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The Human Person Dignity and Compassion

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Abstract: The subject of human value was not, in many cases, thoroughly discussed in the history of Western culture, and thus it needs further examination. Even today, there is a need to open the debate again, given the divergent views and conflicting opinions on the subject. These days, under the influence of cultural and economic globalization, the development of new technologies and science bring new possibilities, but at the same time poses questions about new ways of understanding the value and dignity of the human person, which sometimes clash with traditional philosophical and theological interpretations. It turns out that the current trend, which emphasizes the new achievements of science and the constant economic growth, also affects the very understanding of the human value. From the perspective of science, it is possible to see a revival of the reductionist approach to the understanding of man and the economy of transforming the man's value into a human resource. The consequences of these tendencies are manifested above all in the ethical dimension of human life. Human dignity, compassion, and good relationships with others are complementary facts that lead to the development of humanity, create good for future generations, clarify the parameters of current rapid changes, and set boundaries that allow man to remain human.

Keywords: man, society, dignity, compassion, freedom

Introduction

In the present time, the humankind is rapidly changing basic paradigms in science, technology, in the social, economic, and political sphere, in self-understanding of cultures and societies, in religions and in creating new ways of being. This phenomenon leads us to the questions: What are the parameters

of these changes? Where are the boundaries which allow the human person to remain human? Humankind is confronted with yet another problem. There is a pressing need to create conditions that would confirm and respect the dignity of all members of the human family. Problems such as famine and chronic unemployment, violence and terrorism, injustice and social exclusion, child abuse and desertion of the elderly, illiteracy and ideological manipulation, dehumanisation and destruction of natural environment are all examples stressing the urgency.

Human dignity is one of the fundamental principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Not only does it present the foundation for the most important values held by the members of the Euro-Atlantic cultural community,¹ it also speaks to all the nations of the world. First, there were individual people who rejected all forms of slavery and consciously recognized and accepted the concept of human dignity which is inherent to every human being. It then became the foundation of every personal relationship before permeating the social and political spheres. The acceptance of this concept did not happen overnight. The Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Christian philosophical tradition struggled with it. Today we are trying to carry this acceptance into the agenda of practical politics and our everyday lives. The concept of human dignity greatly influenced the law-making processes in the entire civilized world.² The decision to include the principle of human dignity in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, accepted by the United Nations on October 10, 1948, was closely related to moral turbulence after the horrors of the Second World War. The Preamble refers to the principle which would become the foundation for the moral and legal norms. Human dignity also determines the boundaries of human freedom. "Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable right of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."³ The foundation of all human legal norms is inherent and not acquired human dignity.

¹ Cf. Božena Seilerová, Vladimír Seiler, *Pojem ľudskej dôstojnosti – axióma ľudských práv*, in *Politické vedy*, III, no. 4 (2000), 107–19.

² After the Second World War, the Nuremberg trials with the war criminals unveiled the horrors of crimes committed by people with medical or nursing education in the concentration camps. The tribunal did not accept the principle *nulla poena sine lege, nullum crimen sine lege* (no penalty without a law, no crime without a law) and referring to human dignity convicted the Nazi leaders who defended themselves with the claim that they only fulfilled the orders

³ Cf. *Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, accessed October 15, 2016, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf.

Human Dignity as a Keyword

Human dignity is the key term of the present-day discourse of the postmodern crisis.⁴ Postmodernism, as the result of disrupted fundamental vision of the world common to both Biblical religions and to metaphysics, directs human beings primarily to managing their everyday matters. Critical to this disruption was Nietzsche, whose philosophical thought cast doubt on what was considered the foundation of Biblical religion and metaphysics—the transcendence of the invisible reality which is present in truer and “stronger” sense than what we are able to see with our own eyes. Greek and Jewish thinking holds that not everything can be reduced to the flow of phenomena. There is something beyond that; something that guarantees that the flow of life has its inner continuity as well as its source and aim. Nietzsche rejected not only God but also the human being. In postmodernism, culture does not refer to the sources beyond itself and thus the human action is not directed to meaningful and responsible freedom.

