

Pavol Dancak

Homo Perfectus versus Educatio: Philosophical Reflections on Transhumanism and Education

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Pavol Dancák
University of Presov, Presov, Slovakia

Homo Perfectus versus Educatio: Philosophical Reflections on Transhumanism and Education

Homo Perfectus versus Educatio.
Filozoficzne refleksje
na temat transhumanizmu i edukacji

ABSTRACT

A new form of intervention into what it means to be human is currently emerging. It is an effort to purposely transform the very nature of man, which at once becomes some kind of a material to be worked on, the same as other components of nature are for man. This new emerging form of intervention into human existence extends beyond the humanistic ways and aims at the cultivation of man. *Homo perfectus* is a transhumanist perspective which calls for perfecting man, while stressing the enhancement of the human body and its performance, or his cognitive capacities. At the same time, the human characteristic of creative action is being marginalized. As a result, such a perspective neglects not only the dimensionality of man, but also his finality. The concept of the *homo perfectus* creates a pessimistic image of man and rejects man's intrinsic, biologically limited humanness in expectation of gaining greater control over our lives. The image is not an image of the enhancement of human nature and his full realization, but it is rather an image of a battle against what was once given to man.

KEY WORDS

man, education, transhumanism, perfectionism, reduction

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

człowiek, edukacja, transhumanizm, perfekcjonizm, redukcjonizm

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In this paper, I will present the contradiction that arises in connection to the concept of *homo perfectus* and point out the significance of the concept of *educatio* in connection to human existence. Education becomes a prerequisite of human existence; without education, man would not be able to gain his freedom. Education is not only a preparation for certain life performances but it also guides us out of every partialness, every isolation in the sphere of personal limited interests into a space that can be open towards one and only human direction, that is a direction from the partial to the whole.

ABSTRAKT

Współcześnie jesteśmy świadkami nowej formy ingerencji w istotę ludzką. Chodzi o celowe dążenie do przekształcenia natury ludzkiej, w wyniku czego stanie się ona narzędziem, materiałem do przetwarzania, podobnym do tych, które służą człowiekowi w świecie przyrody. Ta nowa forma ingerencji w ludzkie życie wykracza jednak poza humanistyczne sposoby i cele doskonalenia człowieka. *Homo perfectus* stanowi transhumanistyczną perspektywę, która – dążąc do doskonalenia człowieka – kładzie nacisk na doskonalenie ciała ludzkiego, jego możliwości czy zdolności poznawczych. Jednocześnie zapomina się o charakterystycznym dla człowieka twórczym działaniu. W konsekwencji, perspektywa ta rezygnuje z wielopłaszczyznowości (wielowarstwowości) ludzkiego bytu, jak i jego finalności. Koncepcja *homo perfectus* tworzy pesymistyczny obraz człowieka oraz odrzuca właściwe dla człowieka biologiczne ograniczenia, poszukując coraz doskonalszych metod kontroli nad jego życiem. Jednak nie jest ona sposobem doskonalenia natury ludzkiej, jej pełnej realizacji, ale raczej przejawem walki przeciwko temu, co było człowiekowi dane. Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu przedstawienie wielu sprzeczności związanych z terminem *homo perfectus*, jak również przybliżenie znaczenia koncepcji *educatio* w odniesieniu do bytu ludzkiego. Wychowanie jest niezbędnym warunkiem istnienia człowieka, bez wychowania człowiek nie jest w stanie osiągnąć wolności. Wychowanie jest nie tylko przygotowaniem się do pełnienia istotnych ról odgrywanych przez człowieka, ono wyprowadza człowieka z jego niekompletności, zamknięcia się w sferze osobistych ograniczonych interesów, i prowadzi w kierunku przestrzeni otwierającej się na prawdziwie ludzkie horyzonty, uwalnia od tego, co jest cząstkowe, ku temu, co jest całościowe, pełne.

Introduction

Answers to the questions of upbringing and education seem obvious and are dealt with primarily in the fields of the social sciences (pedagogy, didactics and others). Pedagogy comprehensively addresses the issues of upbringing, physical and mental development and education of man. Yet there are still questions that these social sciences are unable to provide answers for.¹ These questions are of a philosophical nature and they fundamentally challenge what we take for granted when we speak of education. What is essential in education? What must education form, suppress or modify in a man? What makes education what it is and what makes a man a man? What, as a matter of fact, is the meaning of education? Why and how is it required to educate a man? What is the aim of education and what is its status in life of a man? And principally, what is a man? This question encompasses not only the awe of our own being in its often contradictory manifestations, but also coming to terms with our own limitations. It also encompasses the matter of good and evil related to the development of cognition. Last but not least, it is a question of the human quest to find their own place in the wholeness of being.

