

Thinking the Embodied Person with Karol Wojtyła

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Can the Body Be Thought?

IN THE EPIGRAPH TO HER BOOK *Bodies That Matter*, gender theorist Judith Butler quotes Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: “If one really thinks about the body as such, there is no possible outline of the body as such. There are thinkings of the systematicity of the body, there are value codings of the body. The body, as such, cannot be thought, and I certainly cannot approach it.”¹

The answer of Spivak and Butler to this quandary is to retreat from the field, abandoning the project of assigning meaning to the body. Better to engage the body in other ways than to try to approximate its concrete reality with bloodless abstractions that cannot come to the heart of the matter. Butler is famous for arguing that the body is not known, but performed in a complex activity of reiterating and resisting the power discourses that precede and envelop the human subject.²

¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “In a Word,” interview with Ellen Rooney, quoted from Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 1.

² Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006). See also Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” in *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*, ed. Sue-Ellen Case (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 270–82, and the discussion in Sarah Salih, *Judith Butler*, Routledge Critical Thinkers (New York: Routledge, 2002).

The loss of the body from thought is mirrored by the loss of the subject in recent philosophy, a development that witnesses to the intrinsic connection between the body and the concrete person. Hence the (in)famous “death of the subject” in postmodern thought.³ Nietzsche prophetically united the disparate threads of poststructuralist theory when he declared that “there is no ‘being’ behind doing, effecting, becoming; ‘the doer’ is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything.”⁴ Abandoning himself to the impersonal and uncertain mercies of the will to power, he bid a definitive farewell to “that little changeling, the ‘subject.’”⁵

While no poststructuralist, John Paul II has a similar appreciation for the difficulty of thinking the embodied person. He argues in his theology of the body that the realization of Adam and Eve that they were “naked” and “ashamed” (Gen 3:7) indicates a new and “specific difficulty in sensing the human essentiality of one’s own body” after the first sin.⁶ This difficulty arises out of a “fracture in the human person’s interior,” in which the body is no longer subject to the spiritual powers of knowing and loving. It is instead “a constant hotbed of resistance against the spirit and threatens in some way man’s unity as a person.”⁷ Seen through this theological lens, the dualism

³ For doubt on the materiality of the body, see Butler: “The regulatory norms of ‘sex’ work in a performative fashion to constitute the materiality of bodies and, more specifically, to materialize the body’s sex” (*Bodies That Matter*, 2). The “death of the subject,” while pervasively seen, has been problematized like every other theoretical attempt to order the chaos of postmodern thought. E.g., see Jacques Derrida: “The subject is absolutely indispensable. I don’t destroy the subject; I situate it” (discussion following “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” in *The Structuralist Controversy*, ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato [Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972], 271).

⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, First Essay, no. 13, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 481.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them*, trans. Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2006), 28:2, 243 (emphasis original; these theology of the body audience talks will be abbreviated TOB, followed by the audience-talk number and the paragraph number, and finally followed by the page number in the definitive English translation by Michael Waldstein [thus, this citation is paragraph 2 of talk 28, found on p. 243 of Waldstein]). As Thomas Aquinas observes, sins of lust are not the worst sins, but they tend to be the most enslaving (*Summa theologiae* [hereafter, *ST*] I-II, q. 73, a. 5, resp. and ad 2).

⁷ TOB, 28:2–3, 244.

of Rene Descartes—a lordly *res cogitans* over and against a rebellious *res extensa*—is a theoretical sedimentation of the experiences of postlapsarian man.⁸ For John Paul II, however, unlike Butler and Spivak, the body—and the person that the body expresses—can be thought. This meaning is appropriated by the subject in a moment of self-knowledge and self-possession (intellect and will). Rather than a flight from thinking, a certain kind of thinking is necessary—what Karol Wojtyła called “hot thinking” in a passage from his play *The Jeweler’s Shop*.

There, he presents three couples: two older (one happy, one not) and one younger. Of the young betrothed lovers, Christopher is the son of the happy couple, while Monica comes from the broken family. As Monica struggles with the immensity of love, Christopher responds to her question “why do you love me?” by observing, “Man must think differently, must leave cold deliberations—and in that ‘hot thinking’ one question is important: Is it creative?”⁹

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- ⁸ The *Discourse on Method* argues that the human “I” is identical to “the soul through which I am what I am,” a soul that “is entirely distinct from the body and is even easier to know from the body.” His *cogito* leads him to this conclusion: since he can pretend that he has no body but cannot pretend that he himself does not exist, he concludes, “I was a substance the whole essence or nature of which is simply to think, and which, in order to exist, has no need of any place nor depends on any material thing” (René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, part 4, Adam-Tannery no. 33, trans. Donald A. Cress, 4th ed. [Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1998], 19). Elsewhere, Descartes states simply, “*Ego sum res cogitans*” (*Second Meditation*, part 1, AT no. 27, at 65). Karol Wojtyła critiques this view as “a kind of hypostatization of consciousness: consciousness becomes an independent subject of activity.” That is, the person is replaced by consciousness and the body becomes one object among others within *res extensa*: “This view lacks a sufficient basis for including the body, the organism, within the structural whole of the person’s life and activity”; see Karol Wojtyła, “Thomistic Personalism,” in *Person and Community*, trans. Theresa Sandok, O.S.M., Catholic Thought from Lublin 4 (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 165–75, at 169. See also: the commentary by Kenneth L. Schmitz in *At the Center of the Human Drama: The Philosophical Anthropology of Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1993), 132–37; the “Introduction” by Michael Waldstein in TOB, 1–128, at 34–44; and Jarosław Kupczak, O.P., *Gift and Communion: John Paul II’s Theology of the Body*, trans. Agata Rottkamp, Justyna Pawlak, and Orest Pawlak (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 1–5 and 43–44.
- ⁹ Karol Wojtyła, *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 3, scene 2, in *Collected Plays and Writings on Theater*, trans. Boleslaw Taborski (Oakland: University of California Press, 1987), 313.

What is this “hot thinking”? Since it arises in the context of a drama and not a treatise, we do not get a systematic treatment of it. Is it just an appealing metaphor tossed off by a playwright? Or is there something more to be understood? I would like to propose that Wojtyła’s philosophical and theological project is intimately connected with elucidating this “hot thinking.” He wants to unpack how embodied moral action forms and perfects the human personal subject. This action, however, occurs within the context of meaning (“thinking”). How is it that thought can adequately grapple with the realities intrinsic to concrete human persons, such as the body? Is it possible to think the body and particular human persons?

This essay will explore this question through analyzing the philosophical and theological works of Karol Wojtyła.¹⁰ In the next part, I will develop more carefully the distinction that Wojtyła makes between man as an individual and as a person in order to see the challenge of thinking the latter. My third section will develop the truly cognitive, as well as personal, nature of the experience of concrete particulars, while the fourth will explore the importance of the will in self-determination. These two sections will show how Wojtyła develops his “hot thinking” as an activity engaging both of man’s spiritual powers. The fifth part will then elucidate the role of the body in this activity, because (as I will show) the knowledge of particulars engages the whole person. I will conclude with a proposal for further development of this theme.

Thinking the Person: Metaphysics in Motion

In Karol Wojtyła’s philosophical work, he returns frequently to the question of the status of the concrete person, who is more than an individual of the human species (although every human person is also that). He examines this question through a composite methodology:

¹⁰ Cf. the elegant treatment of the same theme by Adrian J. Reimers, “Truth about the Human Person,” in Miguel Acosta and Adrian J. Reimers, *Karol Wojtyła’s Personalist Philosophy: Understanding Person & Act* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 67–83. Reimers resolves his treatment of the question through an analysis of interpersonal relations and the experience of entrusting oneself to another, relying especially on John Paul II’s development of the theme of sexual union described as “knowledge” in Gen 4:1 (exegeted in TOB, audiences 20–21). I will also treat the same theme in my fifth section, below. My approach to the topic of this essay is somewhat different: how can a person know not only another particular person but also oneself and one’s body?

first by taking a metaphysical snapshot, as it were, of the person, and then by observing the person as an actor in history.¹¹

In the first place, then, Wojtyła takes pains to affirm an ontology of the person as substance, or *suppositum*, relying on Boethius's definition

