

## One Man, Two Dreams: Collaboration with Fr. Professor Andrzej Maryniarczyk SDB\*

### Jeden człowiek, dwa marzenia. Współpraca z ks. Profesorem Andrzejem Maryniarczykiem SDB

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**Abstract:** This article consists of memoirs of two associates of late Fr. Andrzej Maryniarczyk, a Polish Salesian priest and a renowned representative of the Lublin Philosophical School. These recollections are but a part of a greater pool of insights, testimonies and reflections delivered at a conference in Zamość that commemorated the third anniversary of the Lublin philosopher's untimely death. Robert T. Ptaszek recalls Fr. Maryniarczyk as a colleague and mentor, impacting his own academic career. Maciej B. Stępień remembers the last four years of Fr. Maryniarczyk's scholarly activity, filled to the brim with efforts to bring the legacy of the Lublin Philosophical School to the English-speaking audience. The two dreams they discuss are the metaphilosophical works of Stanisław Kamiński, successfully published in English before Fr. Maryniarczyk passed away, and the *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (UEP, the English translation of the Polish original), whose editorial team was appointed and assembled by the Editor-In-Chief just days before he was gone.

**Keywords:** history of philosophy, Polish philosophy, Lublin Philosophical School, theory of being, Andrzej Maryniarczyk, Stanisław Kamiński, Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy

**Abstrakt:** Na niniejszy artykuł składają się wspomnienia dwóch współpracowników śp. ks. Andrzeja Maryniarczyka, polskiego salezjanina i wybitnego przedstawiciela Lubelskiej Szkoły Filozoficznej. Wspomnienia te są tylko częścią większej puli spostrzeżeń, świadectw i refleksji wygłoszonych podczas konferencji w Zamościu, upamiętniającej trzecią rocznicę przedwczesnej śmierci lubelskiego filozofa. Robert T. Ptaszek wspomina ks. Maryniarczyka jako kolegę i mentora, który wywarł wpływ na jego karierę naukową. Maciej B. Stępień wspomina ostatnie cztery lata działalności naukowej ks. Maryniarczyka, wypełnione po brzegi staraniami o przybliżenie anglojęzycznej publiczności dorobku Lubelskiej Szkoły Filozoficznej. Dwa marzenia, o których opowiadają, to metafizyczne dzieła Stanisława Kamińskiego, które udało się wydać w języku angielskim jeszcze przed śmiercią ks. Maryniarczyka, oraz *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (UEP, angielskie tłumaczenie polskiego oryginału), której zespół redakcyjny został powołany i skompletowany przez Redaktora Naczelnego na kilka dni przed jego odejściem.

**Słowa kluczowe:** historia filozofii, filozofia polska, Lubelska Szkoła Filozoficzna, teoria bytu, Andrzej Maryniarczyk, Stanisław Kamiński, Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii



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INTRODUCTION (RTP)<sup>1</sup>

This article concerns two of Father Professor Andrzej Maryniarczyk's many academic projects, which are referred to, in different proportions, through the recollections of the two authors. Both collaborated with the Father Professor in somewhat different areas and with different intensity. What unites these recollections is the fact that after many years of my collaboration with Fr. Maryniarczyk, I decided—in late summer 2016—to recommend to him a person who, in my opinion, could continue the extensive translation projects that Fr. Maryniarczyk managed and planned. The need has arisen: Fr. Maryniarczyk was looking for good English translators at the time, and having already become acquainted with the scientific and translation skills of Dr. Maciej Bogdan Stępień,<sup>2</sup> I was convinced that recommending him would be the right step. I was not mistaken. The effects were immediately apparent. What I did not expect, however, was that from such an exquisitely apt personnel decision would begin the last four years in which both of us would be able to work with Fr. Maryniarczyk.

In this text, therefore, the reader will find, combined in different proportions, the recollections of two authors, each of whom worked with the Father Professor in a slightly different way, with different intensity and over different years. The main part is the story of a translator (as well as a proofreader and editor) who, between 2016 and 2020, systematically yet intensively worked on texts written, edited or recommended by the Professor, starting from the works of Stanisław Kamiński up to the entries of the *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. In this way, Dr. Stępień helped to bring to fruition the two dreams which this article is about. This account is supplemented by my brief reflection—the reflection of a philosopher who, not very often, but quite regularly, met with the Head of the Department of Metaphysics, as this was the position Fr. Maryniarczyk held for years at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Catholic University of Lublin. These meetings were an important part of our cooperation, which had lasted since 2000, within the framework of the Polish Society of Thomas Aquinas, of which Fr. Professor was a co-founder and President for many years. During this period of cooperation, I wrote, among other

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<sup>1</sup> Each section of the text is the work of each author individually (RTP, MBS).

<sup>2</sup> In 2013, he requested me to be one of reviewers of his doctoral thesis. However, due to certain circumstances, this honor eluded me. It remained for me to write the *Przedmowa* [Foreword] to the book edition of this exquisite dissertation (Ptaszek 2015b).

things, more than 50 entries published in the *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii* (and now *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy*) and in the *Encyklopedia Filozofii Polskiej* [Encyclopedia of Polish Philosophy].<sup>3</sup> In this way, I contributed to some measurable extent to the realization of the second of the Professor's dreams that are described here.