The questions presented here are far more pressing nowadays, since contemporary man is being exposed to the strong influence of information, consumer and knowledge-based Euro-American civilization. Apart from various images of man, *homo perfectus* emerges as a man who will be rid of his own biological limitations using nanotechnology, genetic engineering, psychopharmacology, information and cognitive techniques and the like. Radical life extension and achieving immortality are in the picture, too. In this paper, I will present the contradiction that arises in connection to the concept of *homo perfectus* and point out the significance of the concept of *educatio* in connection to human existence.

¹ See M. Potočárová, L. Baranyi, “Rodina a výchova”, in: *Európske pedagogické myslenie od moderny k postmoderne po súčasnosť*, eds. B. Kudláčová, A. Rajský, Trnava 2012, p. 129.

The idea of breeding a better man

Since time immemorial, man has striven to better himself, to enhance his capacities and limits. To improve his performance, man has created miscellaneous tools—from a stone cleaver, through a hammer, a dagger to a calculator and a computer. He has made use of glasses, binoculars or a microscope to enhance his visual capacity; the microphone and telephone to make better use of his vocal organs, etc. Listing examples of the enhancements can be taken to extremes: shoes to enhance feet, clothes to enhance skin, a diary to enhance memory, and so on. The given examples of ways to enhance actual human capacities mean only external utilization of tools, devices or things. When intervening into the being of man with the purpose of human enhancement we can think about the following two standard forms:

- (1) medical therapy and prevention;
- (2) personality enhancement, “cultivation” of a man, education.

Medicine and education have the means they can use to significantly influence an image of a particular being of a man. These means more or less directly enter into his biological, mental and spiritual formation, creation and existence. Upbringing and education cultivates and refines man. Medical therapy restores his lost natural/health balance and medical prevention protects him from the disruption of this balance. These two forms then help a man to be “a man” and are both morally acceptable and desirable. The advent and development of new technologies, such as nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, and neurotechnologies, gives rise to the instrumental power of man over his own biological features and opens up new possibilities “to enhance” contemporary man. There is yet another form of intervention into the being of humans. It is an effort to purposely transform the very nature of man which at once becomes some kind of material to be worked on, the same as other components of nature are for man. This new, emerging form of intervention into human existence—the transformation of human nature (anthropotechnique)—extends beyond the humanistic ways and aims of cultivation of man. It also goes beyond the traditional medicine looking after a natural balance of man. In fact, it is contradictory to them because the aim of anthropotechnique is to enable a man “to be a different man to as we know him today”—that is to be transhuman and posthuman.

What we are witnessing here is a transition from the support of cultivation as active creation and the development of intervention into human organisms, because the tools of technology allegedly present a more efficient and quicker way. But to where? From the purposefully managed processes of plant and animal breeding used by people to change the traits of plants and animals to benefit from, we ended up breeding humans. Can we really speak of efforts aimed at benefits for the whole of mankind?

From the philosophical standpoint, the current transhumanist idea of human enhancement could be viewed from the perspective of perfectionism.² It is an ancient philosophical and ethical concept having its roots in Plato and Aristotle, or even in mythology. In Plato's dualism of a perfect world of ideas and an imperfect world of things and people, the old aspirations of man towards transcendence and the Absolute acquired a philosophical formulation in the shape of a perfectly functioning cosmos, perfectly unchangeable being, perfectly good moral life and perfectly balanced human being abiding by the "divine light" of reason. The idea of a perfect being is, as a matter of fact, the idea of God and therefore the desire of man to imitate or follow God is the desire for immortality, the desire to eliminate one's own flaws and limitations and the desire to overcome natural and earthly reliance. The Aristotelian *eudaimonia*, as a desire for better and perfect life, inherent to "human nature" is also a variant of philosophical theory of perfectionism as a theory of the highest good which is an end in itself, not succumbing to any goal. Aristotle claims that man can achieve that by enhancing and developing his nature and his best qualities, capacities and virtues in a moral and political sense rather than in the biological or technological sense.