¹¹ This critique raises the important question of the actual compatibility of Wojtyła's method and project with Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy, a question that cannot be addressed adequately here. See one defense by Wojtyła himself in "The Person: Subject and Community," from *Person and Community*, 219–61, at 228. Future references to this essay will be abbreviated "Person: S&C." For a summary of the Lublin School of Philosophy and its focus on "the primacy of realistic metaphysics, the central role of philosophical anthropology, and the affirmation of a rational approach to philosophy," see Stefan Swiezawski, "Introduction: Karol Wojtyła at the Catholic University of Lublin," in *Person and Community*, ix–xvi, at xiii. For Thomistically inclined scholarly readings of the corpus of Wojtyła / John Paul II that are skeptical about his methodology, see: John J. Conley, S.J., "Philosophy and Anti-Philosophy: The Ambiguous Legacy of John Paul II," in *Karol Wojtyła's Philosophical Legacy*, ed. Nancy Mardas Billias, Agnes B. Curry, and George F. McLean, Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change, series 1, vol. 35 (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2008), 33–43; and the Polish critiques summarized in Jarosław Kupczak, O.P., *Destined for Liberty: The Human Person in the Philosophy of Karol Wojtyła / John Paul II* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 76–80. Most contemporary analyses argue that the philosopher-Pope integrates metaphysics and phenomenology successfully; see, among others, Adrian J. Reimers, "The Thomistic Personalism of Karol Wojtyła (Pope John Paul II)," in *Atti del IX congresso tomistico internazionale*, vol. 6, *Storia del tomismo fonti e riflessi* (Vatican City: Pontificia Accademia di S. Tommaso, 1992), 364–69; Kenneth L. Schmitz, *At the Center of the Human Drama: The Philosophical Anthropology of Karol Wojtyła / Pope John Paul II* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1993); Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty and Gift and Communion*, 1–29; George F. McLean, O.M.I., "Karol Wojtyła's Mutual Enrichment of the Philosophies of Being and Consciousness," in Mardas Billias, Curry, and McLean, *Karol Wojtyła's Philosophical Legacy*, 15–29; Aquinas Guilbeau, O.P., "Was the Polish Pope a French Personalist? An Indication from *Evangelium Vitae*," *Nova et Vetera* (English) 13, no. 4 (Fall 2015): 1229–44; Acosta and Reimers, *Karol Wojtyła's Personalist Philosophy*; and Thomas Petri, O.P., *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body: The Thomistic Foundations of John Paul II's Anthropology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2016). For a comparison of Wojtyła's method with that of Stein, Husserl, and Blondel, see Emmanuel Gabellieri, "Phénoménologie et métaphysique: De Husserl, E. Stein, et Blondel à Karol Wojtyła," *Recherches philosophiques* 5 (2009), 59–74. Borrowing from Rodrigo Guerra López, Acosta summarizes attempts to classify Wojtyła's method under three headings, in "Karol Wojtyła, Philosopher," in *Karol Wojtyła's Personalist Philosophy*, 13–38, at 33–37.

of the person as *rationalis naturae individua substantia*.¹² The self cannot be reduced to consciousness (although consciousness plays an important role in the dynamic formation of the self, as I will show later).¹³ Rather, as *individua substantia*, the person has a metaphysical stability that endures through all conscious experiences and acts. If the person is a substance, then he is a subject of his existence and activity.¹⁴ As Rocco Buttiglione observes, “Being connected with reality through the concept of person, [the substance] is not free to transform itself, as happens in Hegel, into a hypostatized idea of which the empirical subject is a mere carrier or exemplification.”¹⁵ Neither can it melt away into discourses of power, as Butler and her fellow poststructuralists would have it.

¹² Cf. the title of no. 3 in part 1, ch. 2, of Karol Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn* (rendered in the English translation as *The Acting Person*): “The Synthesis of Operativity and Subjectivity: Man as ‘Suppositum.’” The English translation of *Osoba i Czyn* indefensibly translates this title as “The Synthesis of Efficacy and Subjectiveness: The Person as a Basic Ontological Structure”—a translation that neatly obscures the metaphysical tradition with which Wojtyła is in dialogue. Other (mis)translations of *suppositum* in the English translation include: “ontological basis,” “structural foundation,” “ontological foundation,” “basic structure,” and “structural support,” thereby replacing a single, precise term of art (*suppositum*) with multiple ciphers. Others have pointed out the problems with the English translation, beginning with the less-than-literal translation of the title (*The Acting Person*, trans. Andrzej Potocki, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Analecta Husserliana* series [Boston: D. Reidel, 1979]). For a summary of the translation’s problems, see Schmitz, *At the Center*, 58–60. In this essay, I will give my own translations from the Italian translation of *Osoba i Czyn* (*Persona e Atto*, trans. Giuseppe Girgenti and Patrycja Mikulska, in Karol Wojtyła, *Metafisica della Persona: Tutte le Opere Filosofiche e Saggi Integrativi*, ed. Giovanni Reale and Tadeusz Styczeń, trans. revised by Giuseppe Girgenti [Milan, IT: Bompiani, 2003/2014], 831–1216). In the footnotes, I will provide the section numbers, followed by pagination both for AP (the English translation) and P&A (the Italian translation).

¹³ Wojtyła, “Person: S&C,” 227.

¹⁴ Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 1, ch. 2, no. 3: “The subjectivity of man . . . has found expression, in the philosophy developed according to the principles of Aristotle and of Thomas Aquinas, in the concept of *suppositum*. . . . The term *suppositum* indicates being-subject or rather the subject-as-being. . . . *Suppositum* exists as a subject of existence and of action” (AP 72–73 / P&A 926). The English translation, among other problems, omits the reference to Aristotle and Thomas. See also Wojtyła, “Person: S&C,” 222, and especially 225: “The *suppositum humanum* must somehow manifest itself as a human self: metaphysical subjectivity must manifest itself as personal subjectivity.”

¹⁵ Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became John Paul II*, trans. Paolo Guietti and Francesca Murphy (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 88.

As a result, the metaphysics of the person provides an indispensable anchor in a liquid world. Personalist anthropologies that reject this metaphysical anchor eventually reduce the person to his experiences or his attributes. In contrast, Wojtyła's metaphysically grounded anthropology is founded on a "fundamental thesis" (according to Jan Galarowicz)—namely, "that the essence of human existence consists in human interiority."¹⁶ In his theology of the body, John Paul II will explain this interiority using the biblical category of the "heart." A metaphysical understanding of the person provides the necessary safeguard of human interiority and, hence, the identity of the self. "Metaphysical subjectivity, or the *suppositum*, as the transphenomenal and therefore fundamental expression of the experience of the human being, is also the guarantor of the *identity of this human being* in existence and activity."¹⁷ This metaphysical anchor enables the self to *subsist* through all the tempests brewing on the sea of experience.¹⁸

And yet, the anchor is not the last word about the bark. What is the reality that the *suppositum* anchors? That reality is, of course, the person existing and acting in history, revealing and simultaneously forming his "heart."¹⁹ In order to focus on this reality, Wojtyła distinguishes between an individual *suppositum* and a personal subject.²⁰

¹⁶ Jan Galarowicz, *Człowiek jest osobą. Podstawy antropologii filozoficznej Karola Wojtyły* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Papieskiej Akademii Teologicznej, 1994), 31, trans. and quoted in Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 5.

¹⁷ Wojtyła, "Person: S&C," 223 (emphasis mine).

¹⁸ See also Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter on Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), no. 68: "We all build our own 'I' on the basis of a 'self' which is given to us. Not only are other persons outside our control, but each one of us is outside his or her own control. *A person's development is compromised, if he claims to be solely responsible for producing what he becomes*" (emphasis original, accessed October 30, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html).

¹⁹ The metaphor limps here in that it might imply that the lived reality of the human person is somehow detachable from the metaphysical, that there is a metaphysical "part" of the person, rather than the whole person (the whole boat) itself being the *suppositum*, which is the subject of his activity. Such are the limitations of spatial analogies. The directionality in the metaphor, however, does at least include an echo of the "standing under" found in the terms *substance*, *hypostasis*, and *suppositum*.

²⁰ See the treatment in Paul Kucharski, "What Does It Mean To Be 'Incommunicable' and Why Does It Matter?" in *Thomas Aquinas: Teacher of Humanity*, Proceedings from the First Congress of the Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas Held In the United States, ed. John P. Hittinger and Daniel C. Wagner

He notes: “By subjectivity here, I am no longer referring to just the *suppositum* as the subject in the metaphysical sense; I am also referring to everything that, based upon this *suppositum*, makes the human being an individual, personal subject.” In other words, he is probing the reality that a person, while being this particular *suppositum*, is not merely a *suppositum*, but also a unique person who is not interchangeable with other persons. “Neither the concept of nature (as ‘rational’) nor its individualization seems to capture that specific fullness that echoes in the concept of person.”²¹

In his essay “Subjectivity and the Irreducible in the Human Being,” Wojtyła explores how we know man according to the Aristotelian epistemological tradition. We can come to know what man is as a species within the natural world. Such concept formation through the abstraction from sense experience is essential.²² And yet, there remains a “basic irreducibility of the human being to the natural world,” an irreducibility grounded in his “primordial uniqueness.” Each individual human being is also, in other words, a *person*, not merely “reducible” to the natural world or to the species.²³ Every person, unlike the rest of creation, is simultaneously both a (potential) object of thought and also a subject.

Every person’s experience of himself confirms his own dual nature: a person is always both subject and object to his own reflection. I experience both myself and others as ones who both exist and act. Yet, while I objectively experience others’ existence and acts, when it comes to myself, I have both an objective experience of my exis-

(Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 58–67, in which he addresses and critiques positions held by Linda Zagzebski and John Crobby but ultimately seems to support Wojtyła’s approach.