I hope that these memoirs—recorded in this particular form and configuration I have chosen—will allow for a better understanding of how important a figure Father Professor Andrzej Maryniarczyk was for Polish philosophy.

### 1. WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A TRANSLATOR? (MBS)

The answer is: Being a translator is good, but certainly different from “being a scribe.” “Metaphysics was taught to me in the early 1990s by one Fr. Doctor Maryniarczyk, and not only taught, but taught well and thoroughly,” was the *dictum* heard in September 2016 by Fr. Professor Andrzej Maryniarczyk, when we met in the former premises of the Department of Metaphysics of the Catholic University of Lublin after more than a quarter of a century since his last entry in my student's record book. This meeting after many years had been planned, with an appointed place and time, and its topic was English translations of the achievements of the Lublin Philosophical School.

The meeting lasted about one lecture hour, and from then on this lecture hour was kept on every subsequent occasion. On my way out, I had in my hands a stack of “Notebooks on Metaphysics,”<sup>4</sup> already translated and published, and in my inbox a huge but never completed translation of Mieczysław A. Krąpiec's *Understanding of Philosophy*, in a version expanded by two chapters compared to the original (Krąpiec [in print]).<sup>5</sup> For the previous translator of the Lublin Philosophical School, Hugh McDonald,<sup>6</sup> this massive text (numbering more than 1.1 million characters) was for many years a kind of testing

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<sup>3</sup> I talk about this in a little more detail in the last part of this article.

<sup>4</sup> These were the first four volumes in the English-language edition (Maryniarczyk 2010, 2011, 2015 and 2016). Later I received volumes 5 and 6, released in reverse order (Maryniarczyk 2017 and 2018)

<sup>5</sup> The chapters added by the Author are: *Religion, the Focal Point of Culture* and *Human Dimension of Christian Culture*.

<sup>6</sup> Hugh James Francis McDonald, son of Hector and Angela, one of four brothers, a Canadian from the parish of Our Lady of the Scapular in Niagara Falls, Ontario, a student of Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, b. September 30, 1956, d. January 31, 2015.

ground on which he practiced and honed his craft—often by trial and error, sometimes resorting to the mediation of Latin, but always in pursuit of some form of standardization of the vocabulary used—in order not only to “decipher” himself, but also to expose to the public in a coherent and readable form the discourse of the Polish philosopher-realist. But it was not Krąpiec’s work that Fr. Maryniarczyk had in mind in the first place. We began our collaboration along the lines of his long-held dream of bringing to a worldwide (English-speaking) audience the complete works of Stanislaw Kamiński on the metaphilosophy of the theory of being, i.e., the methodology of classical metaphysics cultivated by the Lublin Philosophical School.

Methodological reflection is an essential and distinctive feature of Thomism developed in Lublin; the philosophical thought of St. Thomas (thus not “neo-Thomism”, but also not “paleo-Thomism”, but rather “hopefully, Thomism”—referring to Jacques Maritain’s self-anecdote<sup>7</sup>) has been developed here from the methodological side with the help of the latest developments in the theory of sciences and modern logic.

Thus developed, Thomas’s metaphysics is the *theory of being*: a maximalist and realist (reality-based and reality-oriented) philosophy, constituting an independent domain of human knowledge, with its own object and method, autonomous from other types of human knowledge (including independence from any science and any religious faith), explaining the whole of reality in the aspect of its existence and formulating in this aspect indubitable statements—because for all beings existing independently of human thought (real beings) such factors/elements of their inner structure are indicated that render them free of contradiction (Cf. Kamiński 2019, 14–15).

At that time I was already extensively involved in Polish-English translations of academic papers and I had under my belt a significant number of translations in philosophy, theology, humanities and

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<sup>7</sup> “Je ne suis pas un néo-thomiste, à tout prendre j’aimerais mieux être un paléo-thomiste; je suis, j’espère être un thomiste” (Maritain 1947, 10, cf. Gliniecki 2022, 63). In English translation: “I am not a neo-Thomist. All in all, I would rather be a paleo-Thomist than a neo-Thomist. I am, or at least I hope I am, a Thomist” (Synan 1992, 44). On Thomism in Poland see: Stępień 1999. It has to be added that, as far as the matter can be traced, none of the four people of that surname doing classical philosophy in Poland, i.e. Prof. Antoni Bazyli Stępień (Lublin), Prof. Katarzyna Stępień (Lublin), Fr. Prof. Tomasz Stępień (Warsaw) and Dr. Maciej Bogdan Stępień (Lublin), are related.

social sciences.<sup>8</sup> Now, however, the time had come for a completely new challenge, in the face of which all previous translation work had paled: to translate into English the very methodological backbone of Lublin metaphysics, that is, the metaphilosophical works of Fr. Professor Stanisław Kamiński. This was the first of two great dreams that Fr. Prof. Maryniarczyk realized in collaboration with me between 2016 and 2020.

