

Andrzej Maryniarczyk, S.D.B.

John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin
Poland

ON THE TRANSCENDENTAL PROPERTIES OF REAL BEINGS

If we want to make progress on the path of the rational cognition of the world of persons and things, we can do this by revealing their essential and universal properties and the laws that govern their being. Among these properties, the most important are as follows: to be a thing (that is, to have a concretely determined essence), to be one (that is, to be non-contradictory in itself), to be separate or distinct (that is, to be sovereign in being), and also to be a vehicle of truth, good, and beauty. Among the laws of being, in turn, we find the law of identity, the law of non-contradiction, the law of the excluded middle, the law of the reason of being, the law of finality, and the law of perfection. These laws primarily show the source and foundation of the rational order.

The World is Like a Book

The properties and laws listed above are the key by which we open the doors leading to the knowledge of the rationality and finality of the world of persons, animals, plants and things. The rationality of beings is manifested in the fact that particular beings realize in their

Editio prima (in Polish): Andrzej Maryniarczyk SDB, *Racjonalność i celowość świata osób i rzeczy* [The Rationality and Finality of the World of Persons and Things] (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2007), 13–18, 21–30.

existence the plan (or thought) developed by their Creator or maker. This plan is assigned to natural beings together with their essence, or is inscribed in human products under the form of a project, idea, or laws that our reason can discover.

St. Thomas Aquinas remarks: “It is clear, therefore, that . . . natural things from which our intellect gets its scientific knowledge measure our intellect. Yet these things are themselves measured by the divine intellect, in which are all created things—just as all works of art find their origin in the intellect of an artist . . . A natural thing, therefore, being placed between two intellects [the divine and the human intellect—completion by A. M.] is called *true* in so far as it conforms to either.”¹

The finality or teleology of the world comes to light when we discover that particular things in their existence realize a definite end that has been established by the will of the Creator or a maker. Therefore their existence has meaning. They are goods that come “from” someone and are at the same time addressed “to” someone. Thus we may say that natural things are put between two wills: the will of the Divine Creator and the will of man. Also we may say that real things are the end (purpose) of the appetite of our will. Our will—together with our intellect—discovers this end and orders all human action and conduct according to this end.

Aristotle writes: “For he [the philosopher] is the only one who lives looking toward nature and toward the divine and, just as if he were some good navigator who hitches the first principles of his life onto things that are eternal and steadfast, he moors his ship and lives life on his own terms.”²

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *The Disputed Questions On Truth*, trans. from definitive Leonine text by Robert W. Mulligan, Vol. 1: *Questions I–IX* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1952), q. 1, art. 2, c.

² Aristotle, *Protrepticus or Exhortation to Philosophy*, ed. & trans. D. S. Hutchinson and Monte Ransome Johnson (The Notre Dame Workshop in Ancient Philosophy,

The universal properties that have been mentioned constitute indispensable criteria for distinguishing between what is real and what is illusory, between what is from nature and what is from culture, between being and thought concerning being. The laws discovered by the reason, laws that govern the being of real things, show the deepest foundations of the world's rationality and finality. The human reason discovers these laws and, in turn, makes them laws of human rational cognition, conduct, and action. Thereby the reason, which is directed by the truth of things, becomes really rational (*recta ratio*), and the will directed by the good becomes really free (*recta voluntas*).

Not only can we know the world that surrounds us, but we can transform it. In this way we can make it subject to the laws of the spirit. In this way, along with the world of nature, the world of culture appears, a world that is the work of human hands and the human spirit (the reason). The cognition of the world of persons and things, gained by the discovery of their universal properties and by the discernment of the laws according to which they exist and they are known, leads primarily to our understanding of them. For indeed these properties show that without which a real being, a real action, and a real thought about being, cannot be. Moreover, they unveil new aspects of metaphysical experience such as intelligibility, loveability ("amability"), and perfection.