²¹ Wojtyła, “Person: S&C,” 223. Cf. Karol Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. Grzegorz Ignatik (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2013), 3–7.

²² Karol Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible in the Human Being,” from *Person and Community*, 209–17, at 211.

²³ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 211 (*italics original*). See also Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 1, ch. 2, no. 4, especially the section headed “Definition of the Subject (the Foundation) of Action through ‘Nature’” (rendered more concisely but imprecisely in the English translation as “Nature Defines the Subjective Basis of Acting”): “Nature does not signify a real and concrete subject of being and acting; it is not identified with the *suppositum*. Nature can only be an abstract subject (*in abstracto*). Thus, for example, in speaking of human nature, we indicate something that really exists only in a concrete man as *suppositum* and, beyond that, does not have real existence” (AP 76–77 / P&A 930–31).

tence and acts and an experience of myself as a subject.²⁴ This situation Wojtyła calls existence “between the *suppositum* and the human self.”²⁵ Aristotelian epistemology grasps the human being mainly as an *object*, but what is “irreducible” about each person concerns her *subjectivity*. Indeed, “subjectivity” serves as “a kind of synonym for the irreducible in the human being.” An adequate grasp of this difference requires a distinct methodology.²⁶

In the Aristotelian tradition, Boethius’s definition of person emphasizes individuality—one of a species—rather than “the uniqueness of the subjectivity.”²⁷ Wojtyła contends: “Thus the Boethian definition mainly marked out the ‘metaphysical terrain’—the dimension of being—in which personal human subjectivity is realized, creating, in a sense, a condition for ‘building upon’ this terrain on the basis of experience. The category to which we must go in order to do this ‘building’ seems to be that of lived experience.”²⁸ This is a distinctively modern question, an answer to which will require new resources.²⁹

²⁴ Wojtyła, “Person: S&C,” 221.

²⁵ The subheading in “Person: S&C,” 221.

²⁶ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 211. The subtlety of Wojtyła’s thought on this score is understated by Buttiglione, who elides Wojtyła’s treatment of man as a human being (an individual of the species) with man as a person. Buttiglione maintains that Wojtyła’s position is that “we have no positive knowledge of the human being, inasmuch as he or she is an image of God.” Buttiglione then argues that Wojtyła allows knowledge of human beings as part of the animal kingdom, but he disallows “any knowledge at a more profound level, the level which is constitutive of humanity” (Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła*, 52). Prescinding from the question of knowledge of man qua *imago Dei*, I would argue that Wojtyła recognizes the ability to attain “positive knowledge” of man qua species (“humanity”)—that is, qua rational animal—through abstraction from experience. This knowledge is of more than the animality of man, in that it includes knowledge of man’s *rational* nature. But knowledge of a particular person qua particular is not a matter of abstraction. Wojtyła makes these distinctions in “Subjectivity and the Irreducible” and “Person: S&C,” as I will unfold here.

²⁷ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 212.

²⁸ Ibid. See the translator’s footnote 22 in *Love and Responsibility*, 302–3, in which the difference between *dóświadczenie* (“experience”) and *przeżycie* (“lived experience”) is discussed. He notes: “The context of lived-experience for Wojtyła is man’s experience of himself. When man experiences anything (even an object outside of himself), man also experiences himself, and precisely this experience (lived-experience) helps us understand man in himself. For this reason, lived-experience is a truly personalistic category.”

²⁹ Cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar, who contends that anthropology is an area in which the Church will need to develop new answers to the new modern

The distinction he raises between the metaphysical and the experiential will reassert itself in his later theological writings, in which the experiential is often called the “historical.”³⁰ The distinction is not meant to be a divide, because “the lived experience of our personal subjectivity is simply the full actualization of all that is contained virtually in our metaphysical subjectivity (*suppositum humanum*).”³¹

The defense for the distinction is not fully unpacked by Wojtyła, but it might be expressed as the following: in creating human persons within a world marked by space and time, God made them spiritual-material creatures who can act within history. They *are*, and they *act*, and the acting follows upon the being. In fact, the explanatory force of the theory of potency and act comes from being able to account for this “dynamic character of reality.”³² As Thomas Petri rightly observes, “The importance of the Aristotelian-Thomistic ontological distinction between act and potency cannot be underestimated in Wojtyła’s reading of the Angelic Doctor,” and, I would argue, in his entire corpus.³³ Because the person is a dynamic entity, capable of the movement from potency to act, he can also be fulfilled through moral action.³⁴

questions (*Test Everything: Hold Fast to What is Good: An Interview with Angelo Scola*, trans. Maria Shradý [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989], 24).

³⁰ See the beginning of TOB, in the transition from audience 2 to 3 (between 2:2 and 3:1), when he turns from the Elohist creation account of Gen 1 (which he summarizes as “metaphysical”) to the Yahwist creation account of Gen 2 (which gives a “subjective” and “psychological depth”) (TOB, 134–39). He introduces the phrase “historical man” in 4:1. This distinction between metaphysics and history depends upon the (conceptually prior) distinction of individual and person. It should be noted that, in all of these distinctions, Wojtyła does not mean to create dualisms, but rather interdependent binaries that can be distinguished by the mind to fruitful effect.

³¹ Wojtyła, “Person: S&C,” 232.

³² Karol Wojtyła, “The Problem of the Separation of Experience from the Act in Ethics in the Philosophy of Immanuel Kant and Max Scheler,” in *Person and Community*, 23–44, at 24. For an explication of *operari sequitur esse*, see Wojtyła, “Person: S&C,” 223–25, and Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 1, ch. 2, no. 3 (AP 71–75 / P&A 924–29, although the English translation omits Wojtyła’s quotations of *operari sequitur esse*). See also “Person: S&C,” 260n6: “In its basic conception, the whole of *The Acting Person* is grounded on the premise that *operari sequitur esse*: the act of personal existence has its direct consequences in the activity of the person (i.e., in action). And so action, in turn is the basis for disclosing and understanding the person.”

³³ Petri, *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body*, 107.

³⁴ Ibid., 108, citing Karol Wojtyła, “In Search of the Basis of Perfectionism in Ethics,” in *Person and Community*, 45–56, at 47. See also Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*,

The *structures* of both being and acting, including the mechanism of the fulfillment of the person through moral action, can be described in true concepts universally accessible to the mind. But the *actuation* of the potency latent in these structures—any given person’s being and acting—cannot be described in universal concepts.³⁵ Wojtyła asks if such a reliance on abstraction would not “in a sense leave out what is most human, since the *humanum* expresses and realizes itself as the *personale*.”³⁶

The living-out of a concrete life—defined and formed by metaphysical realities, to be sure—is not the matter of science, as Aristotle himself saw.³⁷ A life is metaphysics in motion. It is built out of experience, lived out in history. As Hans Urs von Balthasar puts it, “the best philosophy can do, as a human enterprise, is to arrive at the horizon of an abstract absolute *in the presence of which . . .* the historical is enacted.” As a result, Balthasar concludes, there can be no adequate philosophy of history.³⁸ History is not a matter of abstract universals playing themselves out inevitably. History is, rather, the temporal matrix in which freedom acts: the freedom of God and the freedom of man. This is because history, freedom, the personal—all these are concrete realities and events that develop out of the foundation of ontology but that put ontology into play. Precisely the concrete particularity of these realities led Gotthold Lessing to despair of ever crossing the “ditch” between accidental truths of history and necessary truths of reason. As Adrian Reimers puts the problem: “If truth is the correspondence between intellect and thing (*adequatio intellectus et rei*), what sense can we make of the correspondence between an intellect and something that is not fixed, between the mind and a

part 1, ch. 2, no. 1, especially the section “The *Potentia-Actus* Conjunction as the Conceptual Equivalent of Dynamism” (AP 63–64 / P&A 913–16).

³⁵ Hegel, or at least the left-Hegelian/Marxist camp, might beg to differ. I would contend, however, that such philosophies demonstrate both the achievements and the significant limitations of treating history in universal, philosophical-scientific categories.

³⁶ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 215.

³⁷ As did St. Thomas: “He knew very well that theology is not a science of the necessary, in the way that Aristotle conceived it, but an organization of contingent data received from revelation, upon which the theologian labors to find the arrangement of God’s design” (J.-P. Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1, *The Person and His Work*, trans. Robert Royal, rev. ed. [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005], 156).

