

THE EXPERIENCE OF “I OUGHT TO DO X”: AS THE GROUND FOR MORAL OBJECTIVITY IN KAROL WOJTYŁA’S META-ETHICS

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The objective of this work is to investigate Karol Wojtyła’s meta-ethics. Following the Aristotelian and Thomistic tradition, he maintains that ethics is a science. Contrary to the Aristotelian tradition, which conceives ethics as a practical science, Wojtyła sustains that ethics is also a science with theoretical objectivity. He posits the human “experience of morality,” in a specific sense, the moral experience of “I ought to do x,” as the ground for the objectivity of ethics as science. He also critiques the understanding of experience as merely a sense-perception and appearance/phenomenon in empiricism and phenomenalism. However, it maintains the phenomenological understanding of experience as “lived-experience.” Thus, this work is an attempt to flesh out Karol Wojtyła’s meta-ethics by investigating the following: 1. Karol Wojtyła’s Philosophy of Person as an Efficacious Moral Person. 2. Wojtyła’s Objectivity of Experience as Subjective Fact. 3. Exposition of his Understanding of Ethics. 4. Discussion of the experience of “I ought to do x”: As the Moral Ground in Karol Wojtyła’s Meta-Ethics. 5. A critical Evaluation and Conclusion.

KAROL WOJTYŁA’S PHILOSOPHY OF PERSON AS AN EFFICACIOUS MORAL PERSON

A window into Wojtyła’s metaphysical foundation on his philosophy of person is the metaphysical principle of which he exposes the “subject” (*suppositum*) as the ontological basis of action. He sustains, “for something to act, it must first exist” (Wojtyła 1979, 73). This follows the logic of the principle, *operari sequitur esse*, which implies that the person is a being that acts. Hence, the relationship between person and action is the nucleus of Wojtyła’s philosophy of the person. Wojtyła accepts the traditional metaphysical conception of the person as *suppositum* but phenomenologically reduces *suppositum* to subject, in the sense of subjectivity, the concrete individual human person capable of action (See Wojtyła 1993b, 222). Hence, in a personalistic sense, the *suppositum* of the human person is its subjectivity; thus, *suppositum* for the human person becomes *subject*. Only with respect to the human person can *suppositum* exclusively be said to be subject (See Wojtyła 1993b, 222).

By this affirmation, Wojtyła (1993b, 222;1979, 66) sustains the metaphysical conception of the person as essentially possessing rationality and free will or self-determination. He denotes this self-determination in the human person as the efficacy of the person. However, he also maintains that the consciousness and self-consciousness of the person not as accidentally important as in Aquinas but as essentially important for a holistic conception of the human person. Thus any fair exposition of Wojtyła's philosophical anthropology must thoroughly expound his understanding of "the efficacy of a person" and "the ontological structure of the person." These are important not only to understand the human person but, more importantly, to comprehend the human person as a moral person.

For Wojtyła, the phenomenological fact in the dynamic of the human person is, "I act," the human person acts. He contends that "Man-acts," that is, human in general acting, is not the same as "I act." The "I" is "ego," the subject. It is the "ego" of not just somebody, but that of a person, an individual subject acting. However, "man-acts" is the experience of the "I act" of others and their dynamic objectivation. This dynamism is that "present in the complete experience of man," as one acting by the operation of self-determination, not the "vegetative dynamism of the human body" (See Wojtyła 1979, 60). Another way of distinguishing these two kinds of dynamism in the human person is the dynamism that is "one-acting or doing-something," and the dynamism that is "something-happening-to-one." In Wojtyła's terms, it is "To Act" and "To Happen," respectively. The first dynamism is within the person's control or volition, which means the person is active in the action. However, in the second dynamism, the person is passive since what is happening is not within the control of the person.

