lublin: PTTA, 2017).

## Metaphysical Theory of Creation *Ex Nihilo*

In contemporary philosophical debate, there arises a discussion on creationism and neo-Darwinian evolutionism that concerns the possibility of indicating rational justifications for the beginnings of the existence of the world and man. As Maryniarczyk indicates, contemporary supporters of evolutionism assume that the issues concerning the study of the beginnings of the existence of the world and man have long been closed. Evolutionists justify their argumentation with the fact that the world, man and other individual beings were created through the so-called ‘god of evolution’, and some are even able to accept the theory of the ‘big bang’ or eternally evolving matter in their explanation of reality, in order to avoid the theory of creationism as the truth about the creation of the world.<sup>20</sup> Maryniarczyk points out that by rejecting this truth, evolutionists have no grounds for elucidating the rationality and teleology of the world. Therefore, it is necessary to become more familiar with the philosophical/metaphysical theory of creation which is the theory of *creatio ex nihilo* in order to note its validity in answering the question of the ultimate explanation of the world (its teleology and rationality).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> As Maryniarczyk points out, posing questions about the ultimate cause of the existence of the world, persons and things, as well as seeking answers to them, lies within the competence of metaphysics, not of the natural-cosmological sciences. All natural-cosmological theories based on a particular method, in this case the method of the natural sciences, fall into the error of methodological incompetence. Due to the limitations of the method, as well as the conclusions and theorems they formulate, they do not elucidate the whole world, but only a fragment of it. Such an action testifies to a certain range of explanation of the world, by pointing only to partial causes of the existence of the world and man. It is only by means of the metaphysical theory of creation that the final causes of the existence of the world and man are searched for, thus encompassing the whole world. Andrzej Maryniarczyk, “Metaphysical Creationism and the Paradoxes of Evolutionary Theism: A Contribution to the Discussion within Contemporary Thomism,” *Roczniki Filozoficzne* [Philosophical Annals] LXVIII, no. 4 (2020): 169–198.

<sup>21</sup> Maryniarczyk, *The Realistic Interpretation of Reality*, 46–47.

In this context, Maryniarczyk's primary task was to reiterate and characterize the metaphysical theory of creationism, which is a cause for discussion within contemporary Thomism. The metaphysical theory of creationism arose from the analysis of really existing things, which are given in human experience, as variable and unnecessary (contingent) in existence. This theory holds that the world did not arise from some pre-existing substrate, but was wholly called into existence by the Creator through an act of intellect and will. The theory of creationism, formulated in the 13th century by St. Thomas Aquinas, is a theory that comes from the philosophical explanation of the origins of the world and man.<sup>22</sup> It is closely related to the understanding of being, which is connected with the discovery of the composition of being, i.e., essence and existence, as well as with the understanding of the Absolute as the cause of the existence of all things (the efficient cause of creation).

Following St Thomas Aquinas, Maryniarczyk commences his analyses by rejecting the thesis that things come into being from something, i.e., that the whole reality is created from eternal matter. Therefore, in the field of philosophy, there appears the problem of so-called *opinio communis*, according to which the world as a whole exists eternally, and 'nothing comes into being from nothing' (*ex nihilo nihil fit*).<sup>23</sup> To this end, Maryniarczyk evokes an argumentation in favor of undermining the eternal existence of reality, which at the same time will become a metaphysical argumentation supporting the theory of *creatio ex nihilo*. An important point is the discovery of the contingent nature of beings and the world, which in their existence are dependent on the ultimate cause, which is the source of all existence, i.e., the Creator. Therefore, at the basis of the understanding of the metaphysical theory of *creatio ex nihilo* lies the fact of the composition of being from

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<sup>22</sup> Andrzej Maryniarczyk, "Philosophical Creationism: Thomas Aquinas' Metaphysics of *Creatio ex Nihilo*," *Studia Gilsoniana* 5, no. 1 (2016): 220.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

essence and existence, as well as the indication of the act of existence as a correlate of every being. It needs to be noted that existence as a constitutive factor of being is not identical with the content determining the essence of things. Therefore, the world as a whole, as well as everything that exists in this world, does not involve the reason for its existence. Such an assertion means that the existence of being demands an external cause. Accordingly, closely related to the act of existence is the understanding of a Being that ‘exists in and through itself’ (*Ipsum Esse*).<sup>24</sup> We are speaking here of the Absolute Being, i.e., the Creator, being the Pure Act, the Supreme Good, that constitutes the efficient cause of creation. The Creator as the efficient cause of existence acts by virtue of reason and will, without any intermediaries. Creation, as Maryniarczyk notes, is the introduction of beings into existence by an act of the Creator’s intellect and will, and therefore the world, as well as particular beings, are carriers of the Creator’s thought. The act of creation is also the act of creating the first relations and dependencies in being. With the introduction of beings into existence, the first relations and references are established. Therefore, the introduction of beings into existence indicates the order of philosophical investigations.