Christian thinking introduces *theosis*—deification as the purpose of human life, while deification is apprehended as the full transformation of man, his likeness of God. It is man's participation in the life of the Holy Trinity and God's nature. Deification is not something that happens to a man once he dies, but something that is happening and should happen here and now. It is a process that begins during an earthly life of man so as to reach his ultimate perfection in eternity.

² See E. Višňovský, "The Idea of 'Human Enhancement' from the Perspective of the Philosophy of Pragmatism", *Filozofia* 2015, vol. 70(5), p. 244.

At the end of the 2nd century, Saint Irenaeus expressed the following: “God became a son of man so that a man could become the Son of God.”³ The classical ideas of humanism represented by a concept of the cultivation and development of human qualities were based on that very notion, too. According to perfectionist humanism, the purpose of human life is to strive for perfection as the highest goal. At the same time it is evident that what we have in mind is a process, rather than a state.

Transhumanist perfectionism is nothing new or incomprehensible from the standpoint of philosophy. What is more, its advocates have at least one very strong argument up their sleeve: Not only are we able to enhance, but we even have an obligation to do so, having all that unprecedented technology at our disposal. It is only now that the time is supposedly right to connect the age-long desires or utopias with technologies, to make the ancient dreams come true and to transform ourselves from earthly and natural creatures to something else.⁴ Biotechnological engineering takes the place of social engineering and it is supposed to provide unexpected and unlimited possibilities of a better life (and in all probability of happiness, too) on the basis of science.⁵

Homo perfectus – contradictio in adiecto

Homo perfectus is a perspective grandiosely promised by transhumanist perfectionism. The British philosopher David Pearce offers a vision of the abolition of all human suffering. Inspired by Jeremy Bentham, he elaborated a concept of “abolitionism” defined as an update of utilitarian calculus of maximizing well-being and minimizing suffering. He claims that apart from the convincing ethical imperatives as to why we should strive to reach such a goal, there are also technological means to pursue it. He calls a project that is to pursue such

³ P. Dancák, *Zagadnienie wychowania w myśli Jana Pawła II*, Prešov 2001, p. 67.

⁴ See D. Pearce, *The Hedonistic Imperative*. Available at: <<https://www.hedweb.com/>> (access: 24.02.2017).

⁵ See E. Višňovský, “The Idea of ‘Human Enhancement’ from the Perspective of the Philosophy of Pragmatism”, op. cit., p. 244.

goal “paradise-engineering.”⁶ He also argues that the suffering of living beings, and man in particular, is not necessary. The evolution of man and life is allegedly heading towards the abolition of both physical and mental suffering through neurosurgery and pharmacology. Influencing moods and emotional states, such as depression, using chemical substances and drugs should give way to much more perfect genetic engineering and nanotechnologies that will enable us “to re-programme” the animalistic nature of animals such as predators, that is including man, too. Similarly, it is possible to use biotechnology to deal with the problem of ageing and some lifestyle diseases, for instance drug abuse. Pearce is also a proponent of the concept of “bio-happiness” further elaborated on by the Canadian philosopher and ethicist Mark Alan Walker. Walker holds the opinion that human happiness has biological roots and it can be biochemically manipulated using “happy pills” which increase feelings of happiness and mental satisfaction. Such an influence is regarded an ethical imperative.⁷

The current understanding of transhumanism is a product of the American futurists, scientists and artists of the 1980’s. Fereidoun M. Esfandiary, for instance, presents the specific indicators of transhumanity: prosthetics, plastic surgery, intensive use of telecommunications, a cosmopolitan outlook, globetrotting lifestyle, androgyny, mediated reproduction, absence of religious beliefs, and a rejection of traditional values.⁸ Another movement, referred to as Extropianism, was formed around Max More and its aim is endless progress. The main principle of Extropianism is constant evolution:

Humanity is a temporary stage along the evolutionary pathway. We are not the zenith of nature’s development. It is time for us to consciously take charge of ourselves and to accelerate our progress. No more gods, no more faith, no more timid holding back. Let us blast out of our old forms, our ignorance, our weakness, and our mortality. The future is ours.⁹

⁶ See D. Pearce, *The Hedonistic Imperative*, op. cit.

⁷ See M.A. Walker, “Happy-People-Pills For All”, *International Journal of Wellbeing* 2001, vol. 1(1), p. 127–148.

⁸ See I. Klinec, *Transhumanizmus. Budúcnosť človeka v 21. Storočí (Conference paper)*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276285208_Transhumanizmus_Buducnost_cloveka_v_21_storoci (access: 11.04.2016).