Wojtyła argues that the acting truly proper to the human person is "human acting." He employs the concept of "the experience of efficacy" to explain what is the particular difference between human act and act of man. This experience, he posits, is the experience of "being the actor." He explains that "This experience discriminates man's acting from everything that merely happens in him. It also explains the dynamic contraposition of facts and structures, in which activeness and passiveness are distinctly manifest" (Wojtyła 1979, 66). Hence, in the dynamic of efficacy, one experiences oneself as the actor, that is, the efficient cause of one's action. This sort of action is what Wojtyła maintains as the human act. On the contrary, when this efficacious experience of acting as the agent is absent in the action of a person, this means for Wojtyła: *something happening to one*, that is, the "act of man."

By this submission, Wojtyła wishes to underpin that the human person is the efficient causation of his or her actions. To emphasize, Wojtyła (1979, 69) contends that, "Man is not only the agent of his acting, he is also the creator of it." The contention that the human person is the efficient causation of his or her actions, for Wojtyła, is the ground of human ethics. The direct implication of this is that the human person is by nature, not only a moral person but even more so, in the human acts lay the ground for the possibility of ethics as science. Hence, his thesis, that the actions of a person are not only judged to be morally good or evil; they make a person a good or evil person. This means in the human person's experience of the human acts, the human person experiences morality, for every human action is a moral act. Therefore, the human person for Wojtyła is an efficacious moral person.

WOJTYŁA'S OBJECTIVITY OF EXPERIENCE AS SUBJECTIVE FACT

There are two realms of experience in the human person: the experience without one's self and the experience within one's self. While the former deals with one's experience of the realities or activities of the world outside of one's ego. The latter deals with the experience of the realities or activities within the ego of a person; in other words, the experience of one's consciousness is also conceived as self-consciousness. For Wojtyła (1979, 3), the experience or cognition of one's self "is the richest and apparently the most complex of all experiences accessible" to the human person. This is because the experience of the realities in the world are also contained and are part of the experience of the ego. In the experience of one's self, there is a cognitive relation between that experienced and the one experiencing, in such a way that the human person is ontologically both the subject and the object of experience (Wojtyła 1979, 4). These dual realms of experience of the human person are what Wojtyła (1979, 4) refers to as "the experience of man." This, for him, makes the knowledge and understanding of the human person possible.

Wojtyła's understanding of experience is neither that of the phenomenologists' nor that of the empiricists' conception of experience. He argues, "To reduce the range of experience to the functions and the content of sense alone would lead to deep contradictions and serious misunderstandings" (Wojtyła 1979, 8). For the phenomenologists, what is given directly in experience is the mere *phenomena*/appearances of things and for the empiricists, what is given directly in experience is sense-perception. But for Wojtyła, what is given directly in experience is not merely the "ego" or an aspect of the human being, but the human person as a whole. The human person with his conscious acting or action is what is given as the object of experience in a phenomenological reduction. It is important to note the distinction between the phenomenological and phenomenological reduction of experience.

Wojtyła maintains a phenomenological reduction of experience, not a phenomenological reduction. Elucidating this point, Acosta Miguel and Reimers J. Adrian (2016, 45) note that "Karol Wojtyła argues that an accurate account of experience demands much more than a materialist or scientific reductionism. Experience is more than the reception and inner cataloging of sensations." This follows that for Wojtyła, what is important is not experience *per se*, but "the experience of man." And for him, "the experience of man" is human-acts (in Polish, *człowiek działa*). The human-act, which for Wojtyła is always and at all times a moral action, is phenomenologically given in a phenomenological reduction of human experiences. Kenneth L. Schmitz (1993, 66) explains the descriptive phenomenological approach of Wojtyła, thus: 'Because action draws together all of the elements in the experience of the person, the focus of the descriptive analysis is not consciousness but action. Moreover, the basis and source of action is not consciousness but rather the whole person, or as Wojtyła says, "man-acts" (*człowiek działa*).' Hence, Wojtyła (1979, 10) adduces: "our position is that *action serves as a particular moment of apprehending – that is, of experiencing – the person.*"