## 2. STANISŁAW KAMIŃSKI (MBS)

Fr. Maryniarczyk's great respect for Kamiński's achievements can be briefly characterized this way: he was Krąpiec's successor in the Chair of Metaphysics at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (KUL), but describing him as "Krąpiec's disciple" is not enough. It is true, but the statement is an incomplete truth. As a metaphysician, he was also a "Kamiński's disciple," and the most diligent one at that. For Fr. Maryniarczyk, everything Kamiński published in the field of the methodology of metaphysics was his beloved field of research and a constant point of reference in what he himself said and wrote as an academic. In particular, Kamiński's language and delivery—removed as far as possible from long-windedness and quaintness, condensed and precise, almost "compressed"—suited Fr. Maryniarczyk's intellectual sensibility. He himself tried to follow a path between the two: Krąpiec and Kamiński, and to expound metaphysics in the simplest possible language, not to dilate or escape into wordiness, but also not to condense the content to the limits of human perception. He smiled broadly, nodding as he heard a comment from one of the professors repeated to him: "I really read Kamiński and studied it all for a long time, but at some point I shelved it all, because I had the irresistible impression that, in order to understand everything Kamiński is talking about, I would have to know everything Kamiński knows—and if I knew everything Kamiński knows, why should I read it?"

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<sup>8</sup> I started by collaborating with the John Paul II Institute of the Catholic University of Lublin, the Pope John Paul II Institute in Warsaw, and the Center for the Thought of John Paul II—A Cultural Institution of the City of Warsaw. I took up English translations of Polish scientific works after obtaining my doctorate in 2014, which was completed in the Institute of Patrology and the History of the Church of the Catholic University of Lublin under the guidance of Fr. Prof. Zygmunt Zieliński, and was credited—by an exceptional coincidence—as theological, while it should have been recognized as a Ph.D. in humanities. How such confusion could have occurred in such a renowned institution is "a good question for another time."

Fortunately for readers of the translation that has now been produced, it is not necessary to know everything Kamiński knew in order to read it. It is enough to have a good grasp of English. Almost all the English paragraphs are longer than those on the other side. Kamiński's thought here has been "decompressed" from the linguistic garb in which it was originally conveyed. Fr. Maryniarczyk was absolutely delighted by this.

The plan to publish Kamiński in English came about a very long time ago, but earlier attempts did not meet Fr. Maryniarczyk's expectations. He knew his English, although he did not prepare English-language publications himself—he preferred to write metaphysics in Polish and give it then to a translator. However, he was able to easily assess the quality of an English translation of a metaphysics text in terms of terminology and style. In my case, Kamiński's "Explanation in Metaphysics" went first. A few weeks later, at the end of September 2016, after I had sent the Professor a third of the whole thing, I heard a reply in the phone receiver: "Sir, I have read it. Good. Good. Please continue."

The continuation of this work resulted in three volumes, collecting everything Kamiński wrote about the methodology of metaphysics. Fr. Maryniarczyk appeared in them as the author of the "Introduction" (Volume 1) and "A Word from the Publisher" (Volumes 2 and 3), while Dr. hab. Wojciech Daszkiewicz was the supervising editor of all three volumes. Nevertheless, the selection and arrangement of the texts was strictly the idea of the Professor, and the final shape of the English text depended on his approval. Also by his decision, the format of the whole mini-series was adopted: the English and Polish texts in two parallel columns, with doubled footnotes, index, introductory texts and "Editor's Note" at the end. He said: "These are things too important to print the translation alone without its base." And so, in 2018, a collection of five articles was published, with which Fr. Maryniarczyk decided to implement his plan: "The Theory of Being and Other Philosophical Disciplines. Teoria bytu a inne dyscypliny filozoficzne;" "The Theory of Being and Its Domains. Dziedziny teorii bytu;" "On the Language of the Theory of Being. O języku teorii bytu;" "Explanation in Metaphysics. Wyjaśnianie w metafizyce" and

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<sup>9</sup> Dear Reader, I draw your attention to the fact that these were mirrored, doubled texts. Such were also their titles—doubled, English and Polish—and it is difficult to abbreviate them without distorting the details of the bibliographic notation. So I quote both titles and separate them with a period. This looks long-winded, because *it is indeed long-winded*, but this is what happens in the rare case of mirror publications.



“Methodological Peculiarity of the Theory of Being. Osobliwość metodologiczna teorii bytu.” Due to the format adopted, which doubled the content, this first volume was 273 pages long (Cf. Kamiński 2018).

