

Article

Religiousness in the Light of Kazimierz Twardowski's Concept of Actions and Products

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Abstract: The aim of the present article is to approach religiousness and prayer with the aid of the conceptual apparatus of K. Twardowski's concept of actions and products. Both actions and their products are psychic phenomena, so the idea is to present the psychological mechanism of the formation of religiousness as a product of a person's actions. This requires a description of the phenomena that are the object of morality, as well as of religion, which is a special aspect of morality. In order to make this description clear, a psychological model of the personal subject will be outlined to explain not only the essence of morality, i.e., how man becomes good, but also how he comes to partake in eternal life.

Keywords: religiousness; prayer; Kazimierz Twardowski's concept of actions and products; model of the personal subject; inner experience; religious actions and products

“Do this and you will live” (Luke 10:28)

1. Introduction

1.1. Religiousness as Signification and as a Signified Process

The term “religiousness” has different meanings in the religious tradition and in the extensive literature on the subject (Walesa 1997). With this context in mind, the present article will focus on what this term *means* in psychological terms, i.e., what psychic phenomena it signifies. We will therefore be dealing with the theoretical psychological conception of this important aspect of man's moral life.

Such a design seems to be justified also by the fact that religion and religiousness are an expression of human nature.¹ However, in order to think matter-of-factly about such subtle phenomena, one needs some notion of that nature, i.e., a model. This will allow the phenomenon of religion and religiousness to be framed in the context of (through the lens of) the *construction* of the human subject.

1.2. Holistic and Developmental Approach

Psychology allows us to look at religiousness in several complementary dimensions. This approach is indicated by the revelation itself, which states that you should love God in four aspects:² with all of your heart, with all of your mind, with all of your soul, and with all of your strength (power). In these words uttered by Our Lord Jesus Christ, the term *holes* (meaning “all”) draws attention, so let us explain how this term can be understood.

At the same time, the text by St. Paul³ features another term: *holoteleis* (“completely”). It is therefore necessary to view the human subject *holistically* with the phenomenological method, not only to take into account the complexity and the distinguished aspects of nature (holism), but also to pay attention to the final aspect (the Greek *teleis*), that is, to the maturation of the subject in each of the distinguished aspects. In particular, when we speak of “all your soul”, we mean not only the soul, which expresses itself through the body it creates, but also the spirit, or the person, who expresses himself through the psychic



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life. This, too, requires clarification: what the essence of spiritual life consists of—in the language of psychology—for it is only at this level that we can speak of religiousness as a certain relationship between man and God.

Regardless of the four aspects of human nature, love is an act—an act of the entire person, in whom different dimensions can be distinguished. Referring to the title of this article, we can say that the product of love thus understood is eternal life: “Do this and you will live” (Luke 10:28).

2. The Model of the Personal Subject

2.1. *The Subject of Psychology and Its Methods*

Psychic facts (also called psychic phenomena) are the subject of psychology. In the Lviv school, founded by Kazimierz Twardowski, psychic facts are conceptualised as psychic actions and their products, as well as dispositions towards the formation and course of psychic facts (Twardowski 1965a, 1965b).

According to Mieczysław Kreutz, a student of Twardowski’s, a psychic phenomenon is “an object that has real existence, is psychic and given directly in experience” (Kreutz 1949, p. 350). Affections are real objects too, in the sense that they are phenomena “that are part of objective reality, independent of the cognising subject” (ibid.) despite taking place in the subject, analogous to how the functions of the human respiratory system are real. Such assumptions give rise to the following question: How does the relationship between man and God become a *psychic object*?

So as to avoid misunderstandings, it is important to emphasise that there is a difference between the things that surround us and “objects”. With the term “object” we denote the *meanings* that *the subject gives to* various aspects of reality: things, relations, and any phenomena, whether accessible to the senses or imagined or conceived of. These meanings are products not only of the action of knowing things, but also of the experience of relations. “Thanks to knowledge, we discover the meaning of particular things and advance in the understanding of these *things* themselves and of the *connections* that take place between them. For to understand is nothing else but to intellectually grasp the meaning of things or the connections between things” (Wojtyła 2021, p. 66). One of the aspects of reality captured is man’s relationship to God as it appears in psychic life, that is, either in cognition or in a lived experience.

Psychic life, too, can be given objectively, the product of which is self-knowledge. In a case like this, it becomes the subject of psychology, understood not only as the science of the soul, but also of its functions (actions) and products, as Twardowski (1965c) puts it.

As regards the adequate method of investigation, psychic objects are given in two ways: in direct inner experience, called introspection, and in reflection, which includes contents called consciousness.

The object of our analyses is religiousness understood as a relationship between two subjects—God and man—given psychologically and therefore objectively. These subjects are given differently. As viewed by Aristotle, God is not a mythical figure, nor is He a thing. God is the First Cause, i.e., the necessary explanation of what is empirically given. In other words, He is a real psychic object.

Contrary to appearances, the existence of a person is given as subtly as the existence of God. That is why the research credo espoused by St. Augustine, the “discoverer” of the method of introspection, was “I desire to know God and the soul. And nothing more? Nothing whatever” (St. Augustine 1910, p. 10). You can only see a person intellectually, that is, objectively. The person is given as an object, i.e., a product of cognition, and not merely as a unique subject that expresses himself in the external facts of culture and language, and in—given internally—a moral experience (Wojtyła 1999).

As a consequence of the above assumptions, we cannot but conclude that human actions are objective.⁴ The human subject is not guided in his actions by the products of his senses, but by created objects (or meanings taken over from others in communication) that form his image of reality. Objectively given, these are things that become his immediate

motives for action, but also goods that become his spiritual goals of action. Approaching God, as well as the relationship between man and God, as an object allows us to see the objective actions that man takes in relation to God.

2.2. Outer Experience, i.e., Observation

As an empirical science, psychology starts from experience, not only outer experience, i.e., observation, but also inner experience. Let us begin with the former, with it being the more tangible element.

The basic fact given in observation is referred to as *action*. This action is a phenomenon of two subjects coming into direct contact with each other and one of them *changing* the other in some way.⁵ These changes can be described, but also explained.