Wojtyła (1993b, 198) establishes a phenomenological relationship between human action and person, in his conception of "action," as, 'what most fully and

profoundly reveals the human being as an *I*—and, indeed, as a person, for that which we express in categories of being by the concept “person” is given in experience precisely as a self (*soi*), as an *I*.’ Hence, the *I*, consciousness, makes the person the agent of his or her actions, for “without consciousness, there is no human experience” (Wojtyła 1979, 47). This objective experience of one’s human actions as moral actions, that is, the subjective fact of the *I*, makes the person in his or her action to be an agent that can be morally good or bad. This means that the objective experience maintained by Wojtyła is the lived experience of the human person. This lived experience he holds to be objective because it is phenomenologically given to the human person. He maintains that “The proper interpretation of this lived experience has always been one of the main tasks of ethics since ethical experience is the experiential fact upon which this science is based” (Wojtyła 1993b, 3). Kenneth W. Kemp and Zuzanna Maslanka Kieron (quoted in Wojtyła 2011, 8), on the idea of “the lived experience,” note that it is based on Edmund Husserl’s distinction between *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis*. This distinction is difficult to render into English, for the ordinary English word renders both as experience.

EXPOSITION OF HIS UNDERSTANDING OF ETHICS

It could be maintained that the takeaway point of the discourse on the ethical person and the acting person is Wojtyła’s thesis that, “Man is not only the agent of his acting, he is also the creator of it” (Wojtyła 1979, 69) This means, in his or her actions, the human person manifests and creates itself. He maintains a strong relationship between morality and human action, in asserting: “Morality and acting differ essentially, but at the same time they are so strictly united with each other that morality has no real existence apart from human acting, apart from actions” (Wojtyła 1979, 70). The notion of acting or action here should be understood as a lived experience. What it then implies is that ethics has no real existence without lived experience. This lived experience becomes a reality, which becomes the subject of ethics as a science. This explains the place of lived experience in the understanding of morality and the understanding of ethics as science.

For Wojtyła, ethics is a science. But what kind of science? For Wojtyła, ethics is not just a practical science as maintained by Aristotle. For practical sciences, as contended by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*, do not deal with universal and necessary principles. However, Wojtyła (2011,59) agrees with the traditional Aristotelian conception of ethics, whereby ethics is part of the supreme science, philosophy, whose essential nature is to explore and grasp *ultimas causas* of reality. Hence, he sustains the defense of ethics as part of the science that examines ultimate causes, in this case, of the facts of the experience of morality, opining: “Perhaps that need is even clearer today, in the face of a decidedly empirical point of departure and the face of the promotion of the normative character of ethics above the practical” (Wojtyła 2011, 59). But Wojtyła, in exploring meta-ethics, strongly desires to maintain the nature of ethics as having universal and necessary principles. Therefore, for him, the investigation of ethics as a science is to understand ethics as meta-ethics.

Meta-ethics, like all meta-realities, makes a claim of principles that are at the same time universal and necessary. For instance, the mathematical realities of numbers

deal with universal and necessary principles. For ethics to be a science in the contemporary sense of science, Wojtyła argues that the normative nature of ethics must not be emphasized over and above the philosophical nature of ethics as the investigation of the ultimate cause of moral facts. This is against the background, he argues, that contemporary “Logicians are inclined to deny them (normative statements) logical status, placing them outside the boundaries of truth and falsity—thereby excluding them from the terrain of science” (Wojtyła 2011, 60).

Normative statements deal with imperatives, that is to say, commands. Commands, like statements of questions, are not logical propositions that have the nature of truth value. For example, the imperative statement: Thou shall not commit murder! This is a statement that can neither be affirmed nor be denied. For contemporary logicians, statements as this are outside the epistemic realm of science because not only that, they are not empirical but especially because they have no logical truth value. It is to this effect that Wojtyła (2011, 60) maintains the emphasis of the philosophical dimension of ethics, of which “the proper nature [ratio] of all our moral duties, including the ultimate ones.” By “the philosophical dimension of ethics,” Wojtyła (2011, 61) asserts that which “is connected to the conviction that *each norm of morality* has primarily the character of *a theoretical judgment*, and only secondarily an imperative form.”