The next volume (386 pages) took the title from its main text, occupying more than two-thirds of the whole: “Methods of Contemporary Metaphysics. Metody współczesnej metafizyki” (Kamiński 2019). This text (intended to be a standalone book) was not completed by Kamiński, and it was translated just as it was. The target structure of the work, planned by the Author, is specified in the “Editor’s Note” at the end. In volume two, the following are also included: “Contemporary Methods of Metaphysics. Współczesne metody metafizyki” (a very short text, and at the same time one that most profoundly demonstrates Kamiński’s great respect for anyone who may have attempted to grapple with the issues of the “first philosophy”<sup>10</sup>), “Method in Classical Philosophy. O metodzie filozofii klasycznej”<sup>11</sup> (these two are followed by the aforementioned main part of the volume, from page 69 to 304) and, as the final text, “The Feasibility of Axiomatization of Classical General Metaphysics. Aksjomatyzowalność klasycznej metafizyki ogólnej.” This one was of great interest to Fr. Maryniarczyk, but he emphasized that it is worth reading it together with the encyclopedic entry “Formalizing the Language of Metaphysics” by Krąpiec (the English version still in editing)—with the caveat that Kamiński should be read first, not later. These two texts form a peculiar pair and present an interesting question that has caught the attention of both philosophers, Kamiński’s in particular: Is it possible to make an exact science out of classical metaphysics? Or would it even be possible to formalize its entire system of statements and start philosophizing in this field *more geometrico*? (Baruch Spinoza announced at one time that this is what he would do with all philosophy, starting with ethics—and it came out as it did; in modern times, Kurt Gödel took a keen interest in this question with regard to metaphysics, but did not move from talking the talk to actually walking the walk.) “Axiomatization of general metaphysics, yes, is possible,” Kamiński replied. “But what for?” We will then have about forty axioms, selected according to different but strict

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<sup>10</sup> In addition, “Contemporary Methods...” is a short text, because few new methods have appeared in metaphysics today, “Methods of Contemporary...” is, in turn, a very lengthy article, because it deals with all the methods that modern metaphysics (all of it, not just classical one) uses—including the methods that have been added recently. In this way of titling one can clearly see Kamiński’s condensed, streamlined style: everything here follows strictly from the order in which the same three words are given.

<sup>11</sup> This text is also unfinished. It is one of the last publications Kamiński worked on.

rules (obviousness, certainty, ontological primacy, etc.), and only a handful of theses derived from them. This will be a curiosity, not a development in the field. Formalization, on the other hand (i.e. a step further) is impossible, Krąpiec said, pointing to the analogical character of the concepts used in metaphysics and the specificity of its object, which is each and every really existing being.

In the third volume, counting 247 pages (Kamiński 2020), Fr. Maryniarczyk has put together a beautiful mosaic of Kamiński's thought going out towards issues broader than the theory of being and its methodological side. After a lengthy article "The Specificity of Metaphysical Cognition. Specyficzność poznania metafizycznego" we move on to "Types of Human Knowledge. Typy ludzkiej wiedzy"—intended to be the context for the specificity explained previously—and we end with a comparison of the rationalism of modern science (deductive, inductive, formal, instrumental and model) with Thomas's intellectualism: "Rationalism of the Modern Methodology of Sciences and Intellectualism of the Epistemology of Thomas Aquinas. Racjonalizm we współczesnej metodologii nauk a intelektualizm w epistemologii Tomasza z Akwinu." But this is not the end of the volume. Its culmination (and the finale of dressing this entire collection in the English-language garb) are the texts: "On the Nature of Philosophy. O naturze filozofii" and "Science and Philosophy vis-à-vis Wisdom. Nauka i filozofia a mądrość." Paradoxically, in order to become familiar with Kamiński's intellectual culture, one would have to start reading everything discussed above with these two articles.

Thus, the Professor's dream of making the methodological key to Lublin's realist philosophy available to the world was fulfilled. In Poland, these key texts had readers numbering in the thousands, but only hundreds knew them well. Now they have tens of thousands of readers around the world, and potentially there will be hundreds of thousands, and eventually (certainly) millions. I have heard the words "this is important" in reference to this entire collection from Fr. Maryniarczyk almost every time we have met. And lo and behold, we did it. These important things appeared in print in quick succession, year by year, from 2018 to 2020. It seemed to us back then that this was some great (and important!) new



opening for the worldwide presence and recognition of the Lublin Philosophical School.<sup>12</sup> But it was already 2020.

The more the number of translations grew, the more often the subject of the method of translation and the question of its quality came up in conversations with Fr. Maryniarczyk. The translation of a literary work is quite different from the translation of a scientific one, not to say: fundamentally, which is due to the radically different nature of these works. This difference does not present itself as a complicated issue, but knowing it is a *sine qua non* requirement for a thoughtful and consistent approach to this kind of work. Basic points of difference were keenly analyzed and described by Roman Ingarden, when, forced by circumstances, he took up translation work more extensively (Ingarden 1955).<sup>13</sup> However, his phenomenological view of the issue (intelligent and by all means precise, but also quite tiresome), was not any particular subject of our discussion and analysis. To sum up this

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<sup>12</sup> Attempts to take the Lublin School of Philosophy out into wider waters had been made, but one at a time and with mixed results (cf. *Theory of Being* 1980 and Krąpiec 1983). A disaster struck with the publication of an English translation of Krąpiec's fundamental work, *Metaphysics: An Outline of the Theory of Being*. No one, not the translator, not the editors, not anyone on the team responsible for this publication noticed that the "theory of being" in the title was changed to "history" of being! (Cf. Krąpiec 1991). How such a gigantic debacle by such a reputable publishing house could have happened is again "a good question for another time." In this situation, KUL's philosophy of culture has acquired greater outreach thanks to the hard work of Prof. Piotr Jaroszyński (cf. Jaroszyński 2002, 2007, 2011, 2018 and 2024). Fr. Maryniarczyk planned to change this situation radically, starting with his "Notebooks on Metaphysics" (translated by Hugh), then through the edition of Kamiński's works (translated by me), up to the final and most profound project, which is the *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2022–), translated by David Daniel, Justyna Japola, Hugh McDonald, Maciej B. Stępień and Karolina Sutton. (Importantly, Andrzej Maryniarczyk remains the Editor-in-Chief of this edition, while Wojciech Daszkiewicz took up his daily administrative duties from 2021 on). Along the way there was also a publication directly presenting the Lublin Philosophical School (Krąpiec and Maryniarczyk 2010).