The basic mental action that occurs in observation is concerned with understanding that which is given in observation. It is not only about cognition, i.e., answering the question: “What is this?”, but is also concerned with the origins, functions, and mechanisms of the phenomenon that we refer to as “action”. This cognition is predicated on the content given in observation, i.e., sensory perceptions, and consists of classifying a phenomenon into a particular class and providing a definition; for example: a human being is a subject, i.e., an entity that exists and acts by itself (Tatarkiewicz 1988, p. 9 and ff). Explaining action requires pointing to the causes of that which is observed. It has been accepted that science is causal cognition: “*scientia est cognitio rerum per causa*” (Aristotle).

In order to explain action, the existence of certain phenomena in the subject is posited. In the concept of hylomorphism propounded by the Stagirite, action is a process involving a transition in the subject from potentiality (potency) to actuality (action), while the transition itself is caused by the soul. The soul is defined as a “substantial form” that forms matter into some specific subject with specific dynamisms (forces) and action conditioned by these dynamisms and environmental conditions.⁶ This points to the function of action, i.e., the answer to the question: Why does a given existing subject act? Wojtyła puts it as follows: “Action actualises the essence of a given being: what it is in potency becomes reality in it” (Wojtyła 2017, p. 64).

In this kind of explanation, the *mechanism of action* escapes us. Wojtyła sees this as a task for psychology: “Psychology aims at disclosing by the empirical inductive method the specific mechanism by which the will operates, and identifying the concrete motive forces which make for the realization of a chosen end. Ethical analysis on the other hand aims at fully explaining the sense of rightness by identifying and characterizing the chosen end—its moral value” (Wojtyła 1981, p. 290, n. 6).

The soul as a form is the external cause of life, whereas the efficient and final causes are internal causes (Krapiec 1959, p. 229). Therefore, in classical psychology, posited is the existence of the so-called powers of the soul, being both sensory and spiritual powers, from which the observed action is derived. By means of deduction, certain logical relations are described, e.g., that the will conditions the arbitrary actions we observe. And so the following question arises: How does that happen?

Empirical psychology, which dates from Franz Brentano’s (See Brentano [1874] 1973) *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874), delves into two aspects of experience: alongside outer experience (observation), into inner experience. This experience points to a whole new class of facts that are becoming the broadly defined subject of psychology. It is not only the soul, but also its *functions* that are given in inner experience; not only the intellect, but thinking and its products, such as ideas, judgments, and produced representations of reality.

One characteristic of psychic products is that they may be obvious to the subject, but are very difficult to put into clear definitions. No one doubts the existence of love, yet it is very difficult to think clearly about it. We therefore draw on the conceptual apparatus of Twardowski’s concept of actions and products to not only *describe* psychic life, but also to adumbrate its picture, which includes the products of psychic actions (Twardowski 1999). This will help us identify the designata of terms that are commonly used but differently

understood, e.g., the heart. Thus, we take our analysis of the inner experience further, after presenting a picture of the subject.

2.3. A Psychological Model of the Personal Subject

A model is a mental image, such as that of the solar system or the nucleus of an atom. The essential functions of a model are as follows: an object-oriented representation of reality in terms of structure and function, which enables explanation of observational data. In psychology, the range of facts widens; alongside observed behaviour, there are inner objects, i.e., actions and their products, as well as dispositions, such as sensitivity, and will. The question of explaining the action thus deepens; we refer to an action *caused* from within—and only *conditioned by* an external situation as “behaviour”. This is a psycho-physical product. The meaning of the product, i.e., what we come to know and not just observe, involves psychic actions and their products. Reconstructing these actions will help us answer the fundamental question of psychology: “Why do people behave the way they do?”

In our search for the rationale elucidating human behaviour, we use the a posteriori method, i.e., we infer the cause from the effects.⁷ The explanations obtained in this way form a psychological picture of the subject. The first attempt to build a picture of psychic life was made by M. Kreutz. In *Rudiments of Psychology*, he writes: “I have already introduced the essential descriptive concepts I had in mind. For the sake of clarity, I shall also discuss the logical relations in which these concepts remain among themselves, and the real relations in which their objects remain among themselves; this too will make it possible to present a picture of psychic life as captured by the conceptual apparatus introduced” (Kreutz 1949, p. 389). We are already able to do this.

Referring to the conceptual apparatus of Twardowski’s (1965a) concept of actions and products, in the image of psychic life, we distinguish *actions*—e.g., a lived experience, their sensory *products*—in this case, an affection, actions, and spiritual products—imagination, and the image of the “I”, as well as *dispositions* towards the formation of actions and products. Dispositions are certain material conditions, such as sensory sensitivity, but also the will.⁸ We illustrate this below (Figure 1).

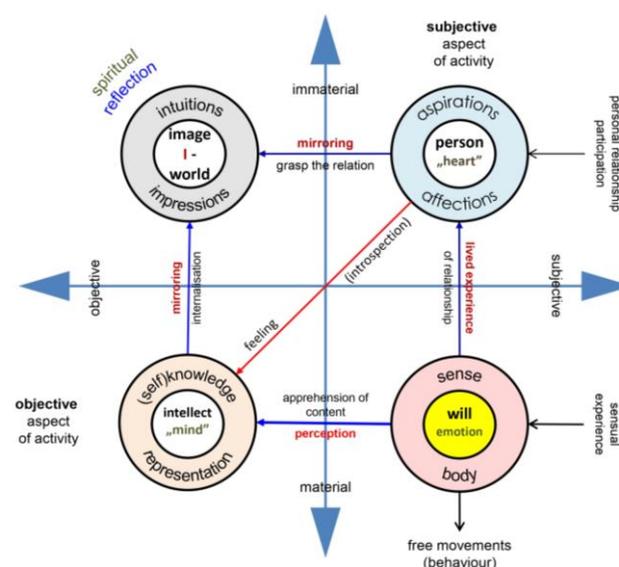


Figure 1. A model of the personal psyche organisation.

2.3.1. Subject Actions and Products: Both Material and Immaterial

The dynamism of the subject comprises the reactive dynamism of the body, the sensory dynamism, which is expressed in emotions and in the actions of sensory cognition, and the dynamism of reason, which is expressed in the actions of the will and the intellect. In

observation (outer experience), we see that vegetative changes in the body and changes in the senses (consisting of receptors, nerve pathways, and the central nervous system) are expressed in bodily reactions (symptoms). These reactions are subject to the influence of the will (integration), which results in free movements (behaviour). In addition to behaviour, which is a non-transient and impermanent product, we distinguish other products; a transitive product is action, i.e., a change in external material, where work can serve as an example. In contrast, a permanent non-transient product of the will is character, understood as capacity ("*habitus operativus*"): "something at our disposal whenever we wish" ("*quo quis agit, cum voluerit*") (Woroniecki 1986a, p. 332).

