

Summary of the Doctoral thesis “The Conception of Realistic Metaphysics According to Mieczysław Albert Krąpiec”

This work presents Mieczysław Albert Krąpiec’s metaphysics as a proposal for doing realistic metaphysics in our contemporary philosophical era. M. A. Krąpiec’s proposal comes at the backdrop of ridicule, subjugation and outright rejection of the Aristotelian-Thomistic classical model of philosophizing. In place of this ‘original’ way of philosophizing, the Cartesian, Kantian, linguistic and positivist models assumed more dominant positions in the agora or philosophical space since the 17th century. The effects of this dominance was that classical metaphysics would either give way to more scientific models of rational thinking or would be the subservient to other philosophical disciplines which are more aligned to the demands of the methodological precision of contemporary science. Krąpiec, therefore, perceived the need for a revamping and re-instating of classical metaphysics as the integrating hegemony of all philosophical disciplines. This proposal is what is referred to as Realistic Metaphysics.

This dissertation dubbed the Cartesian, Kantian, linguistic and positivist demands into what is referred to as the “possibility” and “scientificity” questions. The aim of the dissertation was to determine if Krąpiec’s proposal does justice to the scientificity and possibility questions. Scientificity pre-supposes that metaphysics is not arbitrary; that there is a methodological framework with which metaphysics can reliably cognize and explain reality. The simplest way of posing the scientificity question is by asking: “Is metaphysics a science?” The possibility question, on the other hand, is a demand of demonstration. If Krąpiec answers affirmatively to the scientificity question, it becomes imperative to demonstrate realistic cognition of the world. The simplest way of posing the possibility question is: “how can we do realistic metaphysics?” This dissertation, therefore, is a re-construction of the whole of Krąpiec’s metaphysics as a response to the possibility and scientificity questions.

Chapter one introduces key concepts and formulates the *questio disputatis*. It also engages in key discussions like the relationship between general metaphysics and particular metaphysics as well as establishing *being qua being* as the subject of metaphysical cognition. Chapter two discusses the transcendental properties of being, the use of metaphysical separation in the discovery of these properties and the first metaphysical principles. It further discusses the analogical existence and predication of being. The third chapter delves into the structure of being, an attempt that helps to discern the composition of act and potency, matter and form, substance and accidents, essence and existence in being. Causal cognition is also discussed as

an important way of metaphysical cognition. The fourth chapter focused on key metaphysical and methodological issues as well as an assessment of M. A. Krapiec's metaphysics.

The point of departure was to establish that realistic metaphysics concerns the real world. The scientificity and possibility questions are answered only in the world of persons, animals and things – not in a possible world or in the world of mental/abstract constructs. This world exists irrespective of how we conceptualize or describe it. Its existence is independent of our cognition. This independence does not pre-suppose a no-relation between the world and the cognizer. The confirmation of the previous statement is seen in what is given in experience. The dissertation establishes that what is given in experience should not be disregarded as unreal or a mirage, rather, they are stepping stones for a more rational cognition. This primary contact with things is what is called common-sense cognition. Common sense cognition is not on par with metaphysical cognition because metaphysical cognition offers a deeper rational justification for what is cognized.

To establish the scientificity of metaphysics, this dissertation distinguishes four senses of science according to their ends: *theoria*, *praxis*, *threskéia* and *póiesis*. Metaphysical cognition is connected with the *theoria* – a truth-driven kind of cognition which pursues knowledge for its own sake. It is on the foundation of this conception of science that M. A. Krapiec builds his realistic metaphysics. Most importantly, for the scientific question was to establish the parameters for a scientific consideration for realistic metaphysics. In collaboration with Stanisław Kamiński, Krapiec adopts a broad conception of science, characterized by having an object, method and end. The discovery of the object of metaphysical cognition was actualized through a historical excursus of different objects that have emerged since the inception of philosophy. The result of this exercise was the affirmation that being as being is what metaphysics studies. However, being is understood as a determined content that has an existence proportional to it.

The question of method is an indispensable arm of the scientificity question. The method at the heart of Krapiec's metaphysics is metaphysical separation. This method is an adaptation of Thomas Aquinas' *separatio*. Krapiec stretches the separation into three stages: the affirmation of our first cognitive experience in existential judgment, characterized by its spontaneity; secondly, a separation of the content and existential elements of being; and thirdly the extension of the results of separation to all existing things. Whereas Krapiec demonstrates this in his discovery of *being qua being*, Andrzej Maryniarczyk extends it to all aspects of his

metaphysics. This dissertation follows such reconstruction in the discovery of *being qua being*, the transcendental properties of being and the composition of the ontic pairs of act and potency, matter and form, substance and accidents and essence and existence in being. The causal and analogical ways of explanation are also vital. They manifest the internal and external causal elements for metaphysical explanation as well as the analogical existence and predication of all beings.

Significance and discoveries

The significance of this work is connected with the conclusions which are vital:

- Krapiec's proposal characterizes philosophy as some sort of metaphysical philosophy. This proposal helps us to see the unity of philosophy, divided into general and particular metaphysics. All the philosophical disciplines are knitted together analogically through the same object (being) and the same method (separation);
- this dissertation admits that there is undeniable affiliation of Krapiec to existential Thomism, however, there is an emphasis on the use of the platform of existential Thomism to advance realistic goals. The primary point of reference is being – the concretely existing thing and the object of cognition. Fidelity to reality is the bedrock of metaphysical realism;
- Krapiec does justice to the scientificity question through the use of concrete methods like metaphysical separation, historicism, and reductive demonstration. Through the use of these methods, this dissertation argues for the validity of the primary question which metaphysics answers – *dia ti* (why?). The possibility question was addressed by series of demonstrations which indicate how a cognizer can engage in a realistic grasp of the world of persons, animals and things. This involves searching for the non-contradictable reasons for the be-ing of beings;
- there are obvious methodological differences between Krapiec's realistic metaphysics and the nominalist and idealist philosophies. On the other hand, there are some metaphysical discrepancies in thought with some realistic philosophers like Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain; these discrepancies are also glaring in metaphysical considerations like the act and fact sense of being, the problem of participation and the method of grasping being as being.

Finally, the dissertation establishes that metaphysics is a science, but not in the same sense as the natural sciences.