These properties were called transcendental properties (the transcendentals) on account of their universality, since they belong to everything that really exists. The laws that govern the being of things received the name of metaphysical first laws or principles concerning the existence and cognition of beings. In turn, these transcendental properties were verbalized in linguistic expressions that differed from other expressions because the scope of their predication is unlimited. This means that they can be predicated of everything that really exists. Thus

2015), 53, see "The provisional reconstruction:" <http://www.protrepticus.info/>, accessed on May 20, 2016.

we can give the name “being” to Jan, Eve, a tree, a thought, and even God, and so everything that is something real. Moreover, all the transcendental expressions (being, thing, one, separate, truth, good, beauty) differ from universal expressions (man, tree, animal, etc.) because despite their distinctness with regard to content they possess the same scope of predication (concerning everything that exists). For this reason in the transcendentals knowledge concerning the whole reality is apprehended on the basis of the discovery of analogy in the existence of beings.³

The knowledge we gain about reality in the framework of the transcendentals forms the foundation for all other knowledge, both philosophical and scientific;⁴ thus it is a certain kind of pre-cognition. For indeed it concerns aspects of the existence of being that are necessary for each thing, and at the same time are universal for all things. Moreover, that is wisdom-oriented or “sapiential” knowledge, the foundation of which is not so much the gathered pieces of information concerning a thing as it is the understanding of a thing. Understanding is achieved when by cognition we arrive at the discovery of the ultimate and necessary causes of existence, of action, and of the cognition of beings, and so we arrive at the discovery of the ultimate reasons for the being-ness, rationality, finality, amability, and perfection of the world of persons and things.

In the history of metaphysical cognition, it has been common to distinguish between seven universal properties of that which really

³ This is guaranteed by the structure of the transcendentals. The transcendentals are not concepts but are judgement-based expressions (abbreviations for existential judgements). Cf. Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Metafizyka* [Metaphysics], 5 ed. (Lublin: RW KUL, 1988), 127–129; Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, “Transcendentalia i uniwersalia” [Transcendentals and Universals], *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 7:1 (1959): 5–39; Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, “Metafizyczne rozumienie rzeczywistości” [Metaphysical Understanding of Reality], *Zeszyty Naukowe KUL* 29:1 (1986): 3–15; Étienne Gilson, *Byt i istota* [Being and Essence], Polish trans. Donata Eska, Jerzy Nowak, 2 ed. (Warsaw: IW PAX, 2006), 196–216.

⁴ Krąpiec, “Metafizyczne rozumienie rzeczywistości,” 4–8.

exists. These properties show us that to be a being is at the same time to be a thing, to be one, separate, a vehicle of truth, of good, and of beauty. Among them the chief and fundamental transcendental is the transcendental being (*ens*). This transcendental contains the content of all the other transcendentals, and those are interchangeable with it (*convertuntur cum ente*). For indeed this transcendental shows the most primary and fundamental property of what really exists, namely the possession of a definite content and an existence proportionate to that content. For indeed being as such first shows itself to our intellect and it forms the foundation of all cognition and conceptualization.⁵

The rest of the transcendentals reveals—under various aspects—the subsequent properties of what really exists, and what is virtually contained in the transcendental being. Thus the transcendental thing (*res*) shows us that what is real must always be determined in content, that is, it must possess its own essence. Thus what is real must exist as John, Ann, a red rose, etc. The transcendental one (*unum*) shows that real being cannot be contradictory in itself. Someone cannot be at the same time John and not John, a human and an angel, a square circle, etc. In turn, the transcendental separateness (*aliquid*) shows sovereignty and individuality as universal properties of real beings. Thus we cannot regard mathematical classes or sets as real being; at most we can regard them as thought-constructs.

The transcendental truth (*verum*) helps us to discover that all that really exists is a vehicle of truth, since all that really exists originates from the intellect (of the Creator or a maker). The transcendental good (*bonum*) makes us conscious that real beings are also vehicles of good, since they come from the will (of the Creator or a maker). In turn the transcendental beauty (*pulchrum*) reveals that real things are always a synthesis of truth and good, that is, in their essence they are perfect,

⁵ “Illud autem quod primo intellectus concipit quasi notissimum, et in quo omnes conceptiones resolvit, est ens, ut Avicenna dicit in principio Metaphysicae suae” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *The Disputed Questions On Truth*, q. 1, art. 1, c.).

since they result from the correspondence of the intellect and the will of the Creator (natural beings) or a maker (works of art).