⁹ M. More, “Transhumanism: Towards a Futurist Philosophy”, *Extropy* 1990, no. 6, p. 11. Available at: <http://fennetic.net/irc/extropy/ext6.pdf> (access: 24.02.2017).

Apart from the radicals, there are also moderate theorists among the proponents of transhumanist enhancement. One of them is the sociologist and bioethicist James J. Hughes who came up with the concept of “democratic transhumanism.” He claims that it is necessary to ensure that the perfectionist technologies are safe, made available to everyone and respect the right of individuals to control their own bodies. He states that technologies provide man with greater freedom, namely the freedom not to accept our own biological nature.¹⁰

The concept of the *homo perfectus* creates a pessimistic image of man and rejects man’s intrinsic, biologically limited humanness in expectation of gaining greater control over our lives.¹¹ The image is not an image of human nature enhancement and his full realization, but it is rather an image of a battle against what was once given to man. Natural conception, disease, ageing and death are all natural to man. All of these are perceived by transhumanists as limitations, flaws or even errors of nature¹² that man needs to rid himself of. Transhumanist aspirations are a call for the perfection of man, while stressing the enhancement of the human body and its performance, or his cognitive capacities. We learn about the experiments enhancing bones, muscles, eyesight, and synaptic connections of the central nervous system, but we do not hear about the improving of man as whole, as a unity of the physical and mental, the spiritual and social.

Based on the facts presented, we can assume that man in the transhumanist sense is reduced, or to be more precise, reduced to his own biology, to a system of mechanisms and chemismus (chemical composition)—to neurones, muscle cells, genes, etc. This reduction can be described as nihilistic in the context presented by Viktor Frankl. What he had in mind was physiologism as one of the models of nihilism that reduces man to physical reality. As a result, such a perspective neglects not only the dimensionality of man, but also his

¹⁰ See J. Hughes, *Citizen Cyborg: Why Democratic Societies Must Respond to the Redesigned Human of the Future*, Cambridge (MA) 2004.

¹¹ See N. Bostrom, “Human Genetic Enhancements: A Transhumanist Perspective”, *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 2003, vol. 37(4), p. 494.

¹² See Z. Sitarčíková, “Postavenie človeka”, in: *Európske pedagogické myslenie od moderny k postmoderne po súčasnosť*, eds. B. Kudláčová, A. Rajský, Trnava 2012, p. 108.

finality. The fact that the direction of man towards perfection and his desire “to be a better man,” which is intrinsic to him, has different forms, seems to have been obscured. Then, as if the realization of self, development of own capacities through own efforts, living own human adventure among others, continual advancement towards the Truth, the Absolute, the Love during one’s whole life have been pushed aside. One-sided orientation to own performance and efficiency deprives man of advancement towards the fulfilment of his most profound desires, and to a revelation of the meaningfulness of reality. According to Frankl, this revelation of the meaningfulness of reality will not show the meaning of being, provided as long as we are reduced to one layer of being. It can only happen when we take into consideration the spiritual being in his efforts to find meaning and values. Only then can we understand man in his wholeness which is not exhausted only in mental and physical unity. We cannot omit spirituality when securing the unity of man.¹³

Some philosophers representing philosophical anthropology, such as Max Scheler and Arthur Gehlen, portray a dynamic image of man as an image of being with imperfections and open to the world. Man is an imperfect being and compared to animals he does not have enough specialized organs. He is not sufficiently equipped to fight, his senses are not developed, he has uncertain instincts and he is not adapted to a specific environment. Arthur Gehlen bases his notions on the thesis that man is an imperfect being and he explains the necessity of substitution, intensifying and relieving techniques. Owing to technology, man compensates fully for the capacities he lacks. But at the same time he does not alter himself, he does not intervene into his nature, he stays the same imperfect being. The certain greatness of man can be found in compensation for his own imperfection. The greatness of man rests with the capacities of “looking upwards” as related interpretation of the concept *anthropos*—or the one who is able to “look upwards.” Animals are not capable of “looking upwards,” it is related purely to man. All humans are conditioned. A person is truly human only to the extent to which he can rise above his own conditionality and to what extent it exceeds or transcends.¹⁴ It does

¹³ See V.E. Frankl, *Trpiaci človek*, transl. M. Krankus, Bratislava 2006, pp. 12–17.