<sup>13</sup> This was translated into English by Jolanta W. Wawrzycka (Ingarden 1991) and although the article was published in *Analecta Husserliana* (23: 131–92) it is often quoted as part of the *Ingardeniana III: Roman Ingarden's Aesthetics in a New Key and the Independent Approaches of Others: The Performing Arts, the Fine Arts, and Literature*, edited by his long-years associate, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (which is the title given to this particular volume/issue). Ingarden distinguished four strata of a text: the stratum of phonetic units, of semantic units, of represented objects and of accepted aspects of representation. He was not against giving literary value to works of a scientific nature, as long as this was a secondary goal for their authors. For he saw the first and fundamental difference precisely in the different purpose: on the one hand, literary self-expression being "the result of the author's complex yet specific states and psychological processes, mainly of an *emphatic nature*," and on the other hand, "the steps as well as the tools in a highly complex historical process, that of man's cognition of manifold reality (in its broadest sense)." In addition, he noted in a scientific work (a) lessening or even disappearance of the first stratum, (b) quite different shaping of the second stratum so that it leads directly to the objects cognized by the Author, (c) pursuit of transparency of these cognized ("intentional") objects so that the real ("out-of-text," i.e. autonomous) objects enter the Reader's field of perception, and (d) the requirement of open and clear presentation of aspects of representation, up to and including strict definitions of meanings (Cf. Ingarden 1955, 128–33; Ingarden 1991, 131–36).

topic of discussion, I can point out what Fr. Maryniarczyk emphasized and what he expected from a translator. As far as the author's style is concerned—apart from characteristic mannerisms, favorite phrases and terminological inventions for the sake of the subject (if any)<sup>14</sup>—it should not and cannot be rendered. What matters in the translation of a philosophical work is the thought with which the reader will interact, and this thought must absolutely be preserved, not its packaging. What is valued, therefore, in a translator is his understanding of the thought being translated, not his stylistic abilities, however high they may be, or his, perhaps great and underestimated, literary talent. And here is the crux of the matter, because a translator of a scientific work can only translate well what his own mental culture will allow him to understand. Without a full understanding of a philosophical text, there is no translation; instead, there is a falsification of the author's thought and chaos, in which the original, precisely stated thought is lost, replaced by an eloquent (but “eloquent otherwise”) foreign-language babble that bears only the appearances of coherence. In this regard, I have noted that the method of translation (seen from the practical side, in terms of the very process of creating a translated (“dependent”) work must take the form of “tailor's craft”: the thought (which in Polish is a female noun) must be stripped of the linguistic garment in which she appeared, and then, having taken a good look at her, she must be dressed in such a tailored, new garment that her shape, in every detail, still remains visible, perfectly clear and recognizable. The new robe must not cover anything up, nor add anything more to her “appeal.” Fr. Professor liked this attitude (he also repeatedly demonstrated to me various translator's slip-ups, mainly in English translations of source texts), and with all the more confidence and even some enthusiasm, he began to hand over his own scholarly publications to me for translation.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Vide*: “Krapcisms” in *Understanding Philosophy* such as “upełnić,” “ujaśnić,” “zasycić,” “poznawczość,” “pytajność,” “osobniczość” and many others. All of them have been indicated and explained in the editorial footnotes.

<sup>15</sup> In these publications, the name of the translator was not indicated. Therefore, it should be pointed out that the Author wrote originally in Polish, while submitting English translations written by me for printing (cf. Maryniarczyk 2019, 2020abc).

3. *UNIVERSAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY*: REMARKS OF THE TRANSLATOR AND TEXT EDITOR  
(MBS)

Published between 2000 and 2010, the Polish-language *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii* (PEF) contains the entire introductory exposition of the theory of being developed in Lublin. Entries such as “Essence,” “Existence,” “Being,” “Empiricism (Genetic),” “Intuition,” “Common Sense,” “Cognition (Metaphysical),” “Man,” “Freedom,” “Truth,” “Goodness,” “Beauty,” but also “Culture,” “Moral Norm,” “Ethics” and “Education,” as well as many, many others, take into account and explain the viewpoint of philosophical realism. Knowing the overall content (i.e., reading everything word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, column by column and page by page), one can see that this was an excellent opportunity to present the theory of being—both in its general and particular department—to the public once again, but this time not alone, but in the company of the entire philosophical output of the humankind: of all people, of all times and all places.