At the same time, the subject has an inner experience, in which the products of a lived experience are given. Both bodily changes and sensory changes (emotions) are experienced, as well as—from a certain point onwards—actions of the will. Affections (the so-called bodily and sensory affections) are products of a lived experience of a bodily state and emotions. These are lived experiences of the "*passio*" type. On the other hand, the lived experiences that K. Wojtyła describes as "*action*" are noteworthy. These are lived experiences, the "*matter*" of which is the will's own actions. The will, as a *disposition*, is the innate (human) ability to govern oneself, which we see in free movements such as walking, speaking, etc. These lived experiences should be referred to by a different term than "*affection*", namely the term "*wanting*". Analogous with the way in which an affection is a lived experience of pleasure, i.e., opening up to a certain relationship with the world (or shutting oneself off: experiencing unpleasantness), wanting is a lived experience of an object that becomes a final cause of action. The will is given in two ways: the spiritual will as an *aspiration* of who the person who wants to be—by way of illustration, a spouse—and as a disposition in the *effort* to attain the goal.

Through the lived experience, human nature is given to the person himself, as it were, "from within", as an affection (a desire—a lived experience of some lack) or wanting (which expresses an aspiration). We refer to these qualitatively new immaterial phenomena as the "*heart*". A lived experience reflects a personal subject's state; the overall state of the heart is a state of the "*person*" as an immaterial being. A person enters into personal relationships with other people and can be in love, angry, etc., while his free movements merely express these inner states.

2.3.2. Objective Actions and Products: Both Material and Immaterial

The objective aspect of activity is related to the cognition of things and grasping relations. The act of cognition is a *process* that—at the sensory level—consists of the reception of content given by the change brought about as a result of the sensory organs picking up material energy. These are accidental attributes (colour, size), and at the mental level, it is the form of a thing, or its essence, which is grasped intellectually. These actions are referred to by the term "*objectivisation*", as the content of cognition is "*taken off*" the thing (object). In this way, things and phenomena exist mentally in the form of objects. Apart from knowledge of the world, the subject also has knowledge of the person. The product of the objectivisation of one's own desires and aspirations is self-knowledge.

Both knowledge and the products of lived experiences are given in the form of an objective image of reality, referred to as consciousness. The origin of consciousness, as illustrated by the model, is twofold, being the products of lived experiences and cognition—both at different levels. Some objects arise spontaneously, e.g., impressions and intuitions (i.e., a reflection of experienced values), while others arise through the so-called substitute actions that create a higher level of psychic life.

Through the internalisation of the content of cognition, a new qualitative group of phenomena emerges, which are referred to as inner life, deeper than psychic life. This life develops from the products of the sensory psyche.⁹ As K. Wojtyła emphasises, "the person as a subject is distinguished from even the most advanced animals by a *specific inner self*, an inner life characteristic only of persons [...] Inner life means spiritual life. It revolves around truth and goodness. And it involves a whole multitude of problems, of which two

seem central: what is the ultimate cause of everything and—how to be good and possess goodness at its fullest. The first of these central problems of man’s interior life engages cognition and the second desire or, rather, aspiration” (Wojtyła 1981, pp. 22–23).

It is only in such a broad view of the personal subject that it is possible to utilise content given as inner experience, the source of which is not only the intellect, but also the human heart.

2.4. Inner Experience

The primary inner experience is the *sensing of one’s own body*.¹⁰ Man experiences his body (through internal sensory organs: sensation, balance, etc.) so that he has some intuitive image of his own body. Sensation conditions conscious action, i.e., a deed. In our developed model (Figure 2), the relationship between consciousness, in which the person as the “I” is reflected, and conscious action is of fundamental importance. This relationship is exhaustively presented in K. Wojtyła’s *Person and Act*.

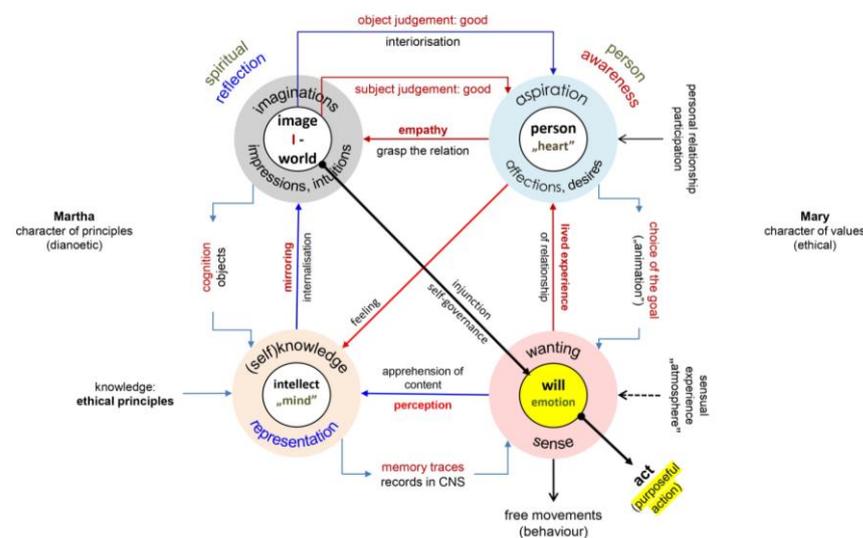


Figure 2. A model of the self-determination mechanism.

The basic empirical fact that is given to us in connection with the human subject is *free movement*. The explanation of this fact points to another fact, given in inner experience, namely freedom. The mechanism of freedom, referred to by Wojtyła as self-determination, is shown in Figure 2. It consists of two elements: self-possession (sensation) and self-governance. To govern oneself means for a man to be able to “dynamise” himself as the first “object” of action. The person “wants to” and can act freely, experiencing his efficacy, which entails responsibility for his own acts. “Man’s nature differs fundamentally from that of the animals. It includes the power of self-determination based on reflection, and manifested in the fact that a man acts from choice. This power is called free will” (Wojtyła 1981, pp. 23–24 (emphasis ours)). The will is free, because it is subject to a person’s freedom, which Wojtyła puts very aptly when he writes that “the will is the power of the freedom of the person” (Wojtyła 2021, p. 224).