³⁸ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*, vol. 4, *The Action*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), 74 (emphasis in the original).

being whose identity is based on his self-determination and his transcendence toward the good in general?”³⁹

Wojtyła names these “unfixed,” concrete realities “irreducible”—not reducible, that is, to a universal category. He argues: “The experience of the human being cannot be derived by way of cosmological reduction; we must pause at the irreducible, at that which is unique and unrepeatable in each human being, by virtue of which he or she is not just *a particular human being*—an individual of a certain species—but *a personal subject*.”⁴⁰ Both the metaphysical-cosmological and the personal-phenomenological methods are necessary to take into account the full richness of the human person. Wojtyła recognizes the danger of subjectivism here, but he believes that “a firm enough connection with the integral experience of the human being” (an experience marked both by objectivity and subjectivity) will “safeguard the authentic personal subjectivity of the human being in the realistic interpretation of human existence.”⁴¹

Our experience of love, he contends, especially confirms the importance of affirming and exploring the experience of subjectivity. I do not come to know and fall in love with a mere individual of the human species, fundamentally interchangeable with every other individual.⁴² Nor is it sufficient to explain my preference for *this* individual by pointing to a list of accidental qualities that mark off this particular substance of a rational nature from all others. Lovers

³⁹ Reimers, “Truth about the Human Person,” 77, quoting Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate* q. 1, a. 1. Reimers (67n1) cites Wojtyła’s “The Problem of Experience in Ethics,” in *Person and Community*, 116–17, and *Fides et ratio*, §§44 and 56, as evidence of the latter’s agreement with the Thomistic axiom.

⁴⁰ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 214.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Cf. Karol Wojtyła, “Participation or Alienation?” in *Person and Community*, 197–207, at 200–201: “Thus the reality of the *other* does not result principally from categorical knowledge, from humanity as the conceptualized essence ‘human being,’ but from an even richer lived experience, one in which I as though transfer what is given to me as my own *I* beyond myself to *one of the others*, who, as a result, appears primarily as a different *I*, another *I*, my *neighbor*. . . . Participation in the humanity of other people, of *others* and *neighbors*, does not arise primarily from an understanding of the essence ‘human being,’ which is by nature general and does not bring us close enough to the human being as a concrete *I*. Rather, participation arises from consciously becoming close to another, a process that starts from the lived experience of one’s own *I*. . . . The *I-other* relationship is not universal but always interhuman, unique and unrepeatable in each and every instance.”

who do this in trying to explain their choice of beloved to others sense how inadequate the whole project is. When Christopher tells Monica that “hot thinking” is required in order to explain why he loves *her* (and not just her qualities), he is circling around this reality. Christopher’s choice of Monica is not thought-less. But neither is it explicable using the categories of abstraction. As Wojtyła puts it elsewhere: “The value of the person himself must be clearly distinguished from the various values that inhere in the person.”⁴³ On the level of the personal and irreducible, another kind of thinking (“hot” or experiential thinking) is required.

Wojtyła is at pains to affirm that such thinking is truly rational and not an emotional or merely intuitive process (although these other elements will be in play). In fact, while “lived experience essentially defies reduction [to an abstraction],” he insists: “This does not mean, however, that it eludes our knowledge; it only means that *we must arrive at the knowledge of it differently, namely, by a method or means of analysis that merely reveals and discloses its essence.*”⁴⁴ This method is that of phenomenology, which Wojtyła hopes will be able to grasp the subjectivity of the human person *objectively* (for this is necessary for all knowing), but not with the method of abstraction.⁴⁵ Phenomenology can supplement metaphysics, he believes, because it is a method that is capable of grasping the concrete subject qua personal and not qua “reducible to the world.”⁴⁶

⁴³ Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 104.

⁴⁴ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 215 (italics original). One of his opponents in this matter is Max Scheler, who reduces the ethical act to an emotional (non-rational) experience of value, which governs an intentional act. In this formulation, Scheler rejects a role for the reason in apprehending a good in the object of the intentional act; the result is an “emotional intuitionism” in which ethics begins and ends with emotion, with little role to be played by reason and will. See “The Problem of the Separation,” 23–44, especially 34–35 and 37–38, and also the treatments in Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 6–24, Petri, *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body*, 98–105, and Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła*, 54–82.

⁴⁵ He clearly recognizes phenomenology’s limits, however, most lengthily in his habilitation entitled (in translation) *On the Possibility of Constructing a Christian Ethics on the Basis of the System of Max Scheler*, completed in 1959 (*Ocena możliwości zbudowania etyki chrześcijańskiej przy założeniach system Maksza Schelera* [Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1959]). See also the previous footnote for more on his analysis of Scheler, the phenomenologist with whom Wojtyła has the most sustained engagement.

⁴⁶ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 211. See also 216: “This personal human subjectivity is a determinate *reality*: it is a reality when we strive to

At this point, however, an objection might be justly raised: the phenomenological method may be all very well for those still aiming for a scientific (i.e., philosophical) knowledge of the person, but such an approach is surely not what Christopher means when he, by all accounts an ordinary love-besotted mortal and no philosopher, proposes “hot thinking” to Monica. Such “hot thinking” is not so much the philosophical examination of experience (as in phenomenology), but the lived-experience itself. I will develop below the reasons why Wojtyła argues that lived-experience is not irrational. But first it is important to be clear that phenomenology is not lived-experience; rather, it tries to describe and understand better this experiential knowing. The phenomenological method justifies the rationality of such “hot thinking” by analyzing it, but the “hot thinking” itself does not necessarily analyze. In fact, such experiential thinking is done by every person *qua* person, not by phenomenologists *qua* philosophers (although hopefully by them *qua* persons). The next section will now explore more closely how experience is rational in Wojtyła’s formulation of how to know concrete particulars such as the body.

Experience as Rational and Personal

Wojtyła maintains that lived-experience is already rational, even if it is not yet thematized or analyzed in phenomenology. He argues that, in order to defend a “consistent realism,” we must recognize that experience is the first moment of cognition. Experience is not only sensory but also intellectual. Hence, “one could say that human experience is already always a kind of understanding.”⁴⁷ The “Introduction” to his

understand it within the *objective totality* that goes by the name *human being*. . . . The [phenomenologically inclined] thinker seeking the ultimate philosophical truth about the human being no longer moves in a ‘purely metaphysical terrain,’ but finds elements in abundance testifying to both the materiality and the spirituality of the human being, elements that bring both of these aspects into sharper relief” (italics original).

⁴⁷ Karol Wojtyła, “The Personal Structure of Self-Determination,” in *Person and Community*, 187–95, at 188. He prefaces this statement by asserting, “Experience is always the first and most basic stage of human cognition, and this experience, in keeping with the dual structure of the cognizing subject, contains not only a sensory but also an intellectual element” (ibid.). On the rational aspect of experience, see Adrian J. Reimers, “Reason and Faith in the Philosophy of Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II,” in Acosta and Reimers, *Karol Wojtyła’s Personalist Philosophy*, 41–102, especially 41–66.

work *Osoba i Czyn* presents an extended defense of experience as both rational and personal. Indeed, the inspiration for the text is (as the first sentences tell us) the “need to demonstrate the objective aspect of that great cognitive process that can be defined, at its origins, as the experience of man.” Indeed, the experience man has of himself in all of his experiences is the “richest” but also “perhaps the most complex” experience.⁴⁸

Wojtyła develops the importance of experience for knowing the person elsewhere. In two essays, one from the mid-1950s and the other from 1969, he defends the necessity of experience in ethics against Kantian “apriorism” while recognizing that “experience” is not an unambiguous term. It must be properly understood in order to avoid a relativism or subjectivism that would eliminate moral norms. The basis for genuine ethical experience is an experience of causation, in which I experience myself both as subject and as object.⁴⁹ In ethical action, this experience is “the awareness that I am performing a certain action, that I am its author,” and that awareness “brings with it a sense of responsibility for the moral value of that action.” A person has an experience of herself both as a person and as a moral actor: “I then experience myself, my own person, as the efficient cause of the moral good or evil in the action, and through this I experience the moral good or evil of my own person.”⁵⁰ This

⁴⁸ Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, introduction, no. 1, AP 1 / P&A 831. For treatments of his methodology utilizing lived-experience, see: Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 66–76; Miguel Acosta, “The Anthropology of *Person and Act*,” part III in Acosta and Reimers, *Karol Wojtyła’s Personalist Philosophy*, 105–243, especially 125–31; Costantino Esposito, “L’esperienza dell’essere umano nel pensiero di Karol Wojtyła,” in *La filosofia di Karol Wojtyła*, Atti del Seminario di studi dell’Università di Bari (Bologna, IT: CSEO, 1983), 17–43; Bernard Hubert, “L’expérience de l’homme selon *Personne et acte*,” *Recherches philosophiques* 5 (2009): 95–112; and Deborah Savage, “The Centrality of Lived Experience in Wojtyła’s Account of the Person,” *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 61, no. 4 (January 2013): 19–51.

⁴⁹ See also Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 1, ch. 2, “An Analysis of the Operativity Underlying the Dynamism of Man,” in AP 60–101 / P&A 909–62.