Ever since the Polish project was completed, Fr. Maryniarczyk had been making efforts to show the world (in English) what had been accumulated in this collection, which is unique in the history of Polish culture. In particular, he wanted to show everything that pertains to the theory of being. But it was not until 2020, thanks to a decision by the Minister of Science and Education that the process of publishing the English version could get off the ground. Translation work had already been going on for years, so to speak, in the background of the efforts being made, and most of the content (up to the letter “P”) was translated in the fall of 2020. But it was not just the translation of the Polish text that this new project was about—this was only the beginning of the hard work. The *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (UEP) differs from PEF in five areas.<sup>16</sup>

The first of these areas is the bibliography attached to the entries. In the third decade of the 21st century, the literature on many topics, but also on many biographies, needs to be supplemented

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<sup>16</sup> I am leaving aside the obvious difference in the alphabetical order of the entries due to lexical differences: “Kultura” in the UEP will be in the letter “C” (Culture), “Koran” in the lierce “Q” (Qur’an), and “Kwadrat logiczny” in the letter “S” (Square of Logical Opposition). Sometimes there will also be more subtle differences in the nomenclature used, e.g. what we refer to in Polish as “Deklaracja Praw Człowieka” is known in English as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (because the adjective “Universal” is never omitted as it is the case in Polish) and, therefore, this entry in the UEP will be in the letter “U.”

compared to the state of research in the late 20th century and the 2000s. Almost every UEP entry differs from the one in PEF in this regard. The second area of differences is determined by the rapid development of certain fields of knowledge. Entries such as “Astrophysics” or “Engineering (Genetic)” had to be updated in the UEP. The third area of differences is caused by the authors of the entries themselves, who, years after writing the Polish version, now want to add or change something in their text when they receive the English translation of the original for authorization. This does not happen often, but nevertheless it does occur, including the entries concerning Lublin metaphysics (e.g., in the UEP, Fr. Maryniarczyk revised a substantial part of the entry “Being” by Fr. Mieczysław A. Krąpiec). The fourth area consists of the rarest cases of detecting an error or ambiguity in an entry (an omission, an understatement, a mental shortcut on the part of the author, followed by an error on the part of the translator, deepening the ambiguity). Such places are changed in the English text and, in the process, (most often) expanded compared to the original. Finally, the fifth area of difference between the PEF and the UEP is the vast field of Polish culture and history. First of all, this applies to biographies of Polish philosophers, but also to some issue-related entries, e.g. “Commission of National Education.” In the PEF, the historical background of many of the facts mentioned is given in a way that assumes in the reader a knowledge of Polish history and a reasonably good understanding of Polish realities, customs and traditions. This is not surprising, since these were Polish texts and were written for a Polish audience. However, when you take into account that the recipient of the same content will now be a Chinese, American, Indian, Australian or Brazilian reader, who knows next to nothing about the former Polish state districts, dynasties, unions, political structures, institutions, uprisings, partitions, etc., such a way of referring to Polish history and Polish culture will, instead of explaining and providing an understanding, create an insurmountable cognitive barrier.<sup>17</sup> Most of the editorial work on the UEP

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<sup>17</sup> One of the more drastic examples of this was the sentence stating that someone “took part in the November and January uprisings.” In this case, the translator (Hugh McDonald) collided with the barrier of lack of knowledge and changed the order of the uprisings to “January and November,” thinking that these insurrections took place, respectively, in those very months of one year, and January is, after all, in the calendar before November (I suspect that Hugh associated this with the Irish “Easter Uprising,” which indeed began and ended in the octave of Easter of 1916). And yet, my dear Hugh, these were two great and bloody Polish-Russian wars! And they lasted for years. All the more reason why others, even highly educated ones, will not know what it means that, for example, “this issue ceased to matter after the Union of Horodło,” “this demand was raised again at the

entries covers this area, and it must be remembered that all the prepared translations still have to undergo rigorous proofreading in several stages. The work on the UEP edition is a gigantic task, and its result is not only a new linguistic layout and a new alphabetical arrangement of the list of entries known from the PEF, but also the expansion and updating of many of these texts, according to the above-mentioned areas (aspects, requirements) dictating the need for changes.

The death of the Editor-in-Chief did not interrupt this project or hinder it in any way. It occurred precisely at the moment when the entire team of text editors, translators, proofreaders and others responsible for every aspect and element of the UEP was finally formed, and all tasks were assigned. Everyone knew what to do. It was only then that Fr. Maryniarczyk passed away. Therefore, the work on publishing the UEP did not stop, but, on the contrary, it commenced. Volume 1 (*A–Ch*) was published as early as 2022, and Volume 2 (*Ci–Ex*) was ready for printing at the end of 2023. Interestingly, the peculiarities of the English language led the two volumes (and especially Volume 2) to accumulate a number of entries of the heaviest weight; it is here that the “heart” of the entire Encyclopedia beats now, as it were, for here is “Philosophical Anthropology,” “Being,” “Cognition,” “Essence,” “Existence,” “Contingency of Being,” “Empiricism (Genetic),” “Common Sense,” “Act (Human),” “Decision,” “Civilization,” “Culture,” “Democracy,” “Evil,” “Conscience,” “Decalogue,” “Ethics,” “Education” and “Death” (there is also, of course, “Encyclopedia,” in here, even “Angel in Philosophy” in Volume 1 and “Demons” in Volume 2, as well as “Buddhism,” “Chinese Philosophy,” “Enlightenment Philosophy,” “Egyptian Philosophy,” “Ethnophilosophy” and “Esotericism”). This unique set of entries still has not seen the light of day, while the Editorial Board of the UEP is already finishing work on the entries of Volume 3 (letters “F,” “G” and “H”). Why the prepared for printing Volume 2 until today (November 2024) cannot be published—this is *a damn good question, asked at this very moment* and addressed to many people, with His Magnificence Rector of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin in the first place.

