



The Sources of The Personalistic Concept of Fertility

Źródła personalistycznej koncepcji płodności¹

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Abstract: Human fertility is a broad concept, encompassing the human biological, mental, and spiritual spheres. It can be referred to procreation as the multiplication of the number of beings or it can be considered in the aspect of the human ontic structure, taking into account the ontic founds of the soul. Fertility was also understood as the ability to transmit life in the sense of the function of an organic body or a spiritual element. Finally, the issue of fertility was related to the mutual relations of parents and their children, and its understanding was broadened to include the context of transcendence. The purpose of this study is to reflect on the concept of human fertility that underlies the personalistic view of human fertility. In connection with this goal, the research problem was formulated in the form of the question: "What were the origins of the understanding of fertility of a person?" In the research work, the method of text analysis and the method of historicism was used. As a result of the study, it was possible to distinguish and outline the pre-philosophical approach to fertility, as well as ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary concepts concerning fertility. Their review shows that human fertility was considered in the context of human sexuality. Moreover, the materialistic concepts related to the monistic vision of man were accompanied by the understanding of fertility as the ability to procreate, while the dualistic concepts, assuming the presence of the spiritual element, attributed to it the ability to animate the material body. The hylomorphic concept of the human structure, proper to the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas and supplemented with a reference to individual existence was presented in the context of the approach to Aristotle's understanding of the soul, along with his discussion of human procreation as a special case of animal reproduction, and then supplemented with a personal context in the contemporary sense. An attempt was made to answer the research question, but the issue was not discussed exhaustively, which leaves room for further research.

Keywords: fertility, person, procreation, life, soul

Abstrakt: Płodność człowieka jest pojęciem szerokim, obejmującym ludzką sferę biologiczną, psychiczną i duchową. Może być ona odnośna do samej prokreacji jako powielania liczby istot albo rozważana w aspekcie ludzkiej struktury bytowej z uwzględnieniem podstawy ontycznej, jaką stanowi dusza. Płodność bywała też ujmowana jako zdolność do przekazywania życia w znaczeniu funkcji ciała organicznego lub elementu duchowego. Wreszcie kwestia płodności była odnośna do relacji wzajemnych rodziców i ich dzieci, jej rozumienie zostało poszerzone o kontekst transcendencji. Poddanie namysłowi koncepcji płodności ludzkiej, jakie leżały u podstaw personalistycznego ujęcia płodności człowieka stanowi cel tego badania. W związku z tak postawionym celem został sformułowany problem badawczy w postaci pytania: "Jak kształtowało się pojmowanie płodności człowieka jako osoby?" W pracy badawczej posłużono się metodą analizy tekstu i metodą historyzmu. W wyniku badania udało się wyodrębnić i ukazać w zarysie przedfilozoficzne ujmowanie płodności, jak również dotyczące płodności koncepcje starożytne, średniowieczne, nowożytne i współczesne. Z ich przeglądu wynika, że płodność ludzka była rozważana w kontekście płciowości człowieka. Ponadto koncepcjom materialistycznym, wiążącym się z monistyczną wizją człowieka towarzyszyło ujmowanie płodności jako zdolności do rozmnażania, natomiast koncepcje dualistyczne, zakładające obecność pierwiastka duchowego, to jemu przypisywały zdolność ożywiania materialnego ciała. Koncepcja hylomorficzna struktury bytowej człowieka, właściwa filozofii św. Tomasza z Akwinu i uzupełniona o odniesienie do jednostkowego istnienia została ukazana w kontekście ujęcia duszy Arystotelesa, wraz z jego omówieniem prokreacji człowieka jako szczególnego przypadku rozmnażania zwierząt, a następnie uzupełniona o kontekst osobowy w rozumieniu współczesnym. Próba odpowiedzi na pytanie badawcze została udzielona, jednak zagadnienie nie zostało omówione wyczerpująco, co pozostawia pole dla dalszych badań.

Słowa kluczowe: płodność, osoba, prokreacja, życie, dusza

Introduction

The goal of this research is to present the historical development of the concept of human fertility in a personalistic paradigm. In reference to that goal, a question can be asked: 'How did the concept of human fertility evolve in the personal realm?'