⁵⁰ Karol Wojtyła, “The Problem of the Separation,” 23. This article dates from the 1955–1957 edition of *Roczniki Filozoficzne*. This experience of the “I” as the efficient cause of its own actions is the primordial ethical experience of the will, an experience that both Kant and Scheler fail to understand, according to Wojtyła. See Karol Wojtyła, “The Problem of the Will in the Analysis of the Ethical Act,” in *Person and Community*, 3–22, and Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 28–41.

fundamental ethical experience is, according to Wojtyła, the basis for any further philosophizing about human action, and he believes that one of the significant weaknesses of Kantian ethical theory is that it cannot account for this universal ethical experience.⁵¹

And yet, a mere description of ethical experience, à la sociology or psychology, also fails to do justice to this fundamental ethical experience.⁵² In his 1969 article, “The Problem of Experience in Ethics,” Wojtyła deepens his analysis of experience by discussing the engagement of the human person with a “phenomenon.” A “phenomenon” is “something that ‘manifests itself’ to us, something that affects our cognitive powers in a perceptible way.”⁵³ It initiates a *cognitive* and not merely *sensory* response in us, contra empiricism and Kantianism.⁵⁴ Experience of a phenomenon is the activation of cognition. And experience is not a purely subjective activity: perception of an object is “the very heart of experience.”⁵⁵ Cognition through experience always accesses a reality that transcends the mind’s own structures (contra idealism). Otherwise the restlessness of the human mind in the perpetual search for truth would not be intelligible.⁵⁶ This is true even when the object being experienced is oneself: “the subject, or

⁵¹ “This whole lived experience [of an ‘I’ acting ethically] has a thoroughly empirical character, and it is upon this empirical fact that ethics as a science is based. The fact that ethics is a normative science can in no way obscure the fact that it is deeply rooted in experience. And so ethics, a normative science, is also an empirical science, because it is based on authentic ethical experience” (Karol Wojtyła, “The Problem of the Separation,” 23). Wojtyła’s analysis in this article is as follows: in rejecting the “outward” directionality of the will in genuine ethical action, Kant reduces all movement of the will toward external goods to the simple motives of achieving pleasure and avoiding pain, which can only infect the ethical act with preferences that might conflict with duty. This Kantian position goes hand in hand with a rejection of the Aristotelian–Thomistic analysis of the ethical act as a motion from potency to act (hence the title’s reference to the separation of experience from the ethical act). See “The Problem of Separation,” especially 23–32, 40–43.

⁵² See Karol Wojtyła, “The Problem of Experience in Ethics,” in *Person and Community*, 107–27, at 111.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 114.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 115–17. He argues that “there can be no purely sensory experience because we are not ‘purely sensory’ beings” (116).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 114.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 116: “Cognition must go beyond itself because it is realized not through the truth of its own act (*percipi*) but through the truth of a transcendent object—something that exists (*esse*) with a real and objective existence independently of the act of knowing.”

self, can also be an object of this kind, since the subject also resides beyond the concrete *hinc [sic] et nunc* cognitive act and is transcendent in relation to it.”⁵⁷ Indeed, the subject is always experienced along with the objects of his experience: “man is always himself, and hence also his experience of himself perdures in some way.”⁵⁸

This excursus into the nature of lived human experience underscores its necessarily cognitive, and also personal-subjective, character. In this way, “hot thinking” can earn its stripes as genuine thinking. Yet this creative thinking is not simply an activity of the intellect, but rather the activity of the whole person conscious of and determining himself in lived experience, as I will show next. In this activity, the personal integration of sense powers with the spiritual powers of reason and free will are “the principal means, so to speak, whereby the human person is actualized; based on their activity, the whole psychological and moral personality takes shape.”⁵⁹ Upon this basis arises the efficient activity of the person as ethical agent. In the holistically integrated life of the *compositum humanum*, expressed especially in ethical action, the human person can assimilate the varied truths of the world and respond ethically in a way that develops himself as virtuous and as unique.

Willing the Person: Creative Self-Determination

In addition to self-knowledge, the full richness of personal experience in “hot thinking” as opposed to “cold deliberation” also incorporates what Wojtyła calls “self-determination.” Only the person is capable of such self-determination, because only the person can determine her ends for herself, whether well or badly.⁶⁰ This activity engages both the intellect (in judging what is true) and the will (in choosing the true as a good).⁶¹ From an ethical perspective, this self-determination forms the

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, introduction, no. 1, AP 3 / P&A 831.

⁵⁹ Wojtyła, “Thomistic Personalism,” 168. He contends that St. Thomas is “well aware” of the unity of all the faculties of the soul (the vegetative and animal, as well as spiritual, powers) acting together for the development of the human person in his integrity (ibid., 169). This unified vision is in contrast to phenomenology, which, in its over-emphasis on intention, flattens the process of human self-determination to the horizontal reduction of a will wanting something of value (“Personal Structure,” 190–191, *inter alia*). Such a method factors out the transcendent.

⁶⁰ Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 97.

⁶¹ See Wojtyła, “Personal Structure,” 190: “The will is the person’s power of the self-determination. . . . Self-determination takes place through acts of the will,

moral status of the person in a dynamic process of ethical becoming.⁶² In other words, my act of will directs me toward a particular good, yet in this will-act, “I myself not only determine this directing [toward a particular value], but through it I simultaneously determine myself as well.”⁶³ I experience myself as the efficient cause of my acts, but in acting, I do more: I am “in some sense the ‘creator of myself.’”⁶⁴

This is what Wojtyła calls “the *personal* structure of self-determination.”⁶⁵ Our will points not only outward to a “value” (as phenomenology emphasizes), but even more importantly, inward, toward the subject-formation of oneself.⁶⁶ “Through self-determination, the human being becomes increasingly more of a someone in the ethical sense, although in the ontological sense the human being is a ‘someone’ from the very beginning.”⁶⁷ Every person is already a personal

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- through this central power of the human soul. And yet self-determination is not identical with these acts in any of their forms, since it is a property of the person as such.” In fact, he continues, even though the act of the will itself is an accident, freedom pertains to the substance, i.e., the person: “it is the person’s freedom, and not just the will’s freedom, although it is undeniably the person’s freedom through the will.” See also Wojtyła, “Problem of the Will,” 14–15, and Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 2, ch. 3, no. 4, “The Will as the Power of the Self-Determination of the Person,” AP 120–124 / P&A 984–88, but also part 2, ch. 3, no. 7, “The ‘Truth about the Good’ as the Basis for the Decision and for the Transcendence of the Person in the Act,” AP 135–39 / P&A 1003–9, especially the section entitled “The Reference of the Will to the Truth as the Intrinsic Principle of Decision.” For more on the importance of the intellect’s posing true goods to the will, see Adrian Reimers, *Truth about the Good: Moral Norms in the Thought of John Paul II*, Faith and Reason: Studies in Catholic Theology and Philosophy (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2011), and Petri, *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body*, 11–44. Savage explicates the role of judgment in “The Centrality of Lived Experience,” 40.
- ⁶² “Problem of the Will,” 20: “The person himself or herself *becomes* good or bad depending on the act performed.” Thus, Wojtyła argues, ethical self-determination is not just a matter of experience (phenomenology) or of a priori commands (Kant) or of values experienced emotionally (Scheler), but rather concerns the reality of the actual being of the person transformed by the ethical act. Here again can be seen the importance for Wojtyła of a robust understanding of potency and act.
- ⁶³ Wojtyła, “Personal Structure,” 191.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid. (emphasis mine). See also no. 1.4, “Efficacy and Self-Determination,” in “Person: S&C,” 228–32.
- ⁶⁵ As in the title of the essay “Personal Structure”; see also the title of Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 2, ch. 3, AP 105–48 / P&A 965–1019.
- ⁶⁶ Wojtyła, “Personal Structure,” 192.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.

subject (a *suppositum*), ontologically. Yet without the full experiential development of the person, the ontological structure will be like a skeleton, lacking the full enfleshed reality that the depth of the personal demands. Self-determination is not only a structural reality; it is also a moral demand.

“The dynamic structure of self-determination,” Wojtyła argues, “reveals to me that I am given to myself and *assigned to myself*.”⁶⁸ This language is typical of Wojtyła / John Paul II: the human person, including one’s body, is not a brute fact, but rather a *task* that the Creator assigns to each one.⁶⁹ I both *am* and *become*. I experience myself “as having continually to ‘achieve’ this dynamic structure of my self [*sic*], a structure that is given to me as self-possession and self-governance.”⁷⁰ The fundamental elements of the personal structure of self-determination, then, are self-possession and self-mastery, both forming a dynamism within the person.⁷¹

“Self-possession” refers to the reality of the human person expressed in the medieval phrase *persona est sui iuris*. A consequence of this self-possession is the ability to govern oneself, which is more than mere “self-control.” Self-mastery is the ability, proper only to persons, to direct one’s whole life and person in freedom with a power over oneself that is incommunicable.⁷² Wojtyła observes that the structures of both self-possession and self-mastery are dual, with an active and a passive pole. I both possess myself and allow myself to be possessed by myself. I both govern myself and allow myself to be governed by myself. The more active pole Wojtyła names “transcendence,” but he notes that it is possible only based on the corresponding passive pole, which he calls “integration.”⁷³ The self-creation of

⁶⁸ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 214 (emphasis mine).