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Four-Year *Sejm*,” and somewhere “Kościuszko traditions were vibrant,” or “Sarmatian customs were no longer honored.” All this needs to be unpacked and dissected.

Under these circumstances, Fr. Maryniarczyk's second great dream is still waiting, in great uncertainty, for its fulfillment. And yet no one needs to be persuaded that this is no longer even a presentation, however large-scale, of the achievements of the Lublin Philosophical School, but a historical event in which more than 600 Polish scholars, including the most eminent persons, have spoken out on fundamental issues such as the credibility of human cognition in general, the rationality of the world of persons and things, and the moral responsibility for the *logos* and *ethos* of human culture, that is, the responsibility for the rational and purposeful cultivation of the real world. It is, therefore, in a broad view, the most serious intervention in the history of Poles and Polish philosophy (now addressed to everyone, on a global scale) concerning the issues directly affecting the understanding us, human persons, and the world of things around us—an intervention all the more important because today, in the dark era of “post-truth,” people are losing the memory of the fact that *understanding* is the highest cognitive act of the human person and the light of his or her purposeful action (cf. Kiereś 2022).

#### 4. *THE UNIVERSAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY* AND ITS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: SOME REMARKS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE AUTHOR OF THE ENTRIES (RTP)

Maciej B. Stępień presented his memories of working with the Professor through the prism of the work they co-created. My perspective will be more personal, because since 1999 I have met with Fr. Professor in various circumstances. Mainly these were meetings arranged for the author of the entries to the Encyclopedia with its Editor-in-Chief. I will talk about the manner in which Fr. Maryniarczyk performed this function a little later. The frequency of our encounters has increased significantly since I began working at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Catholic University of Lublin in 2009. At that time, I was able to meet him on many different occasions: at Faculty Councils, at conferences, and in the Chair of Metaphysics, where Fr. Professor spent many hours every day. And I eagerly took advantage of these opportunities.

Before all this happened, however, I got to know Fr. Maryniarczyk in more formal circumstances. For in 1999 he became one of the reviewers of my doctoral dissertation *Filozoficzne implikacje współczesnych polskich koncepcji religii* [Philosophical Implications of Contemporary Polish Concepts of



Religion]. I keep a scan of this review to this day, because the specific and at the same time very clear guidelines and suggestions contained in it, concerning both formal issues and the meaning of specific metaphysical views, proved very useful in my further academic work.

Breaking the chronology a bit, I would like to mention that Fr. Professor in 2009 also became one of four reviewers of my habilitation dissertation *Nowa Era religii? Ruch New Age i jego doktryna – aspekt filozoficzny* [The New Age of Religion? The New Age Movement and Its Doctrine: Philosophical Aspect] (Ptaszek 2015a). His precise comments and questions once again showed that he was a very insightful and reliable reviewer.

However, it was 1999 that proved to be an exceptional year in terms of our scientific collaboration. Exactly in August of that year I received a request to prepare my first entry for the *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (PEF). Since I was not yet working at the Catholic University of Lublin at that time, I assume that the Professor made such a proposal to me because, as a reviewer of my doctoral dissertation, he got to know my research interests. And he gave me an opportunity that I had not even counted on. After all, I had only been a doctor of humanities in philosophy for a few months at the time. Meanwhile, I was invited to be one of the authors of a work that is unique in many respects.

Today, when the PEF is an important part of Polish humanist culture, we often forget that the idea and realization of this work required great courage and faith. This was expressed in the *Introduction* to the first volume of the Encyclopedia by Fr. Krąpiec and Fr. Maryniarczyk, writing, among other things, these words: “The initiative to compile and publish a multi-volume *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy* comes from a milieu that, in the most difficult times for Polish philosophy and humanities in the last fifty years, developed, protected and nurtured independent philosophical cognition, thus guarding Polish culture.

“The team initiating this undertaking is aware of the enormity of the work and the difficulties it entails, but at the same time is aware of the responsibility posed by the contemporary cultural and social setting, and approaches this task as a service to thinking and a service to truth” (PEF 2000, 10).

From the very beginning, the project seemed so ambitious that many doubted its feasibility. After all, an efficient and professional editorial team had to be formed, a list of entries had to be prepared, and



competent authors and editors had to be found for them. In addition, many more mundane issues had to be resolved, such as obtaining financing or finding a professional printing house. All this combined made quite a burden for the Editor-in-Chief—and he managed to deal with it brilliantly. How and when, in the flurry of numerous responsibilities, he was able to do so will remain his secret.

The solemn presentation of the first volume of the Encyclopedia, containing entries for the letters “A” and “B,” and dedicated somewhat pathetically, but then again wholeheartedly: “To the Polish Nation and into the hands of His Holiness John Paul II, the Greatest Son of this Nation on the threshold of the Third Millennium of Christianity,” took place in December 2000. Subsequent volumes appeared every year, and in 2022 the first volume of the English version of the Encyclopedia was printed.