The issue of human fertility can be reflected very broadly and thus be an object to research activity in the humanities, but also in biological and social science. Fertility may refer to the either biological, psychic, or spiritual realm. Among many philosoph-

¹ Artykuł w języku polskim: <https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-3-Horbow.pdf>

ical concepts of human fertility those seem especially significant which define fertility as the ability to reproduce species or reproduction², or as the ability to give over a lifetime. It seems that reproduction and giving over life are equated just within some of the concepts and it relates to the vision of a man that is a part of those. Fertility understood in a personalistic manner goes beyond mere generating offspring; it is also about the relationship between parents and children, and about transcendence.

The oldest preserved literary artworks that mention generating offspring place fertility in the context of sexuality. Hesiod of Asca in his *Theogony* presented the origins of gods in chronological order. There were heaven and earth among gods, and the first to be born was “Chaos” (Kubok, 1998, 24). In the epic *Women Catalogue*, he presented the history of families that originate from relationships between gods and mortal women. It is noteworthy that sexuality in Greek mythology was understood more broadly than mere procreation: not only Hera – the mother was considered a goddess, but also brave Athena – because of her prudence (Schmidt, 2006, 283). In *Gilgamesh*, the story tells about giving the gift of immortality to spouses and parents, so that they could reach eternal happiness: “Utnapishtin was a man – but now, Utnapishtim and his wife are godlike, are like us”³. Since getting immortal, Utnapishtim retained his masculine characteristics, and his wife – feminine.

1. Ancient philosophy on the issue

Ionian philosophers had a yet different concept of human nature. Thales of Miletus believed in immortality, and he extended it to inanimate objects (Laertius, Ks.1 Par 24). Ionians perceived life as the ability to move, which is a force inseparable from matter. The soul was also shaped with matter, and the soul was a rational element: something that thinks (*nous*) (Tatarkiewicz, 2014, 26). Therefore, it can be said that a human was perceived by them

in a monistic paradigm. Sexuality was ascribed to the matter as physical sexual features that take part in reproduction. Those physical features activate the reflection of a rational element, but it does not have a reference to the being. Nevertheless, Ionians were interested in another aspect of sexuality – its bipolar diversity could be, for Anaximander, a cause of development that follows from mutual neutralization; for Heraclitus – commutativity of things (Tatarkiewicz, 2014, 29-32).

According to Parmenides, proper development of the bodily shape requires „right measure” (*condicio*) which is a combination of distinct potentials (*virtutes*) of a man and a woman that are present in the parents’ blood. Otherwise, if those powers neutralized each other while interconnecting, the body would be destroyed and a new human would never be generated. According to Parmenides, these are both parents – and not only the father – that give the baby ‘a semen’, and they both equally contribute in generation.⁴

Orphism came up with the distinction of a specific element that is decisive about human identity. According to this concept, a divine origin that individualizes and constitutes a human identity of *Daimonion* (that, in turn, originated from Titans’ ash) is accompanied by the ability to move from one body to another at the moment of birth (metempsychosis). *Daimonion*, in a way, joined the body that was given birth. Next, after the series of purifying activities and repentance that served to expiate the sins, *Daimonion* could be freed from the body and join Dionisio. Orphism ‘disregards the body which is the prison of the soul’ (Reale, 2012, 49); it distinguishes and withstands spiritual element and material body – so it is dualistic. And the soul could be interpreted as the force that animates the body – if life is identified with the movement.

Socrates, and then Plato, are unlike the atomists in their theory of parents’ role in generation of a new life. For Socrates, only the soul is a real human’; he identified it with ‘conscious, able to learn and moral self’ (Reale, 2012, 228). Plato, partly referring to

2 Cf *Płodność*, Encyklopedia popularna PWN, 2017, p. 787.

3 Cf. *Gilgamesz*, translation R. Stiller, ed. Vis-à-vis Etiuda, Kraków 2011, p. 86.

4 *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, hrsg. H. Diels, W. Kranz, Bd.1-3, Berlin 1951-1952, 28 B 18.