⁶⁹ From the theology of the body audience talks: “The *Creator has assigned the body to man as a task, the body in its masculinity and femininity*,” and “in masculinity and femininity he assigned to him in some way his own humanity as a task” (TOB, 59:2, 360; emphasis original).

⁷⁰ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 214.

⁷¹ For this point, see Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 2, ch. 3, no. 1, AP 105–8 / P&A 965–68. “Self-mastery” is rendered as “self-governance” in some translations of the works of Wojtyła / John Paul II.

⁷² Ibid., AP 107 / P&A 967–68.

⁷³ Summarized in Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 3, ch. 5, no. 1, AP 189–90 / P&A 1071–73. For the importance of the teaching of *Gaudium et spes* to Wojtyła’s understanding of transcendence (and vice versa), see Pierre D’Ornellas, “Mgr Wojtyła et la constitution *Gaudium et Spes*: L’Église et la personne humaine,” *Recherches Philosophiques* 5 (2009): 185–204.

healthy persons requires integration, as we will see.⁷⁴

First, however, in order to grasp Wojtyła's emphasis on the *personal* structure of self-determination, it is important to understand that he means to counter the reduction of this process to the development of consciousness (a tendency common in modern thought).⁷⁵ Consciousness is an important aspect of the person's development: in consciousness, the objects of cognition are "interiorized" and made "a content of the subject's lived experience."⁷⁶ Consciousness, in other words, enables what is known through the cognitive structures of lived experience to become not merely objective, but also personal.

Yet consciousness does not replace the cognitive act itself. Consciousness is, rather, an important element within the cognitive act: it "endows this objectified content [gained through abstraction] with the subjective dimension proper to the human being as a subject."⁷⁷ In his mature thought, John Paul II will call the conscious encounter of the subject with an object of cognition "meaning." He will state in his theology of the body: "'Meaning' is born in consciousness *with the rereading of the (ontological) truth of the object*. Through this rereading, the (ontological) truth enters, so to speak, into the cognitive, that is, subjective and psychological dimension."⁷⁸ Meaning is an essential part of the process of self-determination, one that transcends mere consciousness and also mere conceptualization. "The 'meaning' of the body is not something merely conceptual. . . . *it is a way of living the body. It is the measure that the inner man—that is, the heart, to which Christ appeals in the Sermon on the Mount—applies to the human body with regard to its masculinity or femininity.*" This understanding of "meaning" is not relativistic: "That 'meaning' does not modify the reality in itself, that is, that which the human body is and does not cease to be in the sexuality that belongs to it,

⁷⁴ Cf. Adrian J. Reimers, *An Analysis of the Concepts of Self-Fulfillment and Self-Realization in the Thought of Karol Wojtyła, Pope John Paul II*, Problems in Contemporary Philosophy, vol. 48 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 109–41.

⁷⁵ For more on consciousness in Wojtyła, see his "Thomistic Personalism" critiquing the modern hypostasization of consciousness (as noted in footnote 4) and *Osoba i Czyn*, part 1, ch. 1, "Person and Act under the Aspect of Consciousness," AP 25–59 / P&A 861–908, as well as: Kupczak, *Destined for Liberty*, 95–112; Miguel Acosta, "Consciousness and Operativity," in Acosta and Reimers, *Karol Wojtyła's Personalist Philosophy*, 125–54; and Savage, "The Centrality of Lived Experience," 33–36.

⁷⁶ Wojtyła, "Person: S&C," 227.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ TOB, 119:1, 620.

independently of the states of our consciousness and our experiences.” He argues: “[Meaning that is] purely objective [is] in some sense ‘a-historical.’ In the present analysis, we, by contrast, take into account man’s historicity.”⁷⁹

In other words, consciousness enables objective truth to enter into the history of a subject—or, even, to enter into history through a subject—but consciousness replaces neither the object of knowing nor the subject who is conscious. “Consciousness alone is not yet that *I*, but it conditions the full manifestation of the *I* through action.”⁸⁰ Consciousness is necessary to the development of the personal “*I*,” but it is at the service of it, not isomorphic with it: “Consciousness is not an autonomous subject,” as one of Wojtyła’s subheadings puts it.⁸¹ Here again we can see that the phenomenological method (which tends to privilege consciousness) must be supplemented with an ontological approach.

Self-determination, then, transcends the development of consciousness. This self-development is the fundamental ethical task and remains the primordial goal of all ethical action. True personal integration will involve the entire psychosomatic reality of the person. In this complex, the spiritual soul as the form of the body functions as the integrating principle, an integration that the body both expresses and furthers.⁸² “The person, including the body, is completely entrusted to himself, and it is in the unity of body and soul that the person is the subject of his own moral acts.”⁸³

Yet self-determination is not automatic: it can fail, when self-possession and/or self-governance fail. Wojtyła singles out not the active (“transcendence”) but the passive pole (“integration”) as the moment

⁷⁹ TOB, 31:5, 255–56.

⁸⁰ Wojtyła, “Participation or Alienation?” 198 (italics original).

⁸¹ Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 1, ch. 1, no. 2, AP 33 / P&A 872.

⁸² Ibid., part 3, ch. 5, no. 5, AP 203–6 / P&A 1089–94.

⁸³ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical on the Splendor of the Truth *Veritatis splendor* (1993), §48, accessed October 30, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html. When Wojtyła lays out his “personalistic norm,” a variation on the Kantian maxim that persons can never be treated as means but only as ends, he modifies the original to emphasize that rational personhood means that the person can and must always freely choose her own ends. See Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 11. For the original, see Immanuel Kant, “Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten,” in *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft und andere kritische Schriften* (Cologne: Könnemann, 1995), 226. On the distinction between Kant and Wojtyła, see Ignatik’s footnote 18, in *Love and Responsibility*, 302.

at which self-determination eludes the subject due to the *disintegration* of the powers of self-possession and self-mastery. Such a person, he writes, is an “I” marked as “insubordinable” and “unpossessible.”⁸⁴ The result of such interior turmoil comes out in the other pole, the transcendent: namely, in the defective action of the person. “The defects and insufficiencies of integration become . . . the defects and insufficiencies of transcendence.”⁸⁵

How does this appear concretely? The lack of self-integration makes the person less a subject, leaving him susceptible to being used as an object. Man is created to be a “subject who decides his own actions in the light of the integral truth about himself, inasmuch as it is the original or fundamental truth of authentically human experiences.” John Paul II recognized that contemporary ideologies reduce man to “an object of certain technologies” rather “than the responsible subject of his own action.”⁸⁶ The disintegrated subject can mount little resistance. The contemporary ethos, privileging a shallow self fulfilled in passive consumerism, produces human objects rather than responsible subjects. Yet: “We are by nature creators, not just consumers. We are creators because we think.”⁸⁷ Successful self-determination is the “integration” of the spiritual powers of the person fully utilizing somatic reactivity and affectivity in pursuit of the true good in action (transcendence). “Disintegration” occurs when the *soma* and/or affectivity run the show, asserting control over the intellectual and volitional powers, instead of the other way around.⁸⁸

The self-mastery that integration requires is something other than the mere suppression of unruly bodily and emotional forces. Drawing on §21 of *Humanae Vitae*, in which Pope Paul VI speaks of the need of “self-mastery,” John Paul II argues that such self-mastery is not the lack of freedom, but rather the fruit of freedom. In speaking of prelapsarian man, he states that “self-mastery is indispensable *in order for man to be able to ‘give himself,’* in order for him to become a gift, in

⁸⁴ Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 3, ch. 5, no. 2, AP 194 / P&A 1078. He goes on to apologize for the neologisms.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ TOB, 23:3, 220.

⁸⁷ Wojtyła, “Thomistic Personalism,” 171.

⁸⁸ This sentence presents a very condensed summary of the explanation of psychic integration and affectivity given in Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 3, ch. 6, “Integration and the Psyche,” in AP 220–258 / P&A, 1112–63. See also the extensive discussion of sensuality and affectivity in Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 84–100.

order for him (referring to the words of the Council) to be able to ‘find himself fully’ through ‘a sincere gift of self’ (*Gaudium et Spes*, 24:3).⁸⁹ Only the truly free person is able to give herself away.

The paradigm of titanic control of the soul over the body, on the other hand, elides too easily into the modern, Cartesian project of the domination of nature by disembodied rationality.⁹⁰ In speaking of the ethical challenge of contraception, John Paul II argues: “The problem lies in maintaining *the adequate relationship* between that which is defined as ‘*domination . . . of the forces of nature*’ (HV 2) and ‘*self-mastery*’ (HV 21), which is indispensable for the human person. Contemporary man shows the tendency of transferring the methods proper to the first sphere to those of the second.”⁹¹ Modernity privileges *birth*-control, while Christianity calls for *self*-control, understood as self-mastery: an alternative between a technocratic solution to a bodily problem versus a spiritual solution to a spiritual problem. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts it: “The ‘mastery’ over the world that God offered man from the beginning was realized above all within man himself: *mastery of self*” (§377).⁹² Likewise, in the theology of the body, John Paul II insists: “This extension of the sphere of the means of ‘the domination of the forces of nature’ threatens the human person for whom the method of ‘self-mastery’ is and remains specific.”⁹³ The person is not made to be controlled externally by technology, but rather to develop himself in integrated self-mastery.