The second aspect of inner experience is the *feelings* through which one has knowledge of what one is experiencing. The objects of these lived experiences are bodily states (e.g., hunger), the value of the relationship with the environment and—discussed above—one’s own action (the lived experience of efficacy).

The third aspect is reflection, which makes way for Descartes’ famous “*cogito ergo sum*”. This is an action of the spiritual soul itself. It is through it that some *sense of self* is formed. In the image of the world, one’s own “I” emerges. Despite the variable content encompassed by this personal pronoun, the “I” itself appears to be unchanging, and thus we speak of the “I” identity (Jarosiewicz and Stompór-Świdarska 2022).

2.5. Processes of Self-Organisation

2.5.1. Thinking and Choices

The subject model introduced allows for a fundamental thesis: God can be known—although not directly, but indirectly, through his creations—and that is real knowledge. You can also address him in your behaviour, in the most real way. How is this psychologically possible?

From earliest childhood, people's actions are free. Still—their object matures. We say that man organises himself to act, and this preparation (exercise)—in each act—stays in the psyche, understood as organisation. In our model, this is illustrated by the three “brackets”, namely cognition, object judgment, and choice (Figure 2). This is done in two different ways. Two typical characters emerge, known and distinguished already by Aristotle: the dianoetic character and the ethical character.

The dianoetic character is formed on the basis of representation. In the ego concept, these are the so-called substitute actions.¹¹ Through these activities, artificial products, called artefacts by Twardowski, are created. An actor's performance on stage or an academic lecture are examples of such a psychosomatic artefact. “Abundant use of them—as Twardowski goes on to exemplify artefacts—is made by an actor adopting a pose in which to express an affection. In fact, however, the actor usually only presents the affection to himself, so that this pose—this psycho-physical product—is not created by the actual affection that is usually expressed in the pose, but by the representation of the affection, i.e., *affection represented*. Thus, just as this merely represented affection is a product substituting for the real affection, so this pose too is an artificial product, since it is not the real expression of affection, but only its feigned, assumed expression” (Twardowski 1965a, p. 238 (emphasis ours)).

Cognition is an action that *goes beyond* the changes that take place in the brain (in the model we refer to it as the “sense”).¹² It is the product of the action of thinking, i.e., the assignment of *object meanings* to the products of perception, which are reflected in the image as impressions (perceptions). The products of cognition, i.e., knowledge (information¹³), form *their own* representation of reality and can be stored in memory and rendered (mirrored) in reflection in the form of imagery. The aim of cognition is to apprehend the *truth* about reality, including axiological truths about the values experienced. On the basis of the representation, rational decisions about the object of the action are made. However, people do not always choose what they consider to be the object of action *adequate* for the situation. As Ovid writes (*Metamorphoses*, 7, 20): “*video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*” (“even though I know better, I keep doing the wrong thing”). Apart from rational decisions, one observes choices resulting from subject judgements that arise under the influence of relationships with others, such as jealousy (Jarosiewicz 2013; Stompór-Świdorska and Witkowski 2011). These choices are not appropriate to the situation, but are in line with the aspirations of the “heart” (see Figure 2).

And so, we have two levels of phenomena here. Through impressions, the subject merely *orients* himself to reality, which indeed allows him to act efficiently and learn to act, but without understanding.¹⁴ As a result of thinking at the sensory level, ideas are formed, which are the expression of action planning, as well as *notions*, in which the essence of things is captured.¹⁵ The subject decides on his motives for action and “uses” his will to carry out the imagined plans.

This is a style that we can describe as Martha's approach to life (from the parable of Martha and Mary, Luke 10:38–42). On the other hand, there appears a style that Mary can illustrate. Whereas Martha is guided by objective judgement, Mary is guided by empathy and subjective judgement. Empathy is the grasping of relationships in which the subject participates. We distinguish between these two phenomena. The term “choice” encompasses any actions whose object is to change a person's life situation, i.e., his relationship with the world or with God, to a more developmentally advantageous one (in general, development is determined by relationships). The aim, for example, is to start a family. A choice “animates” the will. The term “decision”, on the other hand, covers actions that

reveal one of the available courses of action. The object of choice is the good/value that attracts the will, while the decision is an act of the intellect.

The subject not only perceives the material aspects of things, but is also capable of grasping values, especially the relationships between people.¹⁶ The value is the relation of something corresponding to someone because of something;¹⁷ water corresponds to the body because of physiology, and this “correspondence” is experienced precisely as the value of the thing (relation). As a result of the apprehension of the value (relation), ideas are also formed. It should be noted at this point that we have two types of ideas: reconstructive ideas and creative ideas. *Reconstructive* ideas arise from sensations as new ways of acting. *Creative* ideas, on the other hand, arise as products of the action of grasping the value of relationships with the world, whereby the person creates ideas of relationships that are more optimal. Thus, for example, an angry person, as a result of being disrespected by people important to him, spontaneously ideates a change in these relationships, which may take the form of revenge. The moment the choice is made, the value ideated becomes the *goal*. Goalless action is inconceivable. In doing so, it is important to distinguish between observational data, which show us that an action always has some *direction*, and inner experience data, which allow us to talk about the goals of the action. A goal is what we call “the result that gives a given process, before it has even been realised, its direction” (Woroniecki 1986a, p. 62). This result can be recorded as an instinct or it can be created. Indeed, the soul is understood by Aristotle in two ways; as “ἐνέργεια” (“energeia”), i.e., action (activity), and as “ἐντελέχεια” (“entelecheia”),¹⁸ as a purpose. In the case of the human being, goals are not ready-made, since the spiritual soul “is a system intrinsically independent of matter, capable of cognition and purposeful aspiration” (Wojtyła 1999, p. 75). The aspirations (intentions) that arise in the “heart” are achieved in *rational* ways, as these *ways* are provided by the mind (thinking). Actions of the will and of the intellect complement each other, as do the goal and the manner of achieving it.

The products of cognition—both the representation of reality and the products of choices—are fixed in the material subject as memory “traces” and movement “patterns”. Every affection and aspiration that is revealed in an act causes the subject—and his actions—to become this or that of the following:¹⁹ in moral terms—good or bad, and in relation to God—religious or not.

2.5.2. An Act, or Free Action

The task of the above-outlined model is to explain the mechanism of the act, or free action, of which morality is a product. The literature distinguishes between three stages of such an act: preparation, resolution, and execution (Woroniecki 1986b).