¹⁴ See *ibidem*, p. 52.

not mean to abolish our own conditionality but to eliminate our own imperfections in order to become man, to become himself. According to Eugen Fink, the imperfection of human existence is not a blessing, nor a curse, nor salvation or disaster. It is only a condition for us to learn what is happiness and unhappiness, smallness and greatness.¹⁵ Man needs to be confronted with the necessities of his fate, allowing personality to be formed from the whole of possibilities of his “Self.” On the contrary, if we liberate man from these necessities we rob him of his “Self.”¹⁶ Human life is a miracle of transition and transformation. There is a challenge before man to become real through his deeds. Man has the potential to complete and improve himself and to become a better man. Within the framework of one human life, this potential is inexhaustible and provides an open horizon. When actualising this potential, man and his cultivation is always concerned. Education—*educatio*—brings us to a true human form of our individual destinies.

Homo perfectus is *contradictio in adiecto* as:

- (1) a perfect man would mean an ultimate state, but man is constantly in motion, in development. Transhumanists alone are not consistent in their notions as they adhere to the modern belief that assumes continual development towards better;
- (2) he rejects the freedom of man and denies man’s experience with freedom; man is free, but not absolutely;
- (3) contains reductionism: human phenomena pose as epiphenomena of some subhuman level.

Homo educans et homo educandus

According to Fink, a question of education is a question about human existence. Immanuel Kant construes education as a necessary prerequisite for a man to become man. He claims that man is nothing less than what education makes him to be. To be able to answer the question about education, we must first have a concept of what is a man and what makes him one.¹⁷ What is typical for man is his

¹⁵ See E. Fink, *Grundfragen der systematischen Pädagogik*, Freiburg 1978, p. 198.

¹⁶ See V.E. Frankl, *Trpiaci človek*, op. cit., p. 20.

¹⁷ See E. Dvoranová, “What is Education? Several Remarks on the Philosophy of Education”, *Filozofia* 2010, vol. 65(4), p. 371.

peculiar position in the cosmos,¹⁸ his eccentric position in the natural order. Zdeněk Pinc labels man as “an unnatural animal.”¹⁹ Being unnatural is regarded as his second cultural nature that man needs to acquire during lifetime through upbringing and education. The majority of anthropologists agree that man is instinctively reduced and has only a weak and insufficient set of natural defence mechanisms. Therefore, his adaptability, abilities to learn fast, and other capacities are his “choice of curse.” Type behaviour is not distinctive for man, in comparison to animals, and that is why a man is “condemned to” creative action—making something that has not been yet created, but something that he himself creates. By doing so, he also creates himself. Martin Buber said: “greatness of man arises from his poverty.”²⁰

Animal behaviour is largely unchangeable, predominantly instinctive. Man, however, exceeds his instincts by reflection and self-reflection, by his ability to make mistakes, remember them and learn a valuable lessons from them, by creation of new, original qualities, by self-awareness and self-confidence, by special cognitive capacities and a capacity to formulate generally applicable laws (mathematical, physical, but also societal), then act and create knowingly and freely, based on those laws. Man does not learn only by trial and error or by imitation of old forms and patterns of behaviour. He mostly learns by transferring information using abstract symbols (language), by non-genetic transfer that is the cultural transfer of information (mostly using language that is also acquired, through upbringing and education). The cultural transfer is several times faster than the genetic transfer of information. At the same time, the cultural transfer capacity has been constantly evolving (e.g. to develop abstract thinking capacities). The prerequisite of education is then the plasticity of man drawing from his incompleteness, a possibility of universal development, formation, shaping and creation.

Socrates regarded his students as companions with whom he sought answers to questions by applying critical examination to their own experience. He expanded on a need for cultivation and self-cultivation, showing a way for enhancement including personal

¹⁸ See M. Buber, *Problém člověka*, transl. M. Skovajsa, Praha 1997, p. 30.

¹⁹ Z. Pinc, *Fragmenty k filozofii výchovy*, Praha 1991.