Wojtyła (2011, 4) conceives meta-ethics as “the set of cognitive steps which have as their goal the validation of ethics precisely as a science.” And he conceives morality as “a reality subjectivized in the person” (Wojtyła 2011, 5). Morality is a lived experience, a reality in the human person, a subject. Ethics becomes the systematic investigation of morality as a lived experience in the human person, which means understanding the totality of the reality that constitutes morality. The task of the ethicist thus becomes the extraction of “the experience of morality,” “from the entirety of the experience of the human being as a reality “in itself”” (Wojtyła 2011, 7). Therefore, to understand morality, a comprehensive grasp of “the experience of morality” is indispensable.

According to Wojtyła (2011), there are three layers of “the experience of morality.” They are the axiological layer, the praxiological layer, and the deontological layer. The axiological layer is that of the experience of morality involving the reality of moral good or evil as a state of a person. The praxiological layer is that of the reality of moral good or evil as manifested in actions. Moreover, the deontological layer is that of the reality of moral duty as the element that constitutes all moral facts (Wojtyła 2011, 10). In this line of thought, Wojtyła (2011, 57) sustains that “the analysis of every fact given in the experience of morality reveals in its deontic dynamism a relation to an indicator of duty, to the principle of being good and acting well.” The “deontic dynamism” happens at the deontological layer, the realm where ethics is intrinsically connected to the experience of moral responsibilities. The axiological layer of the experience of morality emphasizes that human actions have moral values. Moral value is different but does not oppose what he calls the “personalistic” value of actions. The personalistic value of actions deals with the fundamental value inherent in the performance of action *per se*, which is intrinsically connected to the self-determination, the transcendence, and the integration of the human person. However, all moral values deal with the normative nature of the action performed (Wojtyła 1979, 264).

DISCUSSION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF “*I OUGHT TO DO X*”: AS THE GROUND FOR MORAL OBJECTIVITY IN KAROL WOJTYŁA’S META-ETHICS

In a very simple way, Noel Stewart (2009, 179) maintains, “Metaethics (meta=after), as the name implies, is the branch of ethics that takes a step back from the hurly-burly of the clash between normative ethical theories and their application to the messy practical ethical disputes about things such as euthanasia.” Generally speaking, meta-ethics is a critical investigation of ethics as a science. The science here is understood as a systematic body of knowledge, *Scientia*, that is fundamentally grounded on demonstrations of universal and necessary principles. Meta-ethics could be said to be the philosophy of ethics in the sense that it investigates the nature, methods, assumptions, and presuppositions of ethics critically. It raises and questions the epistemological and metaphysical underpinnings in ethics. It strives to grasp in a comprehensive and coherent manner what makes *ethics*. This is to say, meta-ethics is a search for the *quiddity* of ethics, the metaphysical understanding of the *being* of ethics. Thus, like philosophy *per se*, Meta-ethics is epistemologically a *second-order* activity, for it does not deal with the doing of ethics but the thinking about ethics *per se*. It follows that for Wojtyła, the engagement of the philosopher in meta-ethics is to sustain and validate ethics as a science. It is to construct the grounds that verify and testify ethics as a science. Hence, he asserts that it is the study of morality *per se*.

According to Kenneth L. Schmitz (1993, 31): “Why be moral? Why should I do what I should, rather than what I would? Why ought I to do what is right?” are the questions that provoke Wojtyła’s investigation of the human person. This calls to mind the point already established on the connection between ethics and philosophical anthropology in Wojtyła and any profound ethical investigation. These questions of “Why” are not querying the empirical or psychological nature of morality but are rather querying the ultimate nature and principles of morality as a reality in the human person. Wojtyła (2011, 59), argues in respect to the questions of “Why” in the fact of moral duties, that ‘Through that “why” we demand not only an indication of the ethical norm but also its *justification*. Moreover, in that sense, we displace the entire problematic to ultimate causes, *ad ultimas causas*.’ This shows that the questions transcend the investigation of ordinary ethics to the level of what has been referred to as meta-ethics.