Each of the above-mentioned transcendentals opens before us new possibilities for a deeper understanding of the world of persons and things. As we discern them, we acquire knowledge that refers to all concretely existing things, and therefore it is not abstract knowledge. For indeed metaphysical cognition is directed at concretely existing things, and it does not go beyond these concrete things. We can apprehend the concrete things we know in that which is proper to them alone, or in that which is proper to everything that really exists. So, for example, we can apprehend John cognitively in what is proper to him alone (that he is a human being, a man, etc.) or in that which is proper to him as someone who really exists (that he is someone real, that he has a definite content and an existence proportionate to that content). In the latter case, in the concrete object we discern an aspect that is necessary and universal (transcendental) for every really existing thing.

The discovery of the universal properties of being has inestimable value for our understanding of the world of persons, animals, plants, and things. Thereby we perceive the world in which we live not only as a collection of various objects that we can use, but above all as the natural environment in which man lives and acts, as a reality that is rational and loveable, and so as a reality that in its existence realizes the plan and will of the Creator or a maker. We discover the world as a book in which information about the truth, the good, and the end-purpose of particular things and the entire world has been recorded.

Being (*ens*)

The transcendental being (*ens*) is the first and fundamental key whereby we open the doors to discover the secret of the truth about the nature of the really existing objects that form the world that surrounds us. This transcendental indicates the most fundamental and necessary proper characteristic of real things. Real things are discerned from un-

real things by the fact that they possess a determined content and an existence proportionate to that content. Quite simply they exist and are something concrete and determined (Eve, John, the red rose, etc.).

The word “being” (Gk. τὸ ὄν, οὐσία; Lat. *ens*, *substantia*), as a linguistic expression, in the broad sense denotes “that which actually exists.” In a strict sense it denotes the object of metaphysics, just as number is the object of mathematics, and the cell is the object of biology. Therefore Aristotle writes in Book IV of the *Metaphysics*: “There is a kind of knowledge that considers being as being and that which belongs to it in an essential way.”⁶ And he explains that being as such

is conceived of variously, but indeed in relation to something one, on account of some one nature, and not completely equivocally. Then, just as anything whatsoever healthy is in a relation to health, namely insofar as it conserves health, causes it, or is a sign of it, or is also capable of possessing it . . . So also being is conceived of variously, but always in relation to one principle. Namely, some things are called beings since they are substances, and all others because they are determinations of substance or processes leading to substance . . . For indeed to one science belongs the consideration of objects that are named not only unequivocally, but also objects that are conceived of in relation to some one nature, since in a certain sense this is also a certain naming according to something that is one. Therefore it is evident that the consideration of beings insofar as they are beings belongs to one science.⁷

As we analyze the content of our experience of the existence of things, we discover two constitutive elements that enter into the structure of this experience. They are the “content of the experienced object” and “the existence of this content.” This discovery is the first and most basic step in the way to understanding the nature of really existing be-

⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1003 a 20, cited after the Polish edition: Arystoteles, *Metafizyka*, trans. T. Żeleźnik, ed. M. A. Krąpiec, A. Maryniarczyk (Lublin 1996).

⁷ Id., 1003 a 32–1003 b 17.

ings. At the same time we discover the first transcendental property that characterizes real objects.⁸

In the framework of the transcendental being, the most fundamental knowledge concerning the nature of objects is apprehended. For indeed we become aware that the world of real things is made only of objects that possess “some sort of determined content” and “an existence proportionate to the content.” And thus such objects as the existing John, the existing apple tree, the existing red rose, etc., can be components of the real world. For indeed these objects have a determined content (John, the apple tree, the red rose) and an existence proportionate to the content (the existence of John, the existence of the apple tree, etc.). Therefore general forms such as “human being,” “animal,” or “nature,” etc., will not belong to the world of real beings, since something such as “human being” is indeterminate in content and does not have any own existence in itself. For indeed this is neither man nor woman, neither white nor black, neither tall nor short, etc. Forms (constructs) of this type belong to the world of the products of our intellect, and they exist by the existence of our intellect, not by an existence proportionate to their content.