In the preparation stage of an act, i.e., an action in which the free “I” decides something about himself on the basis of his own judgement, we have distinguished two aspects (see Figure 2). Aspiration can be a product of an objective judgement that is predicated on a representation of the world. On the other hand, there is a predominance of subjective judgements, which pertain to relationships. The way St. Paul sees it, this is the case of “people who are still worldly” (1 Cor 3:1). Self-knowledge is the prerequisite for a balanced inner life. In this way, the sensual man (“*psychikos*”) and the bodily man (“*sarkinos*”) complement each other.

Along with the injunction (resolve), we observe behaviour whose intention is to achieve aspirations and goals. These goals express the “principles” that Martha follows, or the “values” that Mary experiences. This is not about a one-off action, but is about *exercise*, i.e., a series of actions guided by ideas, be they reconstructive ideas (as in a “sensual man”) or creative ideas (as in a “bodily man”).

The function of acts, i.e., intentional actions, is to change: to change a thing (as a result of cognition—such as coal taking on the meaning of fuel and being used as such), to change a subject that has been objectified (e.g., treatment), or to change a relationship between two subjects given as objects. The function of religious acts and religiousness as their product

(which we will describe further on in the paper) is to establish “a personal and positive relationship between man and God”, as Walesa (2005, p. 13) puts it.

3. Religiousness and Prayer in the Concept of Actions and Products

3.1. Religion and Religiousness

As Woroniecki writes, “we use the word «religion» to denote an objective set of beliefs linking mankind to God, rather than a *subjective* preoccupation with them, and we do not link it to the concept of some fixed inner disposition, or virtue. A more fitting word here is «religiousness»; for as a matter of fact we say of *people* that they are religious or non-religious, by which we signify their constant spiritual frame of mind in relation to God” (Woroniecki 1986b, p. 272 (emphasis ours)). If we turn our attention to people, i.e., to how beliefs affect their psychic life, the adopted model of the personal subject allows us to indicate not only how to understand faith, but also how to understand religiousness.

In the model of the subject we are adopting here, religiousness is a subjective phenomenon. It is the product of judgements, which—according to St. Paul—are the product of the spiritual person (1 Cor 2:15). The content that the subject recognises as good in judgement is experienced as aspirations. These aspirations are a state of consciousness. In the “heart” of man, we find lived experiences of various origins, including both sensory and relational affections, as well as those that originate in the mind. By experiencing the content of a reflective image of reality, knowledge of God (religion), which is something objective (given objectively), becomes the person’s personal relationship to God. We are then talking about *religious awareness*.

The distinction between subjective and objective phenomena is significant from yet another point of view. As we have already mentioned, a person’s inner life has two—complementary—poles: cognition and aspiration. The spiritual soul as a substantial form is the external cause of the subject’s existence, while in the living personal subject, we distinguish two internal causes: the efficient and the final cause. The “I” as the *efficient* cause is given—in the lived experience—in relation to the will as the power at the moment of resolution (injunction—“I want”) or consent. Resolutions concern clear motives or modes of action, as they are the products of reflection. In contrast, a person who aspires towards an optimal relationship with the world is working towards a final cause. Although the concept of action includes its purpose—for there is no purposeless action²⁰—the purposes of action are not always clear, i.e., are reflection-based. For when we talk about purposes, it is important to bear in mind their various origins. A purpose can express one’s own objective aspirations, which are clear, such as starting a family, but a purpose can also express the feelings and desires or goals and aspirations *picked up* from others. Choices made under the influence of affections or the will of others are often unclear as to their origin. Participation in the lives of others is one of the most important phenomena in spiritual life, as it is the source from which faith is drawn and customs are adopted (Jarosiewicz 2020). However, the aspirations that are formed in childhood require reflection. As Wojtyła writes: “For me, the fundamental problem was not one of a conversion from unbelief to faith, but rather one of a transition from an inherited, received faith that was more emotional than intellectual to a conscious, fully mature faith given intellectual depth after a personal choice” (Frossard 1984, p. 50).

3.2. The Objective Meaning of Religion and Religiousness

When we speak of the objective meaning of religion and religiousness, we mean the fact that although God is a spirit, He can be a *real* psychic object. He is therefore—in some way—“accessible” to beings capable of cognition, personal lived experience, and reflection.

Furthermore, it should be stated that He can be the object of the action of the heart and of the mind, of the dynamism of the will and of the spiritual soul (of the person), since such aspects of the life of the personal subject have been distinguished in the model presented. In other words, the terms “religion” and “religiousness” can denote *qualitatively different* phenomena in the human subject. However, they are all connected to God.

In terms of the *genesis*, God becomes the content of our psychic life in two complementary ways. He is an entity that is cognised and experienced as a value. Both cognition and the lived experience are special, as God is an immaterial subject. On the other hand, cognising God and experiencing God are possible because in the human subject—as we have demonstrated—we find immaterial phenomena: consciousness based on the lived experience, and reflection as a spiritual action. In the first aspect, i.e., in the lived experience, the origin of aspiration is value, understood as a relationship involving man and God. This relationship is given not only intuitively or affectively, but objectively. In the second aspect, i.e., cognition, man accepts on faith the existence of God, or accepts this existence on the basis of “consistentisation” (Aristotle) as the necessary cause of all that exists. This is because every product presupposes certain actions and their agent.

God can be an object given in the act of cognition or the adoption of the content of cognition on the basis of trust placed in someone who communicates that content and the *belief* that the subject that has been cognised exists objectively. The object of faith is not the essence of the subject, but its existence. For Aristotle, “Faith (*πίστις*) (*pistis*) is the act of reason by which *we accept* as true some assertion” (see III, 428 a 20–23). The reflective subject is therefore capable of recognising a judgement as truth, without having to refer to his own data (perceptions) and his own thinking. For it is one thing to know something and another to recognise its existence in an act of judgement. For Woroniecki, faith is a judgement: “It is, as far as the object is concerned, a theoretical action, because the content of beliefs does not comprise our actions, but truths that exist outside of us, over which we have no influence. [...] A judgement of faith is therefore a judgement made by virtue of someone else’s testimony, about the object which one has not come to know oneself” (Woroniecki 1986b, p. 67 ff).

Religiousness is a qualitatively separate phenomenon. It involves that which the person does as a transcendent subject, for a clear distinction must be made between the reflective “I” and that which can be labelled as “mine”. Affections and lived experiences condition morality, but it is only the act that actually is morality.