Such personal integration in the task of self-mastery leads to the freedom of self-gift. “Man is *person precisely because he is master of himself and has dominion over himself*. Indeed, inasmuch as he is master over himself he can ‘give himself’ to another.”⁹⁴ Wojtyła / John Paul II does not connect self-mastery to self-gift arbitrarily: here again are

⁸⁹ TOB, 15:2, 186 (emphasis and reference in the original).

⁹⁰ See Waldstein, “Introduction,” in which he singles out not only Descartes but also Francis Bacon and Kant as contributors to a modern technocratic mindset (TOB, 34–63).

⁹¹ TOB, 123:1, 630–31 (reference and emphasis original).

⁹² See also Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 2, ch. 3, no. 1, AP 106–7 / P&A 966–67, in which Wojtyła argues that self-governance refers to a greater reality of personal integration, rather than mere “control.” See also Angela Franks, “The Joy of Giving: Church Teaching on Contraception,” in *Women, Sex, and the Church*, ed. Erika Bachiochi (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2010).

⁹³ TOB, 123:1, 631.

⁹⁴ TOB, 123:5, 632 (emphasis original).

the two poles of self-determination, integration and transcendence. When a person achieves a certain level of integration, he can express himself in transcendence, which in turn furthers his integration. “In this way, somehow on the basis of this *suppositum*, the human self gradually both discloses itself and constitutes itself—and it discloses itself also by constituting itself.”⁹⁵ There exists, in other words, a virtuous circle between being and acting.

We may seem to be far afield from the original question of how to think the body, but the issue of integration returns us directly to the main topic. At this point in the argument, Wojtyła introduces the somatic constitution of the person: “The body determines the concreteness of man.”⁹⁶ In so doing, the body is the expression of the person. In fact, “the personal structure of self-governance and self-possession traverses . . . the body and is expressed in it,” because the actions that both reveal and develop this personal structure are expressed in the body.⁹⁷

In this way, Wojtyła provides an account for the dynamic role of the body in the formation of the self. His account also highlights why thinking the body is so challenging. Concreteness is essential to the body’s very definition: its function within the personal structure of man is to express the particularity that each person is. As the drumbeat of the theology of the body repeats: “The body expresses the person.”⁹⁸ This means that the body will always be not only the object of thought but an intrinsic element of the subject who is thinking. Whatever can be said about the person in this regard (i.e., regarding his concreteness) must be said of the body as well: we come to understand such concrete realities through “cold” abstractive thinking but also, and even more, through the “hot,” creative thinking that engages our entire psychosomatic and experiential reality in self-determination.

Discovering the Self through Embodied Experience

The lived-experience that leads to self-knowledge and self-determination does not happen in an isolated, warm room. Wojtyła observes, “The dynamic structure of self-determination reveals to me that I am

⁹⁵ Wojtyła, “Person: S&C,” 225.

⁹⁶ Wojtyła, *Osoba i Czyn*, part 3, ch. 5, no. 5, AP 203 / P&A 1090.

⁹⁷ Ibid., AP 204–5 / P&A 1091–92.

⁹⁸ Inter alia, TOB, 7:2, 154. See Kupczak, *Gift and Communion*, 41–92, for a careful tracing of this theme throughout the theology of the body.

given to myself and assigned to myself.”⁹⁹ I am given to myself as a task for myself. But the gift-task of the personal subject can be developed only in relationship with others, a phenomenon Wojtyła names “participation” in the pre-pontifical writings.¹⁰⁰ He later returns to the theme of knowledge through “participation” (embodied experience with other embodied persons), particularly in his theology of the body papal audience talks.

He argues there that the lived experience of one’s own embodiment forms, and is formed by, the subject, as has already been explored above. Hence, it is not mere primitivism that leads the author of the Yahwist creation account to describe the conjugal act between Adam and Eve as “knowledge,” as in Genesis 4:1 (“Adam knew Eve his wife, who conceived . . .”).¹⁰¹ The masculinity or femininity of a particular person “defines his personal identity and concreteness”—that is, as a *person* and not simply an individual.¹⁰² John Paul II observes that “‘knowledge’ in the biblical sense signifies that man’s ‘biological’ determination, on the part of his body and his sex, is no longer something passive but reaches a level and content specific to self-conscious and self-determining persons.”¹⁰³

But he moves the argument forward: the dramatic situation of human love enables the knowledge not only of oneself but also of another subject. Marriage as the sacrament of embodiment in a particularly concrete way facilitates creative and true thinking about the body and the person.¹⁰⁴ In “shared married life,” the two spouse-subjects in a sense “become one single subject” while remaining two.¹⁰⁵ In this way, the self-determination of the single subject is analogously enacted within a marriage when the two subjects form the single subject of their married life. And just as self-consciousness

⁹⁹ Wojtyła, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible,” 214.

¹⁰⁰ See the text at footnote 43, above, from Wojtyła, “Participation or Alienation?” summarizing and developing *Osoba i Człowiek*, part 4, ch. 7, in AP 261–99 / P&A 1167–1213.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Reimers, “Truth about the Human Person,” especially 77–83, on this theme, and Kupczak, *Gift and Communion*, 51–53.

¹⁰² TOB, 20:5, 208.

¹⁰³ TOB, 21:4, 212.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 96–100 and 126–27 (on integration) and 67–71 (reciprocity).

¹⁰⁵ TOB, 20:4, 207. See also TOB, 91:3–92:8, 480–487, which emphasizes the “essential bi-subjectivity” (91:4) that predominates while the married couple becomes a quasi-single subject of their shared life. Cf. the earlier treatments in *Love and Responsibility* at 67–68 (on reciprocity) and 78–83 (on spousal love).

is needed for the formation of the single subject, so too is it necessary for the formation of the quasi-single subject of the couple. As Adam gained self-consciousness through his knowledge of his own body, so too does each spouse learn about the “uni-subjectivity” of marriage through knowledge of the other spouse’s embodied person.

Hence, when the masculine body of Adam is received by Eve, she knows not only his body, but Adam himself. In the conjugal act, each person is “given” to the other as this particular personal subject, expressed in this particular masculine or feminine body. “And exactly *in this personal identity and concreteness as an unrepeatable feminine or masculine ‘I,’* man is ‘known’ when the words of Genesis 2:24 come true: ‘the man will unite with his wife, and the two will be one flesh.’”¹⁰⁶ Through spousal love: “The wife’s ‘I,’ I would say, becomes through love the husband’s ‘I.’ The body is the expression of this ‘I’ and the foundation of its identity.”¹⁰⁷ In this way, the thinking found within conjugal love exemplifies the love of the beloved as a personal subject and not merely as an individual of the species.¹⁰⁸ It is the love by which Christopher loved Monica in *The Jeweler’s Shop*.

John Paul II provides other examples (beyond married love) of the concrete experiences that must be understood by us as free rational agents. How does man ask about meaning and assimilate these “crucial moments” or “primary experiences” of human reality?¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ TOB, 20:5, 208 (emphasis original).

¹⁰⁷ TOB, 92:6, 485. See Reimers, “Truth about the Human Person,” for the importance of trust in knowing, expressed especially clearly in *Fides et Ratio* §31–32.

¹⁰⁸ See Waldstein, in his “Introduction,” for an explication of the “Sanjuanist triangle” of John Paul II, in which spousal love is the paradigmatic case of total self-gift in our human experience (TOB, 24). For the purposes of this investigation, spousal love is thus the apex of “hot thinking” between human persons in this life, but such thinking is the experiential structure of every love as it tends to self-gift. Spousal love is distinguished from other kinds of love by its totality, as Wojtyła specifies in *Love and Responsibility*. Spousal love is the only love wherein one gives away one’s “I” to be the possession of another “I,” a gift that can be safeguarded only within the loving reciprocal subjection (Eph 5:21; cf. TOB, 89:1–4, 472–74) of the sacrament of matrimony (*Love and Responsibility*, 78–83).

¹⁰⁹ The poles of birth and death in human existence are instructive examples. In *Evangelium Vitae*, John Paul II notes that “man is no longer capable of posing the question of the truest meaning of his own existence.” But further, he cannot “assimilate with genuine freedom” the “crucial moments” of birth and death, which he tries to control through technology. In assessing the mission field, the Pope traverses easily from meaning to living, as he argues that the

Through *living* them intelligently and freely. In this thoughtful and receptive living (“hot thinking,” not merely “cold deliberations”), the meaning of experience is revealed, and with it the meaning of the personally irreducible—the body and the embodied person.