In the framework of the transcendental being, we also discover that the concrete existing thing is the base upon which our neutral (free from the deformation of scientific theories) cognition and understanding of the world of persons and things are built. At the same time we become aware that only the existing concrete thing can be regarded as an assumption-free “starting point”⁹ in metaphysical cognition. The fact

⁸ The primary importance of this transcendental follows from the fact, as Thomas says, that it is the most primary cognitive verbalization of human experience. “Illud autem quod primo intellectus concipit quasi notissimum, et in quo omnes conceptiones resolvit, est ens . . .” (*The Disputed Questions On Truth*, q. 1, art. 1, c.). The other transcendentals “exprimunt ipsius modum, qui nomine ipsius *entis* non exprimitur” (id.).

⁹ One such possibility is to find a basis in being, or to be more precise, in the original experience of reality. Then, as Krąpiec remarks, the problem of the “starting point” disappears. Cf. Krąpiec, “Metafizyczne rozumienie rzeczywistości,” 8; and Étienne

that particular things exist is not and cannot be an assumption, but it is a foundation and source of all kinds of evidence. Thomas Aquinas, looking to Avicenna, explains as follows: “That which the intellect first conceives as, in a way, the most evident, and to which it reduces all its concepts, is being.”¹⁰ In other words, this is the concrete existing thing. “Consequently, all the other conceptions of the intellect are had by additions to being.”¹¹

The primacy of the transcendental being in relation to the other transcendentals follows from the fact that it is the most potentialized apprehension of the whole truth concerning the existing concrete thing, as a result of which metaphysics as a science “is not identified . . . with any other of the so-called particular sciences. For indeed no other science apart from metaphysics considers in general being as being.”¹² In metaphysical cognition there occurs an explicit-making of the virtual content of this original apprehension, and there occurs a formation of the understanding of that which are really existing objects, and that which decides their nature.¹³

The transcendental being also unveils before us the most original and fundamental type of human experience, which is the experience of the fact of the existence of the concrete thing (being). For indeed we

Gilson, *Realizm tomistyczny* [Thomistic Realism], group work (Warsaw: IW PAX, 1968), 44–51.

¹⁰ St. Thomas Aquinas, *The Disputed Questions On Truth*, q. 1, art. 1, c.

¹¹ Id. Cf. Avicenna, *Metaphysics*, cited in Awicenna, *Księga wiedzy* [Book of knowledge], Polish trans. Bogdan Składanek (Warsaw: PWN 1974), 78–79.

¹² Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1003 a 20–25.

¹³ “It should be noted that the cognition of reality that occurs in existential judgments is the starting point in the singling out of the object of metaphysics, and it is man’s germinal cognition—germinal both in the sense of its genesis, and in the sense of epistemic justifications—in his everyday and natural cognition. As ‘immersed in the world’, we first learn that something is, that something exists as real, before we learn more or less exactly the content of that which exists” (Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, “Analiza ‘punktu wyjścia’ w filozoficznym poznaniu” [Analysis of the “Starting Point” in Philosophical Cognition], in his *Byt i istota. Św. Tomasza “De ente et essentia” przekład i komentarz* [Being and Essence. Translation and Commentary on St. Thomas’ “De ente et essentia”], 2nd ed. (Lublin: RW KUL, 1994), 111–112).

discover that existing things (beings) are what is first given to us in cognition—*quod primum cadit in intellectu*—and what makes that our cognitive life begins to be actualized.¹⁴ This experience, on account of the object which is the existing concrete thing (being), is called meta-physical, and as such it is the neutral base of philosophical cognition, since in this experience the existing object is directly given to us. It is, as Krapiec remarks, “the purest human experience, a pre-reflective experience, an experience not subject to error (excepting sickness!).”¹⁵