orphic theory, understood a human as a soul that was made by the demiurge – ‘a wandering spirit’ that is not permanently attached to one body. This platonic soul was only undetermined sexually, but also by the genre since it could also incarnate animals. It was a substance *in se* (by Aristotelian categories), a subject, and a cause of movement. Division of men and women was connected to the body: sexuality is present in a human body and as such it belongs fully to the material world. It is a phenomenon (*epiphenomenon*) that is indispensable in the process of human reproduction, but still completely irrelevant to ontic identity. Plato believed that an unrighteous man would be reborn as a woman in the second generation (Reale, 2012, 235); he also believed that woman is in every aspect weaker than man (Platon 455D). At the same time, he noticed that among men there are stronger and weaker, and so there is diversity among them. That there are different roles for a man and a woman when it comes to the act of procreation – was quite obvious to Plato. Nevertheless, he advocated equal treatment of men and women in all other spheres of life as a soul can be incarnated in a man and also in a woman. He did not attach much importance to a specific body as it is only an oyster-like ‘shell’ for a soul. The only job that he considered different for a man and a woman was in generating and then the upbringing of children. In his *State*, he recommended that women took state positions since they are forty whole men can do it starting from their thirties.

The essential aspect of sexuality can be seen in an anecdote that was jokingly told by one of *Symposium* members, Aristophanes. In his story, people originally consisted of two halves and there were three genders: one was a blend of two masculine elements and it represented the sun; the second one consisted of two feminine halves and it represented earth, and the third one was hermaphroditic represented by the moon. Gods decided to weaken people and therefore divided everyone in half; since then, every incomplete half longs for long-lost completion, and the sexual act is the only way they can feel the connection. This story does not relate to the roles of man and woman as parents probably because Plato distinguished the act of procreation from the act of

giving over a life: for him, an act of procreation was not as important as the act of giving over a life that is an animation of the body by the soul.

Yet another concept of fertility can be found in Aristotle’s teaching. It is connected with the manner in which he understands the soul, and especially with the definition that says that the soul is the first act of natural (organic) body that is able to live” (*De anima*. II, 1 [412a 35]). At the same time, he thoroughly discusses human fertility as reproduction in the context of the mother and father’s role in procreation in his treatise *On Generation Of Animals*. Remarks and conclusions that can be found in it can also refer to people as Aristotle counted a human as one of the animals (living beings) in the first place, and only later did he add that there is a feature that distinguishes a human from other animals – namely, rationality. For Aristotle, the male is a norm of a given species, and the female is here out of necessity, “if the male cannot govern the matter because he is so young of for a different cause of this kind” (Aristotle 767 b 8-10). In division into males and females, Aristotle saw, in the first place, two different roles that they take on them during fertilization. He noted that males and females are different because they have different organs that represent ‘primary’ features of the two sexes, but to him, it was not only differently constructed body. This is the male who passes substantial form – which is a soul – to the descendant. Female provides the matter of ovum. Aristotle claims that; the body of new – born comes from the female while their soul – from the male as the soul is an essence of a given body’ (Aristotle 738b 25-27). It pertains to all animals of distinct genders that give birth to similar animals. The inability to produce semen was a characteristic of a female (Aristotle 728 a 18-20). It is noteworthy that this concept that clearly links reproduction with giving over a life seems to assume that a male represents not only a movement that is shaping up the essence but also an active part in the very process of giving birth. A male is an animal that is able to ‘give birth in the other’; a female, on the other hand, is capable of ‘giving birth in herself. The dissimilarity between males and females is present in fetal life already. Aristotle pointed out that a female fetus needs more time to develop than the

male one (Aristotle 775 a 9-22). Sexual determination appears as early as at the stage of individualization of particular representatives of the species, namely particular persons; it does not pertain to 'genre' as such, i.e. to the form of a human. The principle of individualization is, for Aristotle, not soul, being a form, but the matter of the semen. Thus, sexuality in Aristotelian teaching is not about humanity (which is defined by rationality), but rather about animality, materiality, and biology. The soul as such cannot be a principle of determination of a man as a man or woman. Nevertheless, since the generation of a new man requires not two identical individuals of one species, but very particular selves – this man and that woman – the descendant is by necessity individual self. Hence, the soul also has to be indirectly engaged in the determination of a child's sexuality – even if sexuality is not a part of the structure of the soul, being just an attribute.