²⁰ M. Buber, *Problém člověka*, op. cit., p. 31.

responsibility for the transformation of one's own life and thinking. According to Socrates, everybody must be an object affected by their upbringing and education, including ourselves regardless of age, social status, and so on. The Socratic approach does not place an educational process in some educational establishment but assumes a responsible approach to upbringing and self-education. Such an understanding of education is coupled with modesty and caution, and with critical and consistent thinking.²¹ A responsible attitude to our own life and self-education is some kind of life stance, a value, life philosophy, that implies the realization by every person authentically and freely. It becomes the understanding of being. If education should aim at the fully-fledged and free life of man, then it is necessary for education to be philosophical cognition too, so that the life and world are understood as a whole. It is because in philosophical knowledge, life itself expands and gains new horizons and acquires itself. Meanwhile, in specialized knowledge the known remains separated from knowing (knowledge), they are two opposing things.²²

Education is a vitally important and existentially deciding value because it is only education that can humanise man and bring him to attain the knowledge and realize the fullness of his own freedom through conscious actions, and nothing else. Education becomes a prerequisite of human existence; without education man would not be able to gain his freedom. Jiří Michálek writes: "a man is (exists) in a way that he is being educated and at the same time he educates, education belongs to human existence."²³ Education is not something that we could observe as something happening outside of us, something static or unchangeable, because we are, in our whole human and cultural essence, the ones who are being educated and the ones who educate, the ones who are getting influenced and the ones who influence others. That is, we are directly involved in this dynamic process based on certain conscious or unconscious understanding of education. Rootedness of education in our being compels us to its constant philosophical reflection.

²¹ See W. Jaeger, *Paideia II*, transl. M. Plezia, Warszawa 1964, p. 96.

²² See J. Patočka, *Péče o duši I*, Praha 1996, p. 375.

²³ J. Michálek, *Topologie výchovy*, Praha 1995, p. 12.

Pondering upon education requires looking at this process not only as manipulating and influencing the younger generation by the older one, or manipulating and influencing an individual by society. It is also important to perceive it as passing on habits. It is therefore necessary to view education as co-being resulting in mutual determination, the interaction of individuals, groups and nations. Education can bring out potential in man, and his enthusiasm for life, let it manifest and evolve, but it can also suppress and dampen enthusiasm. Education can form a man positively within his personality (individual) dispositions, but also deform him. Education can become a power over itself and negatively interfere with the inner integrity of man.

Conclusion

The modern human community built on “science-technological” thinking often threatens reductionist thinking and therefore it is ever so important to enrich this kind of thinking with a spiritual dimension of the human heart and calling for love of God. The legacy of Christian personalism articulates clearly that the other man does not pose a threat, but he as our neighbour presents us with the opportunity for complete realization. Life requires self-limitation whose essence lies in orientation towards good. Moral relativism brings something that is not good and what is against life—murders, genocides, inhumane conditions, slavery, human trafficking, exploitation of children, etc. John Paul II reminds us in his encyclical letter *Centesimus annus* that communism promised freedom to the whole of mankind, but in reality communism enslaved whole nations. Mankind came to realize yet another historical experience which again confirmed that the freedom without the truth loses its content. If man is to benefit from the freedom, it must be freedom that is responsible, that reflects on the whole.

Man is a cultural being and that implies that not all found in man is a product of his nature. It is not even the creation of a man himself, but it is a result of these two realities. This holistic view of the reality called man, is expressed most clearly in *paideia* which is the most typical feature distinguishing a man from animals and plants. Man is a creature that is “unfinished” and he still builds himself to the great extent. According to John Paul II, the basic aim of culture is to “work

on” man. Culture is then this educational effort through which man becomes more of a man: he “is” more in all ways of being. The future of man depends on culture!²⁴

Education is not only a preparation for certain life performances but it also guides us out of every partialness, every isolation in the sphere of personal limited interests into the space that can be open towards one and only human direction, that is a direction from the partial to the whole, to the space where man both as an individual and mankind will be placed and called to live. Ján Patočka wrote that “education in the true sense is introduction into the wholeness of the world.”²⁵ At the same time, this openness to the whole is the true openness for all other beings occupying the world together. It is the openness towards people and things in their true perspective. Determination by egocentrically oriented goals must end here. Instead, the position in relation to the whole must be assumed.

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²⁴ See Jan Paweł II, “W imię przyszłości kultury. Przemówienie w UNESCO”, in: Jan Paweł II, *Wiara a kultura*, eds. M. Radwan et al., Rzym 1986, p. 81.

²⁵ J. Patočka, *Aristoteles, jeho předchůdci a dědicové*, Praha 1964, p. 370.

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE:

Prof. PhDr. Pavol Dancák, PhD
 University of Presov, Presov, Slovakia
 pavol.dancak@unipo.sk