The freedom from error and evidence of this experience applies to the proper object of our cognition, and so applies to the fact that “something is,” as distinct from “what something is.” This happens because “that which really exists” (being) is the proper object both of the senses and the intellect. And no faculty can err as to its own object. For example, the faculty of hearing cannot err that it hears a sound, or the eye that it sees a color, etc. Also, the ear cannot see, and the eye cannot hear. Error, however, can concern the pitch of a sound, the hue of a color, etc. The situation is the same with the freedom from error and infallibility of the senses and the intellect with regard to the assertion of the fact of existence (and only with regard to the fact of existence!) of a real being. Just as the ear cannot err that it hears a sound, for sound is its proper object, or the eye that it sees a color, so the senses and the intellect cannot err that they know “something that is.”¹⁶ For precisely this reason, this type of apprehension of a thing is called “super-veridical” but not in the sense of “super-true,” rather in the

¹⁴ Thomas emphasizes that perfect cognition pertains to man’s happiness. Cf. S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Summa contra Gentiles*, ed. Ceslai Pera (Taurini: Marietti, 1961), lib. II, c. 39. Cf. Leo Elders, “Le premier principe de la vie intellectuelle,” *Revue Thomiste* 62 (1962): 571–586.

¹⁵ Krapiec, “Analiza ‘punktu wyjścia’ w filozoficznym poznaniu,” 112.

¹⁶ For example, in the case of the proper object of hearing, errors can and do concern the genus of a sound, whether the sound is the note “C” or the note “G;” in the case of the proper object of vision, the quality of a color, whether it is “red” or “green;” and in the case of the proper object of cognition, whether “this something that exists” is John, Casimir, an apple tree, or a pear tree, etc.

sense of being free from error. For indeed when the intellect asserts that something is, it asserts the existence of its proper object as to which it cannot err, since the existing object is the reason for the assertion. The qualification of truth or falsehood does not yet belong to apprehensions of this type (this qualification appears only at the stage where the content of a known object is being clarified). Apprehended under the transcendental (universal) aspect and expressed in the transcendental being, the content of a metaphysical experience is very imprecise and vague (*in actu confuse*). It is a potentialized apprehension.¹⁷ For indeed in this apprehension the most essential, universal, necessary, and at the same time, border or critical properties of being something real are apprehended.¹⁸

The transcendental being unveils before us also the deepest foundations of the rational and loveable order. This order is made explicit in the form of the metaphysical first principles such as the following: the principle of identity, the principle of non-contradiction, the principle of the excluded middle, the principle of the reason of being, the principle of finality, and the principle of integrity. These are not principles established by the intellect or given before the cognition of being, but they are read out or interpreted from being as laws that govern the existence and cognition of being. They are laws that primarily govern the being of real things. As we discover these first principles, we become aware that the foundations of rationality are first inscribed

¹⁷ “The most original and still misty cognition of existence is the reason for our immediate stances to the contents of a being that acts upon us, the contents provided to us ‘under actual existence’. This is intelligible insofar as this ‘processing’ of the real world that man constantly performs cannot be suspended in a ‘vacuum’, but is situated in the real and cognitively asserted existence of the world”—as Krąpiec explains (*Metafizyka*, 107).

¹⁸ Of course this is an analogical and transcendental apprehension. By the analogicality we can cognitively “reach” to the Absolute, and by the transcendentality we must be satisfied in cognition with existing reality (being), which constitutes the limit of our cognition. This limitation will be indicated from various aspects of the existence of being.

in existing objects and in the entire world, and subsequently read out and appropriated by the intellect; they constitute the principles of the intellect's rational action.

As thus understood, the transcendental being can be treated as the metaphysical "principle of principles." For indeed this transcendental is the criterion of the cognition of the truth concerning real existence and cognition of being. As a consequence, in the framework of the transcendental being the following occur:

- the field of the realism of the world is unveiled before us; this field is made up of concretely existing things (and only them!) with the entire wealth of their endowment of content;

- we discover the originality or primacy of the order of the existence of a thing in relation to the cognition of it;

- we become aware that both cognition and action are connected with being and directed to being;

- we arrive at the understanding of what being is and why being is, which allows us to distinguish between what is real and what is a product of our thought; that which makes the world real from that which is a theory or hypothesis concerning the world; that which is from nature from that which is from culture, and so, that which is a product and construct of man, etc. Thereby we can remove at the very beginning of rational life all points that would lead to absurdity in the explanation of the world of persons and things.