2. Medieval reflections on fertility

In the medieval era, thinking of fertility was very much influenced by Christian religion that defines man and woman on the basis of descriptions from *Genesis*, lines of *Song of Songs*, and the *New Testament* which presents a fully personalistic vision of humans. The distinction between man and woman is present in the Bible from the very beginning – *Genesis* says that 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.' (Gen 1:27) Hence, since the moment of creation, a man and a woman are very different from each other – otherwise, it would make no sense to create two people instead of one. And only together, as a mutual completion, a man and a woman may be an image of God. God blesses both of them together, telling them to be fertile, to be parents, and to govern all creation. (Gen 1:28). It is noteworthy that this distinction between

male and female is only mentioned in reference to humans: creating them, God made them men and women, blessing their fertility and giving them jobs that can only be done when they cooperate (populate the earth and govern the creation). It is only about humans that "men and women" were mentioned in the context of fertility and procreation – other species were not referred to as such although of course there are many species that are distinct by gender. Sex is one of the features that transcend the kingdom of animals and hence it points to the personal character of a human being. When it comes to generating a new life, we can see the indispensability of both men and women in fulfilling the highest human calling. Bible says:

'shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.'⁵ (Gen 2:24). To become one flesh, which is necessary to fulfill the human calling, a man and a woman must be indispensable, mutually – complementary parts. At the same time, both a man and a woman at the very moment of procreation have to be fully developed ontically; if their sex conditions fulfilling of their calling, then it must be a fundamental characteristic, connected directly with the soul. In the course of procreation, both parents participate as a man and a woman in creating a new life, which is ultimately given by God. So, sexuality in its essence is purposeful, and its purpose expresses in mutual love, maternity, and paternity, shaping the world around and becoming an image of God in this world.

St. Augustine in his reflection on sexuality was inspired mainly by the Book of *Genesis*⁶; nevertheless, he interpreted the fact of creating a man and a woman in the context of their ontic structure. He pointed out that during the process of Creation "man was not referred to: by the <<species>> as there was only one, of which also a woman was created. There are not many species of a human (...) that would allow us to say: <<by the species>>,"

5 King James Bible online, <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org> (access: 30.07.2022).

6 'And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed*.' (Gen 2:21 – 25), KJV.

as we could say generally, to discern them from similar ones, being originally from this same semen” (Augustine, 1980, 157; Gen 1:24-25). In another place, he writes that “internal human”⁷ was not created before the human body was created, but that the body and the soul were created at the same time; then, he emphasizes that a man and a woman are only different by the body (Augustine, 1980, 163). Every human is given his sexuality by God, and undisputable differences between men and women as to the process of generating children are so permanent that even after the Resurrection everybody will have his sexuality restored. However “by mental functions and rational intelligence a woman is equal to a man, by the sex she is subjected to a man just as the urge to act should be subjected to reason that shows the right way of acting (Augustine, 1980, 205). He divided virtues into masculine and feminine: and even human reason is a kind of blend similar to marriage: contemplative reason represents a husband, and practical reason – a wife (Augustine, 1980, 63).

Saint Hieronymus of Strydom was of a quite different opinion. He believed that after the Resurrection, everyone will take on the body of a man as it is more perfect than a feminine body – or that the bodies of the redeemed will be asexual. In his commentary on Letter to Ephesians, he wrote about the difference between a man and a woman – that this difference, namely, is present only when the woman is a mother. In this case, she is as distinct from a man as the body is distinct from the soul. But, when she recognizes Christ as her goal, and she decides to start serving Him and not her children, she will be called a man and she will deserve ascension to the state of a man (Hieronymuslib. III, cap. V). It is noteworthy that praising a man in Hieronymus’ works is a part of his message to women where he talks about the virtue of virginity. In his *Letter to Eustochium, Paula’s daughter On Preserving Virginity*, he wrote: ‘I praise wedding, I praise marriage – since virgins are born there. (...) Saint Apostle says: *Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord.* He preserved his chastity not following command,

but of his own will.’ (Hieronimus of Strydon, 94; Cor 7: 25). And when Hieronimus encouraged women to remain virgins, he showed them femininity that goes beyond the corporal realm. He wrote to Eustochium: ‘Eve was a virgin in paradise; only after she put on animal skins did she start to live with her husband. Your land is a paradise. Preserve what you were born into and say: Oh, my soul, to your rest.’ (Hieronimus of Strydon, 93; Ps 116:7)