Wojtyła, in his philosophical anthropology, as briefly exposed above, establishes that a person is revealed and known in his or her actions, that is to say, in his or her lived experiences. In a more unique and specific manner, a person is revealed and known in his or her moral actions/experiences. He contends, the experience of morality “is contained within the experience of the human being and occupies in it a more or less central position” (Wojtyła 2011, 7). By this assertion, he aims to emphasize that the experience of morality is a unique objective reality in its own right. He claims that this experience of morality is also an understanding of morality. This is to say that we understand morality because we do experience morality. Morality, as an experience like every other experience, is phenomenologically given to us. Because moral experience as a human reality is intentionally given to the subjectivity of the human person, ethics can be phenomenologically understood on the basis of epistemological

universality and necessity. This nature of epistemological universality or objectivity and necessity in the phenomenological grasp of moral experiences grounds ethics as a science. Hence, for Wojtyła, *the experience of morality* is the ground for ethics as a science. The testability for the *scientia-ness* of ethics is *the experience of morality*.

The highest and the most sustainable ground in the testability of ethics as science, according to Wojtyła (2011, 8), is *the experience of duty*. But for Kant, this duty is and should be a rational duty, in such a way that reason should command the will. Kant thus denies experience in morality. Wojtyła's main problem with Kant's ethical philosophy is Kant's stripping off of experience from the dynamism of the will, making the will a mere analysis of practical reason (See Wojtyła 1993b, 4). For, he asserts that "The most evident feature in an act of will is the efficacy of the personal self. This efficacy is immediately given: it is reflected in the awareness of the acting person as an act of will" (Wojtyła 1993b, 8). He considers the phenomenological analysis of lived experience as necessary for the investigation of the will and action. The consideration of lived experience leads him to Max Scheler's philosophy. This denial of experience in morality by Kant was copiously criticized by Max Scheler. Max Scheler emphasizes the experience of morality not as norms but as values.

One of the metaphysical foundations of ethics is the concept of free-will; simply put, the will. Wojtyła (1993b, 3-22) acknowledges the investigation of the will by both Kant and Scheler. However, he critiques Kant for identifying the will with practical reason, which he claims makes Kant unable to explore the essence of the will. Wojtyła, though greatly influenced by the ethics of Scheler, especially in his critique of Kant's ethics, using the phenomenological method, is not completely satisfied by Scheler's ethics. Wojtyła affirms and applauds Scheler's ingenuity in employing the phenomenological method in investigating ethical experiences. Though Scheler, unlike Kant, does not negate the will from experience, however, Wojtyła (1993b, 8) critiques him for connecting "willing with the feeling of value and not with the efficacy of the person."

For this reason, too, the ethical experience is not contained immanently in willing, in the act of will, but has its source, according to Scheler (see 1973, 30-38), in emotion. The very core of the ethical experience, in Scheler's view, is not the efficacy of the person but the emotional experience of value (see, Scheler 1973, 85-100). Wojtyła strongly opposes any attempt to reduce ethical experience to emotionalism, and that is what he claims Scheler does in his ethics of values. Wojtyła's position becomes a critique of the critique of Scheler. This he executes by both affirming the reality of experience in morality and sustaining the existence of moral norms, as in duty. Thus, he maintains the reality of *the experience of duty*.

The experience of duty is the experience of certain obligations in the reality of the action performed by a person in his or her interaction and participation "together with others." A person's communal existence with the other imposes on him or her certain moral obligations, which are intellectual, rational commands, and real and objective experiences of moral obligations. Hence, a person does not only command the Kantian categorical imperative as a duty; the person, even more so, experiences the commanding of the categorical imperative as a duty. Therefore, there is the lived experience of "I ought to" in the commanding or willing of the categorical imperative as a duty for all. While the duty for Kant is categorical, Wojtyła (2011, 8) contends

that ‘The lived experience of duty (“I ought to ...”) is always strictly personal and connected to the concrete “I act” even when that action is performed “together with others.”’ The phrase “being personal” should not be understood as subjective and relative, as it is prevalent in contemporary ethical attitudes and values in general. “Being personal” should rather be understood in its connection with “I act,” as in his concept of subjectivation. For Wojtyła, “I act” implies the experience of the dynamism of efficacy and the vertical transcendence that a moral person experiences through the performance of actions of personalistic values.