Equipped with this kind of key, we can easily define the field of realism. For indeed to be something real is to have a defined content and to have an existence proportionate to that content. Thereby we can distinguish between the real John and a concept of John, between the world of nature and the world of culture, between the object of the real world and the ideas and constructs of our fantasy. We can distinguish between the existence of John, Eve, an apple tree, a red rose, etc., and the existence of our thought concerning them. While the constructs of our imagination have a definite content, they do not have an existence

proper (proportionate) to them; they have the existence of our imagination and exist by the existence of our imagination. Therefore this here John is a real being, a real being is not some rather indefinite “man;” this red rose is a real being, a real being is not some undetermined “nature.” Both “man” and “nature” are schemata of thought (concepts) constructed for cognitive purposes.

A content and an existence, that are proportional to each other and determine each other, are the fundamental and necessary properties that each object must possess if it is to belong to the real world.

The Explicit-Making of Being

Metaphysical cognition is a constant explaining of that which really exists. It is the process of explaining (making explicit) the content of the original apprehension of what is real, and that which has not been explicitly expressed by the word “being.”¹⁹ The process of explicit-making occurs through the singling out of newer and newer properties pertaining to the universal and necessary aspects of the mode of being of that which is real, and through the apprehension of these properties in corresponding linguistic expressions called transcendentals. The specific character of transcendental expressions is that their scope of predication does not change, although the content to which they point changes, and for this reason they are all interchangeable with being (*convertuntur cum ente*). The transcendentals singled out always add something new to the understanding of being, and as a result of this being is made explicit. However, this is a specifically understood process of “addition” (*additio*). This process consists in the fact, as Thomas explains, that each new transcendental adds something to the under-

¹⁹ “[A]liqua dicuntur addere supra ens, in quantum exprimunt ipsius modum, qui nomine ipsius *entis* non exprimitur” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *The Disputed Questions On Truth*, q. 1, art. 1, c.).

standing of being in the sense that it shows a new aspect of its act of being (*ipsius modus*) which was not expressed by the word “being.”²⁰

The transcendentals singled out unveil (or make explicit) modes of being that are characteristic of all that really exists. They show what is real in two ways: (1) either as the mode of being of what is real in itself, (2) or as a mode of being in ordination to something else.²¹

In the first case, the transcendentals show in a positive or negative way the mode of being of what is real. Thomas explains it as follows:

We can, however, find nothing that can be predicated of every being affirmatively and, at the same time, absolutely, with the exception of its essence by which the being is said to be. To express this, the term *thing* is used . . . “thing differs from being because being gets its name from to-be, but thing expresses the quiddity or essence of the being.” There is, however, a negation consequent upon every being considered absolutely: its undividedness, and this is expressed by *one*. For the *one* is simply undivided being.²²

In this way, in the framework of the first transcendentals, being is unveiled as thing (*res*) and as one (*unum*). Also both thing and one show the universal modes of being in themselves of what is real, namely as the act of being determined as to content, that is, as something that has its own essence, and as something that is undivided in itself into being and non-being.

In the second case the transcendentals unveil the mode of being of what is real in ordination to another being. This ordination can concern the fact of division (*divisionem*) of one being from another, or the agreement (*convenientia*) of one being with another.

²⁰ Cf. *id.*

²¹ “*Alio modo*, ita quod modus expressus sit modus generaliter consequens omne ens; et hic modus *dupliciter* accipi potest: *uno modo* secundum quod consequitur omne ens in se; *alio modo* secundum quod consequitur unumquodque ens in ordine ad aliud” (*id.*).