Albert the Great’s concept of fertility was strictly connected with his position in the debate over universals and it was inspired by Aristotle. Albertus distinguished two natures: universal and particular. Universal nature was of general character and it was ascribed to the genre. Its purpose, which was to preserve the species, is the main reason of a woman’s existence. Woman, representing the matter (potential), requires her completion that is a form – an act of dominion, being a man. In Albertus’ opinion, a man is primarily driven by reason – and as such, he is predestined to acquire cardinal virtues; woman, on the other hand, is driven by emotions and wants (Uliński, 2001, 70).

St. Thomas of Aquinas, being a Christian thinker, was inspired by his contemporary Albert the Great and by Aristotle whose teachings were a fundament for their reflection on the nature of being. As opposed to Averroism, he believed that every human possesses an individual soul that is permanently ascribed to him. Referring to theology, he also argued that fertility is linked to human soul. His reflection on sex he placed in an eschatological context and proved that sexuality, which is indispensable for procreation, will be restored after the Resurrection. Aquinas referred to the fact of fertility not only in the context of a mere act of procreation and giving birth, but also in connection with the love that is between the spouses; as he noticed, a human should only love reasonable creatures. A man should love his wife since they are one flesh. So, love for a wife should be stronger, but the relationship with parents should be filled with even greater respect (St. Thomas of Aquinas, 16, q.26, a. 5, a.11).

7 Identified with human soul – authors’ reference

3. Modern and contemporary discussions on fertility

Throughout modernity, theological aspect of philosophical analyses of fertility was replaced by sociological and biological context, similar to Ionians' concept of the soul which is a kind of matter, or Plato's belief in 'wandering' spirit, not connected with a body. According to Descartes, a human is *res cogitans*, which is basically the mind (whose subject is a brain); body is chaotic matter, arbitrarily driven by the mind. And so, sexuality that is proper to human body cannot pose a fundament to human identity – it is just an attribute, and fertility is a question of reproduction and giving birth to corporal offspring. In this way, Descartes referred to Plato's perception of the soul.

John Locke placed fertility in the context of family and both parents; participation in procreation as well as upbringing. In Locke's opinion, when a married couple starts a family, they 'acquire each other's bodies to fulfill the task of having children and bring them up, since 'God, giving a gift, gifted the world as a common good not only to Adam but to the whole of mankind' (Locke, 1992, 323).

Immanuel Kant, when speaking of interpersonal relation – and relation of man and wife is certainly a case of such – noticed that the other person is seen from my perspective – this person is someone to me, and I am someone to them. He described transcendental 'I' as transcendently free. He also pointed out that first person perspective is always connected with responsibility in a semantic way. He acknowledged personal realm of a person, but was rather inclined towards consciousness as a criterion of a person. Modern thinkers that believed in dualistic concept of being in the most part did not deal with fertility which, according to them, belonged in corporal realm.

It is worth bringing up sociological position of Hegel who pointed out that dialectical opposition of genders is manifested not only biologically, but also sociologically and ethically; mother, from ethical point of view, raises the children, and the father commits himself in the service for a nation. (Uliński, 2001, 157). What Hegel emphasized the

most was that this maternal obligation should not be interfered with feelings or emotional bond, but should be fulfilled because of a husband as a husband and descendant as a descendant. Similarly, getting married should be an act in service of fertility and multiplying the number of state's citizens and it should be under no circumstances preceded by feelings between future spouses. A man, on the other hand, should do his job for the state with no personal issues (Hegel, 1969, 26).

4. Fertility in personalism

Contemporary understanding of fertility seems to arise from some of the stances discussed here before that perceive the relation of fertility and a human as a biological, psychological, sociological, or cultural feature; approach to life and to the issue of giving over life and concept of the soul. There are three main positions on human sexuality: biological determinism, social constructivism, and personalistic orientation. Biological determinism, as a monistic concept, emphasizes the corporality of a human, and hence perceives fertility as a manifestation of reproduction of mankind that takes two people while one of them is morphologically a man, and the second – a woman, both being sexually binary. The soul (mind) is at times reduced to the function of the biological brain, and the life – to the psychical and chemical process. In this paradigm, then, fertility is understood as reproducing the species. Social constructivism that is based on the dualistic vision of a man seems to propound separation of fertility from defining the gender of parents and child, so here the most crucial issue is the act of reproduction – a new human will define themselves.