3.3. Prayer and Act as an Expression of “Service to God”

Following Woroniecki, we have assumed that when we talk about religiousness we pronounce on people, and not on religion. As we analyse religion and religiousness, we point to three aspects: actions, their products, and the disposition behind them. Religion is—in this conceptual apparatus—a product of cognition, i.e., a belief system that can be subjected to analysis. In the analysis of religiousness, on the other hand, this belief system interests us, but as a source of knowledge on the basis of which the subject creates *his own representation* of God and of the relationship between God and man. Furthermore, the intellectual representation of the world is the basis for acts of the will, as the will strives for good the way the intellect presents them to it.

Striving after the good is in fact nothing other than love, as Plato has already emphasised. In the dialogue *Symposium*, he makes Diotima say the following statement: “[...] they love not what is their own, unless perchance there be some one who calls what belongs to him the good, and what belongs to another the evil. For there is nothing which men love but the good” (Plato 1892, p. 576). But love can express itself in a variety of ways. According to J. Woroniecki, “love, and by extension Christian perfection, consists of two factors: actual love, i.e., prayer and habitual love, i.e., the performance of duties, or in other words—a good life” (Woroniecki 1988, p. 5).

3.3.1. Religious Actions and Products

Religiousness as a product is about two types of phenomena: transitive and non-transitive, which in turn are divided into non-permanent and permanent products. Both permanent and impermanent products express the human subject, in each of the four aspects indicated earlier. These are the products of thought—intellectual representations,

of the heart—aspirations, of the spiritual soul—reflection, and the products of the will—intentional actions (cf. Figure 2).

Transient impermanent products are acts that express the free person (spiritual soul) and the will. The significance of the will is fundamental in the moral life. The Lord Jesus states: “Do this and you will live.” An act is the product of an action of the will, which is “at the disposal” of a person at the moment of self-determination. Woroniecki, referring to the thought of St. Thomas, writes: “Piety, as a moral virtue, should first of all improve the will and then only from it penetrate into all the other powers of our soul, which, under its influence, should acquire a permanent disposition towards all the actions by means of which we are to worship God” (Woroniecki 1986b, p. 279).

The person is their efficient cause: at the moment of resolution, he commands the will to act. Noteworthy, whether an action is good or bad, religious or not, is determined by its purpose. The will chooses certain affections, desires, or objective goods as the goal of action. If the object of choice is the good of God, then the product of such acts is *worship*, i.e., reverence for the Creator. Additionally, sensual aspirations and desires also influence *ways of acting*; in morality, we are dealing with what is known as “wanting thinking”, i.e., it is the intentions of the “heart” that trigger the search for ways to realise them.

The essence of worship is “zeal, that is, a constant readiness of the will for everything pertaining to the worship of God, such a deep devotion to its divine affairs and responding readily to God’s every call to do His service” (Woroniecki 1986b, p. 279). In the course of worship, *permanent* transient products are also produced, such as *places of worship*, artistic creations (e.g., songs), or written *accounts* of religious events or experiences.

Next to external products, there also appear *non-transient* products, i.e., changes in the subject himself. These too can be impermanent and permanent. They are more difficult to describe, as they are mainly about sensory experiences and interpersonal relationships.

Impermanent non-transient products are current thoughts and ideas. At the time of the Annunciation, Mary “wondered in her heart what this salutation could mean” (Luke 1:29).

Impermanent subjective products are also lived experiences, both sensory and spiritual ones. A lived experience is a response to value. As Hildebrand writes: “If man is to become a bearer of moral values, he must experience various conscious acts: first, the act of cognition, of understanding morally relevant values; then, of the free response to the goods that are the bearers of morally relevant values, i.e., the response to value” (Hildebrand 1985, p. 171). A value can be given spiritually: “[...] our joy presupposes the knowledge of an object and its importance, and that the process by which the object in its importance engenders the response is itself a conscious one, a process which goes through the spiritual realm of the person.” (Hildebrand 2007, p. 26).

The content of a religious experience is special. It is a *numinous* (from Latin “numen”, meaning “deity”) experience. Following R. Otto (1924), C. S. Lewis assumes that it is a “*mysterium tremendum et fascinans*” (“a fascinating yet horrifying mystery”). In *The Problem of Pain*, he provides a number of examples of such experiences: “In Pagan literature we find Ovid’s picture of the dark grove on the Aventine of which you would say at a glance *numen inest* [Fasti, III, 296]—the place is haunted, or there is a Presence here; [...] Ezekiel tells us of the «rings» in his Theophany that «they were so high that they were dreadful» [Ezekiel 1:18]: and Jacob, rising from sleep, says «How dreadful is this place!» [Genesis 28:17]” (Lewis 2001, pp. 7–8). Such experiences are not treated by Lewis pejoratively, for the reason that they are irrational, but as the legitimate voice of the heart, which in our model we define as participation in the life of someone.

In the development of religiousness, a lived experience, whether sensual or spiritual, is complemented by ethical reflection: “The Numinous is not the same as morally good, and a man overwhelmed with awe is likely, if left to himself, to think the numinous object «beyond good and evil». This brings us to the second strand or element in religion. All the human beings that history has heard of acknowledge some kind of morality; that is, they feel towards certain proposed actions the experiences expressed by the words «I ought» or «I ought not»” (Lewis 2001, p. 10). It is the voice of the natural conscience. Piety is born, as

Lewis argues, “when the Numinous Power to which they feel awe is made the guardian of the morality to which they feel obligation” (Lewis 2001, pp. 11–12).

The third non-transient product is reflection, which makes it possible to grasp the “I”–“You” relationship. To use Edith Stein’s (1988, 1989) idiom, there emerges the act of empathy through which it is possible to grasp the relationship with the other. In the relationship with “You”, an image of the “I” as the efficient cause of action emerges. This is a product of identification. This image is often intuitive and therefore unclear. To the other person, one can *attribute*—in reflection—various qualities, or lived experiences, which may be a *projection* of the subject’s own affections.

The “response” to the relationship with the other person takes the form of one’s own judgement (called “subjective”, as opposed to mature “objective” judgement), the product of which is to seek to participate in the other person’s life or to break off the relationship. K. Wojtyła expresses this conflict in a poetic form: “I have decided to remove the word «mine» from the collection of the words I use. How can I use this word if I know that everything is Yours? (. . .) I fear the word «mine», although at the same time I love what is contained in it. I fear it, however, because the word always puts me before You” (Wojtyła 1984, p. 8).