²² *Id.*

The mode of division of one being from another as a universal property of the being of what is real is expressed by the transcendental *aliquid* (something separate). Every real being always exists as “something-else” (*aliud quid*). Thomas explains it as follows: “For, just as a being is said to be *one* in so far as it is without division in itself, so it is said to be *something* in so far as it is divided from others.”²³

The transcendentals that follow unveil being as connected in its existence with other beings. It is a matter here of showing the specific connection of being with personal beings, or more precisely with the intellect and will of the Creator or a maker. The fact of the universal connection of every being with the intellect of a person is unveiled by the transcendental truth (*verum*), and the connection with the will by the transcendental good (*bonum*). For this reason, Thomas explains:

Good expresses the correspondence of being to the appetitive power, for, and so we note in the *Ethics*, the good is “that which all desire.” *True* expresses the correspondence of being to the knowing power, for all knowing is produced by an assimilation of the knower to the thing known, so that assimilation is said to be the cause of knowledge.²⁴

²³ “*Uno modo* secundum divisionem unius ab altero; et hoc explimit hoc nomen *aliquid*: dicitur enim *aliquid* quasi *aliud quid*; unde sicut ens dicitur unum, in quantum est indivisum in se, ita dicitur *aliquid*, in quantum est ab aliis divisum” (id.).

²⁴ Id. “*Alio modo* secundum convenientiam unius entis ad aliud; et hoc quidem non potest esse nisi accipiatur *aliquid* quod natum sit convenire cum omni ente. Hoc autem est anima, quae quodammodo est omnia sicut dicitur in III *De anima* [text. 37]. In anima autem est vis cognitiva est appetitiva. Convenientiam ergo entis ad appetitum exprimit hoc nomen *bonum*, ut in principio *Ethic*. dicitur: *Bonum est quod omnia appetunt*. Convenientiam vero entis ad intellectum exprimit hoc nomen *verum*. Omnis autem cognitio perficitur per assimilationem cognoscentis ad rem cognitam, ita quod assimilatio dicta est causa causa cognitionis: sicut visus per hoc quod disponitur per speciem coloris, cognoscit colorem. Prima ergo comparatio entis ad intellectum est ut ens intellectui respondeat: quae quidem correspondentia, adaequatio rei et intellectus dicitur; et in hoc formaliter ratio veri perficitur. Hoc est ergo quod addit *verum* supra ens, scilicet conformitatem, sive adaequationem rei et intellectus; ad quam conformitatem, ut dictum est, sequitur cognitio rei. Sic ergo entitas rei praecedat rationem veritatis, sed cognitio est quidam veritatis effectus” (id.).

Conclusion

The principles Thomas outlined for unveiling and making explicit the universal modes of being of what is real have been included over time in the structure of metaphysical separation. Metaphysical separation would also become in realistic metaphysics the fundamental method for knowing beings and showing their universal properties. We should also take note of an important remark by Krąpiec in his *Metaphysics*, namely that the transcendentals as special cognitive apprehensions of being cannot be “quantified and univocally communicated to another, but they must be communicated in a ‘living’ way by a special ‘agitation’, formulating in the mind of the receiver many mental images and associations in which he himself is to see the cognitive content communicated to him.”²⁵

Translated from Polish by Hugh McDonald

ON THE TRANSCENDENTAL PROPERTIES OF REAL BEINGS

SUMMARY

The article analyzes the metaphysical approach to the rational cognition of the world of persons and things. It shows the way in which metaphysicians reveal the essential and universal properties of the world and the laws that govern their being. Among these properties, the most important are as follows: to be a thing (that is, to have a concretely determined essence), to be one (that is, to be non-contradictory in itself), to be separate or distinct (that is, to be sovereign in being), and also to be a vehicle of truth, good, and beauty. Among the laws of being, in turn, the article indicates the law of identity, the law of non-contradiction, the law of the excluded middle, the law of the reason of being, the law of finality, and the law of perfection. These laws primarily show the source and foundation of the rational order.

KEYWORDS: Lublin Philosophical School, transcendental, metaphysics, being, reality, world.

²⁵ Krąpiec, *Metafizyka*, 140.