In personalistic orientation, the perception of fertility seems to determine the personal character of a human. Acknowledging human dignity embraces also the sexual realm. Fertility is an integral part of the ontic fundament of a human, i.e. their soul. In this context, it is noteworthy to bring about the concept of the soul by St. Thomas of Aquinas. To him, the soul is, by its nature, a being, i.e. substance that exists independently, but at the same time is incomplete (*sub-*

stantia incompleta). In order to reach its completion, it requires a body, so this is the body that provides the soul with its species; species is, however, determined here not only by the soul but also by the body. Species, then, are also provided by the body. A soul is an act, and the act is chronologically, ontically, and epistemologically earlier than potency; therefore, in order to be a human soul (and not, for example, an angelic soul), a soul has to remain in relationship to the body from the very beginning. The soul not only shapes the body but also creates it, so it is the body together with the soul that individualizes and provides a human with species. And a human exists in no other way than being either a man or a woman. Looking at this issue from an anthropological perspective, it is important to add that the soul not only organizes the matter that is able to live, as Aristotle wrote, but also provides it with existence, since it is the first actuality of the organic body that has life potentially, but also the first actuality of existence of human as a being. Act of existence is always an individual and individualizing act. Unlike Aristotle (who believed that matter individualizes form), Aquinas maintained that matter provides a form (the soul) with species. Soul itself, therefore, being the first actuality of life, individualizes matter (the body) to be a man or a woman. And so, the principle of being a human – woman, or a human – man, has to be of sexual nature. In his teaching, St. Thomas was inspired by Aristotle's *De Anima*. Having Aristotle's remark ('nature does not act in vain, and does not miss anything that is necessary') as his starting point, he acknowledges that 'every being, that has a principle of life inside of itself, has also organs that are adapted to this principle, and body organs correspond to the parts of the soul.' (St. Thomas of Aquinas 633). Soul, forming the body – therefore its parts – acts like this since the parts are deposited in it.

Free will, which characterizes a man as a person (Chudy, 2005) enables people to make sexual decisions in a process that goes beyond instinct, which makes human sexual drive different from a sexual force that drives animals. K. Wojtyła argues, that ability to direct sexual drive 'in the context of nuptial love is what helps to reach its natural purpose. Sexual drive is aimed at mankind's preservation, which is

always connected with the existence of a new person – a child being the fruit of love of a married man and woman. The will turns to that purpose and by aware fulfillment of this goal, it struggles to extend its creative force' (Wojtyła, 2015, 122). Consequently, the will always characterizes a human as a man or as a woman; then, the act of will that is directed toward good is different in the case of men and women. The source and principle of existence and action of a human as a person is a soul, hence sexuality penetrates the whole human person. A. Maryniarczyk puts it in the following words: 'to be a person, is to be an individual and indivisible subject (substance) of rational and sexual nature. Human persons fulfill themselves as men or women' (Maryniarczyk, 2019, 67). If a human person is an integral blend of body and soul, then the whole human is sexual: the body as well as the soul that actualizes it.

John Paul II referred to human sexuality many times, and he always understood sexuality as a personal attribute of a human, since 'the fact that man and woman are persons does not change the fact that they are also man and woman' (Wojtyła, 2015, 45). In his reflection on sexuality, the pope referred to human nature as proper to every human being. He noted that even if because of some disease or other unfortunate incident the reason does not manifest fully, the person still remains rational; in the same way, a person is sexual, even if their sexuality does not manifest fully because of disease, accident, or some other condition. And so, the drive that penetrates the whole reality and is present in all realms of life constitutes the property of the whole human being. At the same time, K. Wojtyła emphasizes the fact of distinctness of human drive. He argues that the drive is 'an attribute of human being that is reflected in action and finds its expression in action' (Wojtyła, 2015, 44). Although the drive penetrates and encompasses the whole human being, it does not have the power to determine a person to act (unlike it is with animals). Man is a subject of action and the author of action that is connected with sexuality; human sex penetrates the personal realm of a human, so it is different from animal sexuality since a person transcends the kingdom of animals. Sexual drive for a human is 'something developed – stable and