The fourth subjective product, which is non-transient, is the act, or the act of the will. This is preceded by the choice of a goal. The aforementioned participation consists of a person choosing what is chosen by another important person with whom the subject identifies (Jarosiewicz 2020).

3.3.2. Piety as a Product of Action

The permanent *non-transient* product of the acts expressing a person’s aspirations or religious principles is *piety*, understood as character, i.e., a certain permanent capacity. A man who performs religious acts acquires certain qualities, characteristics, and attributes that these acts produce in him. Henry Newman refers to this as *perfection*: “By perfect”—he writes—“we mean that which has no flaw in it, that which is complete, that which is consistent, that which is sound—we mean the opposite to imperfect” (Newman 1893, p. 382). In line with what we wrote earlier, it can also be assumed that by doing moral good, a person becomes good.

The aforementioned acts can be divided into life actions—preparatory and religious ones, in the proper sense. “If you ask me”—Newman continues—“what you are to do to be perfect, I say, first—Do not lie in bed beyond the due time of rising; give your first thoughts to God; make a good visit to the Blessed Sacrament; say the Angelus devoutly, eat and drink to God’s glory; say the Rosary well; be recollected; keep out bad thoughts; make your evening meditation well; examine yourself daily; go to bed in good time, and you are already perfect” (Newman 1893, pp. 382–83).

3.3.3. Prayer as an Act of the Heart

Expressing one’s love for God includes *individual prayer*, understood as being a conversation with God (Tatala and Wojtasiński 2021), and *religious rites*, in which communal prayer takes place. Prayer has its origin in piety. As Woroniecki writes: “As soon as in the will arises the desire to devote oneself, without hesitation, to the service of God, its first resonance is sure come from the reason, which is most closely associated with it, and which, inspired by this desire, will itself begin first to declare in its interior its worship of God, and then to express it also outwardly, by voice, by posture, by some or other actions, or finally even by the various things which it will offer in service to the worship of God” (Woroniecki 1986b, p. 281). Woroniecki emphasises the complementary link between prayer (actual love) and actions (habitual love). Piety is expressed in prayer, while prayer permeates the acts of the will, i.e., the readiness to serve God. We are dealing with actual love “when man, by conscious acts of reason and will, turns to God and expresses to Him all that he owes Him: honour and praise, thanksgiving, apology, petitions, etc.” (Woroniecki 1988, p. 4).

Here, we find all four aspects of love highlighted in our model (Figure 2). God, who can be grasped by reason, becomes, in the process of internalisation, the object of the

aspiration of the “heart”. The heart animates the will, whereby the person undertakes God’s works and acquires God’s character. The fourth aspect is reflection. The “I” stands in relation to the “You”. On the formal side, prayer is communication between two persons who meet and talk. As St. Francis de Sales writes, preparing for prayer is a process “which consists of placing yourself in the presence of God (*Mettez-vous en la presence de Dieu*), and in imploring his assistance” (St. Francis de Sales 1885, p. 49). The first condition to be met is (1) “a lively and attentive comprehension that He is present in all things and in all places [...] [in a reflection]”; (2) “that God is [...] in your heart, nay, in the very centre of your soul, which He enlivens and animates by his divine presence [...]”; (3) “[in] consider[ing] our Saviour in his humanity [...]”; (4) “in imagining to ourselves [...] Jesus Christ [...] in his sacred humanity” (pp. 49–51). The second condition is perhaps even more important than the other three. The function of prayer is not the exchange of information, but the communion of people. “Prayer is always an act of love, where that love is actual, conscious, uniting us by inner predilection with God, whom we come to know by reason and faith, and who has revealed to us that He wishes to dwell in our souls” (Woroniciecki 1988, p. 30).

Prayer as “actual love” is a peculiar “act” of the heart. Not only does the “I” stand in relation to “You” in prayer, but it also participates in the other person’s nature. “By such participation”—writes K. Wojtyła—“in someone’s nature, not only do *we depend* on him, but *we belong* to him in the innermost way. (...) What is more, through such participation, we inwardly become like him, we become, in a way, “another him”, of course—to the extent that the intensity of this participation itself allows us” (Wojtyła 1999, p. 114 (emphasis ours)).

The truth about God’s dwelling in the soul is linked to hope, which—next to faith in his presence and love—plays an essential role in prayer. Hope, writes Woroniciecki, “positions itself in relation to God in a twofold manner, i.e., from two viewpoints: firstly as to that supreme infinite and immutable good which we desire one day to possess, and secondly as to him from whom we expect help in obtaining it. Through hope we expect God from God, “*Deuma Deo*”” (Woroniciecki 1986b, vol. 2, p. 170). He is not only the final cause, as man strives towards Him, but also the efficient cause. This removes the suspicion of idolatry.

4. Conclusions

When we talk about religion, we point to the content related to God and the relationship between man and God. As regards the term “religiousness”, man is its designatum. Using the conceptual apparatus of the concept of actions and products, we have been able to show how the personal subject is “constructed”. The person, who through reflection appears as the transcendent “I”, is the cause of the free act, i.e., the agent of the morality for which he takes responsibility. But he is also a subject experiencing relationships. Through the lived experience, he becomes the final cause of activity, that is, he realises some goods, including God’s goods. With the aid of the psychological model that depicts man as a spirit, soul, and body, we have illustrated the meaning of the Lord Jesus’ call to love God with all of one’s heart, all of one’s mind, all of one’s soul, and all of one’s strength. Love takes the form of piety, or acts of free will, and the form of prayer, in which the person stands in the presence of God and participates in the life of God Himself. The product of such participation is the character of Mary. A religious person can also realise the principles he is obliged to adhere to by faith, and this is Martha’s character. These are the two aspects that make up religious acts. Still, “Mary has chosen the better part, and it will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:42).

The model of the subject we have developed affords us a new perspective on the crucial problems of man’s inner life, for we distinguish not only between material and immaterial phenomena (Figure 1), but also—alongside conscious phenomena, which are products of experiences—the image of reality as a purely spiritual phenomenon. Not all of a person’s desires and aspirations are reflected in this image. Consequently, not all personal relationships (the “bodily man”—to use St. Paul’s idiom), of which the subject is aware, are reflected and become the subject of a person’s decision (the “spiritual man”). Hence,

the analysis of phenomena in the psychoanalytic paradigm: “unconscious (subconscious)–conscious” is complemented and deepened when we take into account the tensions between consciousness and reflection. This finds application in the study of religious development and in the analysis of problems that arise in the “I”–God relationship (e.g., the conflict between the freedom of a person and the duty they feel to realise the will of God).