The result of Maryniarczyk’s research is to show creation as a relation of dependence on the source of existence, which is the Creator. By discovering the dependence of every being on the Creator, attention is drawn to the fact that each thing is willed and cognized by Him. The relation of every being to the Creator, distinguished within the framework of the theory *creatio ex nihilo*, finally explains, in the context of the creative cause, the fact of the contingent nature of beings. The metaphysical theory of creation plays an important role in the reflection on

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<sup>24</sup> Maryniarczyk notes that the discovery of the Creator as *Ipsum Esse* (Self-Existence) entails the discovery of the Creator as a Person, and therefore a rational and free being.

the rationality and teleology of the world.<sup>25</sup> The source of existence, which is the Creator, is also the source of the laws governing the existence of things (identity, consistency, excluded middle), which determine the rationality of every accidental being. In this context, the world appears as rational, since it is an act of the Creator's intellect, and thanks to that it can be cognizable. The theory of creation is also closely related to the category of teleology. Maryniarczyk argues that beings are ascribed to the will of the Creator, which means that every contingent being is willed by Him. The whole of reality is characterized by teleology, because it is the effect of the Creator's free will; moreover, the will is inscribed in beings in the form of a purpose, expressing their good.<sup>26</sup> For this reason, the Creator, being the Supreme Good, constitutes the ultimate goal of the pursuit of beings. Therefore, through the metaphysical theory of creation *ex nihilo*, the ultimate dimension of the teleology of reality is indicated and philosophically justified.

In the light of Maryniarczyk's considerations on the metaphysical theory of creation *ex nihilo*, it should be stated that it provides an answer to the question about the ultimate cause of the existence of the world and man, it is also the key to further research on the ontic foundations of reality. Additionally, it should be noted that the metaphysical theory of creation *ex nihilo* shows an important place and role in the philosophical elucidation of the world, as well as demonstrates an inalienable methodological value, being the culmination of the whole system of metaphysics.

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<sup>25</sup> Maryniarczyk, "Philosophical Creationism: Thomas Aquinas' Metaphysics of *Creatio ex Nihilo*," 263–265.

<sup>26</sup> Maryniarczyk, "Metaphysical Creationism and the Paradoxes of Evolutionary Theism: A Contribution to the Discussion within Contemporary Thomism," 185.

## Conclusion

The conception of realistic metaphysics developed by Andrzej Maryniarczyk is, for methodological and systemic reasons, a kind of research exception on the plane of contemporary philosophical conceptions. The conception of metaphysics he proposes shows an original attempt to formulate important philosophical problems anew.

Maryniarczyk reflected on the system of metaphysics, which constitutes an adequate cognitive response to the way reality exists. He also reflected on the fundamental properties which influence the formulation of such a system. The research on metaphysical separation allowed him to indicate that, on the grounds of his conception of metaphysical philosophy, it constitutes a basic research method. The method of separation was developed on the basis of discerning the object of metaphysics, taking into account the manner of its existence, as well as guaranteeing the realism of cognitive approaches. Maryniarczyk also developed the metaphysical theory of creation *ex nihilo*, which played an important role in his realistic metaphysics by introducing into the area of philosophical research the issue of the existence of the world, as well as the question about its source and ultimate cause.

The problems discussed in this article fully correspond with contemporary philosophical research. The presented considerations concerning Maryniarczyk's concept of metaphysical philosophy provide the starting point for further research on this issue. They might include such issues as: the character of the language of metaphysics, as well as the specific nature of explaining and justifying judgments in metaphysics. Due to the significance of these issues in contemporary literature, there arises a need to study them separately.



**Specific Research Elements in  
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SUMMARY

The paper deals with the specific nature of research in realistic metaphysics by Andrzej Maryniarczyk. The first part presents the method of realistic metaphysics, i.e., metaphysical separation, which constitutes the basic method of forming the understanding of being. The second part focuses on the characteristics of the system of metaphysics as a cognitive response to the existence of reality. The third part concentrates on the metaphysical theory of creation *ex nihilo*, showing the essential aspects of this theory. All the presented issues constitute important complements, which integrate the metaphysics practiced by A. Maryniarczyk into a whole.

KEYWORDS

Andrzej Maryniarczyk, realistic metaphysics, system of metaphysics, separation, being, creation *ex nihilo*.

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