The experience of duty, that is, the experience of “I ought to...”, occurs at different levels: positive and negative, action and inaction. Every experience of “I ought to do x” is simultaneously an experience of “I ought not to do y.” For instance, the experience of “I ought to do good” is simultaneously the experience of “I ought not to do evil.” Since, as Wojtyła (2011, 9) seems to maintain, there is always an axiological level to every deontological level or layer, the experience: “I ought to do x” (deontological level), should have “in order to realize y” (axiological level); Or “I ought not to do x” (deontological level) should have “in order not to realize y” (axiological level); Or “I ought to do x” (deontological level) should have “in order not to realize y” (axiological level) and “I ought not to do x” (deontological level) should have “in order to realize y” (axiological level). These simultaneous experiences of the deontological and axiological levels of the experience of duty, “I ought to do x,” and “I ought not to do y” are realities directly experienced in the subjectivity of the moral person. The ontological reality of these experiences can neither be denied nor negated in the epistemological apprehension of ethical or moral experiences. The synthetic-aprioriness of the epistemological apprehension of the experience of “I ought to” grounds the *scientia-ness* of ethics as science.

To this effect, the lived experience of duty, “I ought to do x,” holistically, is both logically and ontologically a constitutive part of the experience of morality. This implies that not every experience of morality is identical to the lived experience of duty. Hence, Wojtyła (2011, 9) submits that “Only the lived experience of moral duty can be said to be a constitutive element of the experience of morality.” Moreover, since the experience of duty could be a duty in the “technical” or “productive” sense, argued Wojtyła, not all experience of duty is a duty in the moral sense. A health worker in a place scourged with the pandemic of Corona virus, for instance, may have an experience of the duty to take care of infected and sick persons in a hospital because it is his or her profession and job. In this instance of the said pandemic, medical scientists and technicians may have the experience of the duty to develop vaccines and curative drugs against the virus or produce more face masks, testing kits, and ventilating machines. These could be said to be examples of the experience of duty in the technical or productive sense. However, the health workers, the medical scientists, and technicians would not, for this very reason, be said to necessarily have the experience of duty in the moral sense. The experience of duty in the moral sense with respect to the health worker, in this case, comes into play when taking care of the infected and the sick anthropologically delimits the health worker as a good or evil person. In other words, it delimits him or her as a moral person, rather than professionally or productively defining the health worker as being a good or bad health worker. It follows that the experience of morality must be the ground of ethics as science, but not

the experience of duty in general. It must be the specific understanding of the experience of duty in the moral sense. That is to say, in the anthropological delimitation of the person as morally good or evil.

A CRITICAL EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

In his dialogues that deal with political and ethical problematics, Plato makes serious efforts to establish that moral and ethical experiences ought to have logical objectivity and a metaphysical necessity. For instance, in the Republic, it is argued that particular experiences of justice ought to have the form of justice that is universal and necessary. Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*, posits ethics as a science that is practical but not theoretical, thus denying universality and necessity to be ethical and moral experiences. Without completely deviating from the platonic and Aristotelian ethical presuppositions, the philosophers of the Hellenistic periods broadly conceive ethics and morality as intuitive philosophico-spiritual experience. The Scholastic philosophers' conception of ethics is mainly Aristotelian in a Kerygmatic spirit. During the modern period, Spinoza as a representative of rationalism attempts to mathematize ethics by basing moral experience on Euclid's Geometry. Hume, as a representative of empiricism, reduced ethics and moral experiences to phenomena of sense-perception. Kant (1997; 1996), in between the two epistemological poles, in his ethical works: *Critique of Practical Reason*, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and *The Metaphysics of Morals*, confines ethics within the realm of practical reason, and by attempting to give a metaphysical foundation on morals denies experience in ethics but posits duty as the normative ground of morality.

Wojtyła critiques the understanding of experience as empiricism and phenomenism. Hence, he contends that ethics is neither a phenomenistic nor a descriptive science as sustained in the positivistic sciences of our contemporary times. He strongly criticizes Utilitarianism by positing the person as the source of morality and criticizes Kant by affirming that ethics as the science of experience is possible. The implication of denying ethics as science is to deny objectivity in ethics. The affirmation of objectivity in ethics is very crucial for this age. Our age is marked with strong waves of relativism and subjectivism in moral and ethical issues. Moral and ethical experiences have become judgments of sensational taste and emotional preference.