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Notes

- ¹ K. Wojtyła writes: “Religion, like ethics, is also in a large measure something which blossoms from the human nature. Humankind did not need Revelation in order to be religious in some way, just as it did not need religion in order to determine for itself the framework of natural morality. The rational nature of man itself forms the basis not only of ethics, but also of religion. Reason itself leads man to the conclusion that there exists the First Cause who is the First Being, namely God. Practical and moral consequences of this conclusion belong to ethics. Since God is the First Cause to whom everything, and thus also man, owes existence, so man, as a being capable of knowing this truth, must give it expression in his internal and external life. As he does this he is satisfying an elementary obligation of justice. If, however, he fails to do this, he is falling short of justice. In this way religion, the worship of God, belongs to the program of natural morality. Religion does not primarily imply ethics, but ethics does primarily imply religion as the elementary sign of justice.” (Wojtyła 2017, p. 227).
- ² See Matt 22:37, Luke 10:27, Mark 12:30.
- ³ 1 Thess 5:23: “Himself now the God of peace make sanctify you completely (holoteleis) and entirely your spirit (holoklēron) and soul and body blameless at the coming of the Lord of us Jesus Christ may be preserved (holoklēron)” (literal translation, from the Greek-English interlinear New Testament at https://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_thessalonians/5-23.htm (accessed on 1 December 2023).
- ⁴ As J. Woroniecki points out: “. . . the morality of each of our deeds depends primarily on its object. We call ‘the object of the deed’ that which we want to obtain or achieve with it. These will not just be some external things, but equally inner states, thoughts, affections, desires, etc. (. . .) In a word, anything that impels us to act, that, having come to our mind as an end worthy of desire and attainable, takes us out of the passive state and brings us into the active state, all this we call the object of the act” (Woroniecki 1986a, pp. 260–61).
- ⁵ This is a fundamental assumption behind Aristotle’s “dynamic” theory: “According to this theory, it is part of the essence of an act to «give oneself». In this sense, «all being is good». And so Aristotle denotes act and action with the same term *ἐνέργεια*. Every act is capable of action. In order for it to actually engage in action, certain conditions must be met, in particular the acting agent must: (1) come into contact with the body which is to receive action from it; (2) differ from it in some respect, because «like is unaffected by like»” (Aristotle 1935, p. 91).
- ⁶ “So the soul”—writes Aristotle—“must be substance in the sense of being the form of a natural body, which potentially has life potentially within it. And substance in the sense of form is actuality. The soul, then, is the actuality of the kind of body we have described” (Aristotle 1935, p. 69).
- ⁷ “For the individual manifestations of human life, man’s individual lived experiences and acts constitute a set of effects. The soul is the proper and first cause of these effects” (Wojtyła 1999, p. 24).
- ⁸ “Conditions which include sensitivity, memory, imagination, disposition, inclinations, will, character, etc. (. . .) are covered by the umbrella term of «disposition» (adaptation)” (Twardowski 1965c, p. 244).
- ⁹ The Greek word *ψυχικός* indicates a connection with that which is “sensual” (Popowski 1995); cf. “sensual man”, as seen by St. Paul (1 Cor 2:14).
- ¹⁰ “It demonstrates”—writes Wojtyła—“a relation to the body such as that which a subject has to an object: although this relation is not made conscious in sensation itself, through it the body becomes a certain content that simultaneously permeates

the field of consciousness. Thus, through sensation we rise above what [...] was called the subjectivity of the body itself” (Wojtyła 2021, p. 338).

11 Substitute actions have been described in detail by M. Kulczycki (1990). He distinguishes between (1) orientation processes, the product of which is a picture of reality, (2) decision-making processes, which serve to reveal the goals of action, (3) the construction of modes of action, (4) realisation processes, and (5) processes of behaviour control and correction.

12 “It is not enough”—writes K. Wojtyła—“merely to introduce this object «onto the territory» of the cognising subject, but the adoption and creation of this object is accomplished in a new way—in the cognitive image or reflection (species). Such a description of the fact of cognition indicates that it arises with the aid of some internal force that performs this adoption and cognitive expression of the object in the act of cognition” (Wojtyła 1999, p. 33 (emphasis ours)).

13 The term “information” can be understood as the apprehension of the form that makes a thing what it is; similarly, it is possible to grasp (comprehend) what idea was conceived by the carpenter who made a wooden table rather than a wheel.

14 It is noteworthy that animals orient themselves to the world given by the senses, but they do not cognise it objectively. At the sensory level, they have an emotional life, often broader in scope than that of humans, and sensory perceptions, which allows them to store sensory content in memory and learn new behaviours that can be remembered. Learning is about associating affection and sensation. Animals do not possess themselves in the form of consciousness, i.e., an image of themselves and the world, within which they can choose their goals and modes of action. At the level of the sensory psyche, there is a lack of reflective distance through which the personal subject transcends himself and creates his own goals of action.

15 Notions are communicated in the form of sentences. In the statement, “A triangle is a geometrical figure in which the sum of the angles. . .”, that which is perceived (three segments) takes on a new meaning thanks to what is conceived: it is a figure.

16 Formal relations, apprehended in the process of cognition—the relation of equality, majority, etc.—are a different thing.

17 “A value is not the same as the object which represents it; it constitutes a specific object-subject relationship, and expression of a particular correspondence (of some-one to some-one, of something to some-one, or of something to something as it affects some-one)” (Wojtyła 1981, p. 304, n. 52).

18 Greek: “something that contains its purpose in itself; a form becoming realised in the building material; a force causing the organism to develop” (Stein 2015, p. 97).

19 “All things subject to change and to becoming never remain constant, but continually pass from one state to another, for better or worse [...] Now, human life is always subject to change; it needs to be born ever anew [...] But here birth does not come about by a foreign intervention, as is the case with bodily beings [...]; it is the result of a free choice. Thus we are in a certain way our own parents, creating ourselves as we will, by our decisions” Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Moysis*, as cited in: John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, n. 71.

20 “There is no pointless action. (...) If there is actual action, there is an objective factor determining that action, there is a factor that makes the action the way it is [...] We call this very objective factor, which is the sufficient reason for the action, the goal. The goal (...) is the rationale behind action as the good towards which the action itself perceptibly proceeds” (Krapiec 1959, p. 228).

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