necessary, and not acquired and accidental'; it is of existential character because it is connected with a human coming into existence. Human exists as a person, who is 'a source of self – determination which is reflected action' (Wojtyła, 2015, 46). If a human person is able to act morally in his sexual activity, it means that sexuality is not merely a biological or sensual issue, but it penetrates all spheres of human activity, the whole human as a person. A person is able to act beyond their instinct, thanks to which they can choose means and adapt them to their purposes.

In this perspective, the definition formulated by K. Wojtyła, according to which human drive is a 'certain natural, congenital to everyone direction of action, which drives the entire being from the inside and which improves it' (Wojtyła, 2015, 45) allows interpretation in which this improvement is understood as growth in being a man or a woman – if the sexual drive is obviously connected with human sexuality. What is more, sexual drive both for men and women has a natural tendency to transform into love, and love penetrates life of a whole human being (Wojtyła, 2015, 47).

Without fertility taken into account, a human would not be able to actualize fully as a man or a woman by interpersonal love which results in giving birth to a new life in love. The soul of a newborn man comes directly from God by the power of the act of creation (Gen 2, 7) – which means it is not a result of procreation – but is also in possession of its own act of being; as St. Thomas wrote, 'what possesses *esse* by itself, cannot arise or be destroyed in any other way, just by itself'⁸. This is also the reason why, as E. Gilson points out, the soul cannot arise by giving birth (no creature can make actual existence start happening); it can only be created by God. Nevertheless, a human soul shares the same act of being that it received from God with the body that they received from parents: a man and a woman, as a fruit of their fertility (Gilson, 1965).

Human sexuality is a reason of love of the second person, interpersonal love that is – according to the pope's formula – positive personalistic norm:

'A person is a being of such kind that the only proper relation to them is love' (Wojtyła, 2015, 32). Love is in this context the highest manifestation of human sexuality. A. Sarmiento writes: 'when we talk about <<humanization>> or <<personalization>> of sexuality, we want to find the expression of a fact that sexual activity should be placed in the context of a person who is a being directed toward good and love' (Sarmiento, 2002, 25).

Today there are different concepts of the role of sex in personalism. This diversity follows from the fact that there are many different personalistic trends. J.M. Murry, referring to N. Bierdiayev's concept, understood sex as a way to revive Christianity in a mystical way. That would involve people discovering a bond between them and God in their own hearts, drawing the life force from the ongoing revival of a man by God. To make this happen, Murry proposed in his 'Adam and Eve' the renewal of religion by the renewal of faith in love. Aside from the vertical dimension, he understood this love exclusively by interpersonal relationships between two people in marriage, claiming that all other relationships are unreliable and prone to failure. He was quite radical in his view; being a protestant, he propounded the abolition of celibacy. He was also against the dogma of virgin maternity of Lady Mary. On the other hand, he criticized protestant Puritanism (Coates, 1949, 221-227). Roger Scruton argued that persons are distinct from the rest of nature by responsibility, and this characteristic is connected with rationality – personal beings are aware of their actions, so they can either perform or refrain from a given action. Love for the person of distinct sex is manifested and fully realized in arising of a new life. Parents love their children as a whole—they do not love a child as a body in the material realm. R. Scruton puts it as follows: 'I love my child as an embodiment of my child, and not the body' (Scruton, 2009, 275).

All in all, as follows from the presentation of different historical concepts of a human in the context of sexuality and procreation, the connection between sexuality and the ontic basis of the human person is fundamental to the issue of sexuality in Christian

8 St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*. I, 75, 6.

personalism. The ontic basis of the human person is – let us remind that – the soul. The context of fertility and children from a personalistic perspective completes the act of creation; it is also reflected in the Christian understanding of love as the only proper relation to the person. Love finds its realization in the

interpersonal relationships of man and woman, and also in parents – newborn child relations. Broader reference to how the understanding of internal relations in a family shaped in the history of Christian personalism would go beyond this paper and thus it requires further research.

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