Conclusion and a Proposal

As outlined here, Wojtyła develops a rich and provocative epistemology and anthropology of concrete personhood. We have seen that the embodied person knows himself through self-knowledge and self-determination. He pursues self-knowledge and self-determination by means of his concrete embodied experience (“lived-experience”), which is already cognitive. Hence, a person grasps concrete reality qua concrete through an embodied process of living out the reality intelligently and freely. I come to know my body not only through an abstract concept but even more through living out the reality captured by the concept: my body becomes “meaning” when its (objective) truth is “reread” and lived out by me as a subject. The achievement of this meaning requires that I integrate my embodied experience into my self-knowledge and that I form myself (“self-determination”) into “more” of a person through my ethical action. In this way, the body—and hence, the concrete, embodied person—can be known by concretizing abstract concepts in and through lived-experience. It is a knowing that is also a doing; it is a living subject’s creative engagement with objective truth. This is Wojtyła’s “hot thinking”: I know my body by living out my embodied life in accordance with the body’s objective truth. In the theology of the body, John Paul II will explicate at length this truth of the body as a “spousal meaning,” that we are made for self-gift. But that is a topic that requires its own treatment.

Yet, is this treatment of the knowledge of the embodied person satisfactory? One could justly argue that Wojtyła leaves us with a formal account of knowing the embodied person that stops short of explicating *what* precisely one knows (the material content). When Christopher knows Monica in his “hot thinking,” what does he know? For that matter, what does he know when he knows himself? To respond “the person,” as Wojtyła possibly would, can be called a

defect in meaning is immediately reflected in experience: “Birth and death, instead of being primary experiences demanding to be ‘lived,’ become things to be merely ‘possessed’ or ‘rejected’” (Encyclical Letter on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life *Evangelium Vitae* [1995], §22, accessed October 30, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html).

kind of methodological humility. Or it might be called a tautology.

I would like to propose a way out. As others have observed, “person” is a discovery that unfolded historically to meet the exigencies of the development of Christian doctrine.¹¹⁰ As Thomas Aquinas notes, it is what is most perfect in nature.¹¹¹ It straddles philosophy and theology. Philosophy can unpack the formal structures of personhood, via both metaphysics and phenomenology. But philosophy limps when it comes to saying precisely what the content of personhood is: does anything distinguish one person from another, beyond material individuation?

Balthasar argues that philosophy develops “person” as an individual member of the human species but cannot go farther to give “person” positive content.¹¹² Christoph Cardinal Schönborn, in his explication of “person” during the early Christological controversies, notes that a common solution (seen among, e.g., the Cappadocians) was to distinguish persons by accidental qualities. We have seen how unsatisfactory this solution is in the arena of human love; even

¹¹⁰ See, e.g.: Hans Urs von Balthasar, “On the Concept of Person,” in *Explorations in Theology*, vol. 5, *Homo Creatus Est*, trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), 114–25, and Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*, vol. 3, *The Dramatis Personae: Persons in Christ*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 208–20; and Joseph Ratzinger, “Concerning the Notion of Person in Theology,” *Communio* 13 (1990): 438–54. Wojtyła acknowledges that “theological personalism is prior to humanistic personalism” in Christian thought (“Thomistic Personalism,” 166), but he also notes that in Thomas as well there is philosophical access to a personal God through the realization that the person is *perfectissimum ens*, which analogously would apply to God (ibid., 167).

¹¹¹ ST I, q. 29, a. 3.

¹¹² Balthasar, “On the Concept of Person,” especially 114–15; cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 5.1: “When you ask ‘Three what?’ human speech labors under a great dearth of words. So we say three persons, not in order to say precisely, but in order not to be reduced to silence” (in *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill [Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1991], 189). Balthasar did not find the phenomenological method congenial, remaining instead firmly anchored within a Thomistic metaphysics and epistemology in his philosophical orientation (see, e.g., *My Work: In Retrospect* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993] and *Theo-Logic*, vol. 1, *Truth of the World*, trans. Adrian J. Walker [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000]). Wojtyła would most likely dispute Balthasar’s assessment of the limits of philosophy and propose supplementing the latter’s ontology with phenomenology. Balthasar might contend that phenomenology might fill out the formal structure of personhood but does little to explicate its material content. In other words, we still do not move beyond an individual of the human species.

more, it exposes a person to a kind of utilitarian quantification based upon qualities.¹¹³ A further precision, first proposed by Maximus the Confessor, helpfully distinguishes between *logos* and *tropos*: each human person *is* human (*logos*), but he enacts his human nature in a particular and unrepeatable way (*tropos*).¹¹⁴ This approach anticipates the real distinction laid out by Thomas Aquinas, in which a distinction is made between an essence (what something is) and its concrete act of existing. Thomas develops his emphasis on person as *subsistence* with his subtle correction of the Boethian definition into a “subsisting individual of a rational nature.”¹¹⁵ This line of thought gives an important reorientation to “person,” locating it less in the arena of essence and more as a concrete act of existence. But how much does this reorientation help our problem? Can we still think the concrete, embodied person, especially given that Thomas argues that being is not accessed through an act of conceptualization but in a judgment?¹¹⁶ Wojtyła develops *how* I know the body and the person; but *what* do I know when I know an embodied person?

I see a way forward in Balthasar’s postulate that the content of a person is found in mission, with the full Trinitarian content that the word “mission” implies.¹¹⁷ Where philosophy breaks off, theology can complete the question. What makes this particular *person* unique (and not merely an individual) is the mission given to him by God, a participation in the mission of the Son. The Son’s mission is not an

¹¹³ Christoph Cardinal Schönborn, *God Sent His Son: A Contemporary Christology*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010), 142–47.

¹¹⁴ See Opusculum 1:1036C, translated and exegeted in Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 49–59.

¹¹⁵ *ST* I, q. 29, a. 3 (my translation). See Gilles Emery, O.P., “Essentialism or Personalism in the Treatise on God in St. Thomas Aquinas?” trans. Matthew Levering, in *Trinity in Aquinas* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press at Ave Maria University, 2006), 165–208.

¹¹⁶ See especially in Thomas’s Commentary on the *De Trinitate* of Boethius, q. 5, a. 3, found in translation in Thomas Aquinas, *The Division and Methods of the Sciences*, Mediaeval Sources in Translation 3, trans. and intro. Armand Maurer (Toronto: PIMS, 1986), and discussed in Etienne Gilson, *Beings and Some Philosophers*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: PIMS, 1952), 190–204, and in John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being*, Monographs of the Society for Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy 1 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 24–62.

¹¹⁷ For a more detailed treatment of Balthasar on the question of knowing concrete particulars, see Jörg Disse, *Metaphysik der Singularität: Eine Hinführung am Leitfaden der Philosophie Hans Urs von Balthasars*, Philosophische Theologie 7 (Vienna, AT: Passagen, 1996).

accidental property but rather the temporal “extension” of his eternal Person.¹¹⁸ This material content fleshes out the formal structure of personhood and brings it to life. This approach is consonant with John Paul II’s treatment of mission (although he does not develop it in the terms used here—namely, the content of the person). I am unique because of my mission. It provides the dramatic content that structures and develops my personal life. Less this seem excessively functional, it should be noted that mission for Wojtyła is more about being than doing.¹¹⁹ Waldstein summarizes Wojtyła thus: “Mission is thus not in the first place an attitude of moral commitment in response to a moral duty, but a way of *being* that is rooted in the person of Jesus as the Son of God.”¹²⁰ Through “hot thinking,” I can know my embodied self, and *what* I know is not simply my human nature, but more significantly my mission, *who* God wants me to be. As Wojtyła says, the Christian in faith shares in the divine being-mission: “Thus he takes part in the ‘state of mission’ in which all the Church continually finds itself; and each individual is a unique, unrepeatable embodiment of the salvific ‘state.’”¹²¹

¹¹⁸ “Mission” in God signifies an eternal procession with a temporal term (*ST* I, q. 43, a. 2, ad 3).

¹¹⁹ Karol Wojtyła, *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*, trans. P. S. Falla (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980), 207: “[Mission] does not initially imply a function or institution, but defines the *nature* of the church and indicates its close link with the mystery of the divine Trinity through the mission of the Persons” (emphasis mine).

¹²⁰ Waldstein, “Introduction,” 93, glossing Wojtyła, *Sources of Renewal*, pt. 3, ch. 1, 203–18. See also the Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church *Ad Gentes*, §2, concerning the Church’s missionary nature: “The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father” (accessed October 30, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html). In other words, the Church is missionary by *nature*, prior to her deeds, just as the missions of the Son and Holy Spirit are extensions of their Persons and not simply roles taken on *ad extra*. See also John Paul II, Encyclical Letter on the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate *Redemptoris Missio* (1990), §23, exegeting John 17:21–23: “We are missionaries above all because of *what we are* as a Church whose innermost life is unity in love, even before we become missionaries *in word or deed*” (accessed October 30, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html; emphasis original).

¹²¹ Wojtyła, *Sources of Renewal*, 207.

This conclusion outlines one approach to the question of the material content of the concrete, embodied person. The supple resources of Wojtyła's thought, in both the questions he addresses and those he leaves unanswered, have brought us to this point, better able to engage the questions that remain man's perennial horizon. **N&V**