I can say without exaggeration that Fr. Maryniarczyk’s offer to join the team of authors of the PEF was extremely motivating for me. In response, he systematically commissioned me to prepare more and more entries. At first they were mostly not very extensive biographies of philosophers. Then I wrote entries explaining important concepts and terms, until finally Fr. Maryniarczyk began to commission me also to elaborate on significant philosophical issues.<sup>18</sup>

However, regardless of the topic of the entry, I remember well the procedure of creating it. First there was a letter from the Professor with a proposal to elaborate on another topic. When I accepted it, there was a working meeting during which I presented the way I wanted to write it. During these meetings, the Professor always came up with valuable hints and suggestions whenever he thought there was something particularly relevant to the topic the entry was about. After such a conversation, I would write and send him the first version of the text. After some time I was invited to another meeting, at which I received my text with handwritten corrections by the Professor. They were very meticulous and showed not only his philosophical competence, but also his attention to the smallest details. At the meeting, Fr. Maryniarczyk would also make comments and remarks, to which I would respond the best

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<sup>18</sup> There is no room here to recall them all. Let me only point out that the Editor-in-Chief appreciated my expertise in several areas, so that I had, for example, the privilege of writing the entry “Chesterton Gilbert Keith” (PEF 2001, 110–112, UEP 2022, 1266–1268), but also (among many others) “Cassirer Ernst,” “Engels Friedrich,” “Marx Karl,” “Kołakowski Leszek,” “Euhemer of Messina,” “Leeuw Gerardus van der,” “Deism,” “Fatalism,” “Homo (Man),” “Incarnation,” “Cult,” “Consumerism,” “Manichaeism” and “Millenarianism.”

I could. After such a discussion, it was enough, generally, to edit the text one more time and the entry went to editorial processing and then to print.

I am describing this procedure in a little more detail, because I have no doubt that these discussions with the Professor turned out to be the best lessons in philosophy for me. And for this I want to thank him in particular.

His unexpected death was a blow comparable to a death in the family. Denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance and giving meaning—elements of all these stages of grief could be felt and indicated. The first days after the news of his death reached us, and the subsequent funeral—under inhumane conditions of “pandemic restrictions”—only deepened the sense of loss. On the side of those who concelebrated the Mass at the Church of Our Lady of the Help of the Faithful in Lublin on December 30, 2020, there were perhaps more people than the faithful allowed to participate in the Mass. Those invited were only Fr. Maryniarczyk’s closest associates. We were seated as far apart as possible, but in consecutive pews. Directly behind me was seated Dr. Stępień. This is a minor detail, but in the category of “coincidence” quite significant. I know—we both know—that this was not the end of the Professor’s dreams, but the beginning of a new stage of their realization.

#### CONCLUSION

This small glimpse of the most recent history of philosophy in Poland was intended to honor the memory of Fr. Andrzej Maryniarczyk SDB and his outstanding qualities as a mentor, organizer, editor and author. There is no doubt that his death on December 27, 2020 was a COVID 19-related calamity, one of many that struck Poland at the turn of the second decade of the 21st century. On the other hand, given what Fr. Maryniarczyk achieved in his lifetime, one cannot but wonder at how complete his legacy is as a person, as a priest, and as a philosopher. In each department, he is remembered with affection and gratefulness. We focused here on the philosophical side alone, and sampled just a few, rather busy years of his life and work. Understandably, it is way too early to even try to evaluate his academic significance, influence or impact.

As far as the theory of being is concerned (which is the realistic metaphysics of the Lublin Philosophical School), the methodology is clear, the overall content has been expounded in detail, and access for non-Polish speakers has been granted. How large a scale it will reach remains to be seen. Unblocking the project of the English-language *Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy* will certainly be the deciding factor. This is Maryniarczyk's Magnum Opus, and not only his, as it has been long years in the making, engaging hundreds of top Polish scholars. It puts classical philosophy in a much needed context, and presents Aquinas' metaphysics (fully comprehended only in the 20th century) as a true milestone in understanding reality, understanding human being, and, last but not least, understanding human cognition.

Classical metaphysic is doing well in Lublin, finding ever wider applications thanks to figures like Fr. Andrzej Maryniarczyk. It is a living, realistic, maximalistic and, most importantly, standalone domain of human knowledge that deserves to be studied, known and applied in this landscape of desolation and total confusion of recent decades. Fr. Maryniarczyk was not involved in some pious hobby of a bunch of Catholic intellectuals, but in *pugna universa*: the struggle that decides the future shape of human culture on a global scale. "What we need metaphysics for, since we have physics?" asked one of the more ignorant Professors of a Polish university quite recently, thus committing a public act of exceptional self-degrading. But there are even more basic questions, formulated in a less intellectually offending manner. To look for possible answers to them all, and to find all the answers already given or attempted at, an independently thinking person usually reaches for an encyclopedia to begin with. Seen from this angle, Fr. Maryniarczyk's legacy has barely even begun to make an impact. We will be watching these matters very closely.

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