Today, ethical issues and behaviors are judged from the perspective of positive sciences. Actions are said to be moral or not, based on whether or not positive sciences support them. The attempt to separate ethics from metaphysics, by denying metaphysical foundations in ethics, was assumed to be part of the so-called "spirit of Enlightenment." However, even before the Enlightenment period, some philosophers during the modern period attempted to found ethics based on the psychological nature of the human person. The psychological feelings of pain and pleasure became the ground for judging and interpreting moral actions. This we find in the ethical reflections of Spinoza, Butler, Hume, and Sidgwick. This ethical psychologizing initiated the modern hedonistic and utilitarian ethical theories that come to their climax in Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mills in the nineteenth century. Karol Wojtyła (1993a), in his work *Love and Responsibility*, where he explores normative ethics,

vigorously critiques all shades and manners of the hedonistic and utilitarian theories in ethics. Thus, his investigation on meta-ethics, to establish ethics as a science, is a continuation of his critique of ethical subjectivity and relativity. This effort to reestablish ethics on the scientific principles that make metaphysics and, of course, mathematics acceptable as sciences should be the intellectual disposition and industry of all moral philosophers.

Meta-ethics, as a philosophical investigation, provokes the metaphysical questions of What is morality? What is a good action? What is an evil action? Why are good actions, good, and evil actions evil? Why ought I act in this way and not in that way? These questions completely transcend the epistemic realm of the positive sciences. They also transcend the questions of particular ethical action or behavior. They are simply meta-ethical questions, for what they aim to probe is the *quiddity* of morality *per se*. To this effect, Karol Wojtyła aims at liberating ethics from the cruel epistemic claws of the positive sciences by developing a meta-ethics, which gives a metaphysical foundation to ethics as science based on the “experience of morality.” This attempt to reconnect ethics to metaphysics and to reestablish ethics on metaphysics is extremely cogent in ethical studies. It is very pertinent at a time when ethics and ethical theories are becoming matters of personal taste and cultural or nationalistic fashion. This explains why contemporary ethical attitudes are dominated by ethical subjectivity and relativity.

More so, Karol Wojtyła’s position that ethics must be necessarily connected to anthropology is another very important point in his investigation of meta-ethics. Moral actions should not be studied as if they are phenomena separate and unrelated to those who produce the actions. Moral actions cannot exist without an efficient moral cause, which is the human person. Moral actions must, therefore, always be seen as the moral experiences of the human person. Moral experiences are objective realities in the subjectivity of the human person. They are as objectively real in the subjectivity of the human person as the sum of angles in a triangle is real for every triangle.

By doing so, in conclusion, he intends to reconcile and synthesize, Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition of ethics as a practical science, Kant’s deontological ethics as a normative science, and Max Scheler’s ethics as a science of values. For him, the essence of science is objectivity in a systematic thought informed by facts, that is to say, moral reality. He maintains that the fact on which ethics is based as science is the experience of duty in the moral sense, common to all human persons. The argument of Wojtyła to sustain ethics as a science is based on phenomenology as the epistemological method of establishing first principles and grasping truth in reality. It is thus, very persuasive for anyone who maintains the claim of phenomenology as the epistemic discipline that not only aims at grasping necessary and objective truth but that establishes the science of reality. On the other hand, those who hold the positivistic conception of science purely will not be persuaded by Wojtyła’s argumentations in sustaining ethics as science.

The writer has thus, attempted to flesh out the meta-ethics of Karol Wojtyła. It is obvious in this study of his works that his investigation on meta-ethics is in its seminal stage, with a lot of provocative claims and arguments that need further investigation and systematization. With the politicization of ethical and moral issues today, there is an urgent need for a clear and distinct conception and methodology of

ethics. Moreover, more so, for systematization and grounding of ethics as a science that investigates moral reality on necessary and universal principles. Thus, this makes the investigation of Karol Wojtyła's meta-ethics pertinent and urgent today.

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