In this situation, the term *dignity* on which the protection of human rights is based, presents terminological ambiguity and raises a question whether the meaning of the term remains the same. Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or other documents of the UN do not provide any definition of human dignity, there has been a space for various attempts to provide a strict and exhaustive definition. Formally, human dignity is guaranteed by the Constitution and other legal regulations of a given country but a very important role is played by the society which either protects, reinforces or harms human dignity with its moral relationships and the moral consciousness. Every individual cultivates his or her personality; as long as they do not feel indifferent towards the disparaging of dignity of others they are determined to protect it.⁵

The reference to the legal tradition, moral relationships in the society and the attitude of the individual to his or her own cultivation does not provide argumentative certainty with regard to definition of human dignity. It is clear, however, that human dignity is most likely to be some intuitive foundation for different legal institutions and human practical action. Although philosophers, theologians, and moral philosophers point to the diversity of views on dignity and to difficulties in finding some common ground, politicians and lawyers must be firm in the standpoint they consciously decided to take knowing that a compromise is the only option in the joint political and legislative action. Bernhard

⁴ Cf. Olga Chistyakova, “Philosophical-Anthropological Meanings of Postmodernism,” in *“Mediatizing” Human*. Proceedings of the 2016 International Conference on Contemporary Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Volume 74 (Paris: Atlantis Press, 2016), 637–42.

⁵ Cf. Seilerová, Seiler, “Pojem ľudskej dôstojnosti – axioma ľudských práv,” in *Politické vedy*, III, no. 4, (2000), 107–19.

Krautter exposed *a weak or even a dangerous spot* in such an approach by showing the changing circumstances surrounding the legal interpretation of the term *dignity* in the Federal Republic of Germany.⁶

The inviolability of human dignity and the commitment to protect it are enshrined in constitutions of present-day states. The German Constitution (the German Basic Law) is no exception. Drafted after the victory against the horrors of totalitarian National Socialist tyranny, the term dignity was granted the highest priority. Article 1 of the German Basic Law stipulates: “Human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.”⁷ Besides the fact that the term dignity is, by its nature, not a legal term, what we see here is a worldview statement that implies ethical consequences. The prominent legal theoretician Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde⁸ claims that the state lives on normative premises which it, however, cannot itself guarantee and thus these premises lie outside the framework of the state’s orders.⁹ This was valid only until recently. In his reaction to 2003 commentary on the German Basic Law, Böckenförde concludes: the human dignity *was* inviolable. He refers to this new commentary on the Article 1 section 1 as to “a turning point” drawing attention to its key sentence: “Notwithstanding the claim to human dignity that inheres in every person and leads to the prohibition of certain categories of acts, the mode and measure of the protection of human dignity is open to differentiations which should acknowledge the circumstances of the case.”¹⁰ Examples of such *circumstances* are: embryo and foetus protection, heterologous insemination, adopted law stipulating that the human person is responsible for ending his or her own life, reproductive and therapeutic cloning. Such statement questioning inviolability and equality of human dignity, even if only in certain circumstances, concerns and threatens the very essence of the legal order on which the foundation of Western culture lies. People have always raised questions concerning themselves since the dawn of Western culture (e.g., Heraclitus, Sophocles). The knowledge of ancient thinkers about human essence was later acquired, transformed, and improved by the Christianity. Modern times, however, saw a dramatic shift in knowledge of the human essence. In the end,

⁶ Cf. Bernhard Krautter, *Důstojnost' člověka z pohľadu bibliie*, trans. Gašpar Fronc and Monika Šurdová, accessed October 15, 2016, http://www.uski.sk/frm_2009/ran/2006/ran-2006-1-04.htm

⁷ *The German Basic Law*, accessed October 15, 2016, <https://www.btg-bestellservice.de/pdf/80201000.pdf>

⁸ Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde; a constitutional judge in the Federal Republic of Germany from 1983 to 1996

⁹ Cf. Bernhard Krautter, *Důstojnost' člověka z pohľadu bibliie*, trans. Gašpar Fronc and Monika Šurdová, accessed October 15, 2016, http://www.uski.sk/frm_2009/ran/2006/ran-2006-1-04.htm

¹⁰ As quoted in Miguel Nogueira de Brito, *Human Reproduction and Human Dignity as a Constitutional Concept*, in Mario Viola de Azevedo Cunha, Norberto Nuno Gomes de Andrade, Lucas Lixiski, Lúcio Tomé Fêiteira, *New Technologies and Human Rights: Challenges to Regulation* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 182.

the debates on human essence and human dignity have reached an impasse, an open aporia which one can characterize by the following statement. Max Scheler claims: “We are the first epoch in which man has become fully and thoroughly ‘problematic’ to himself; in which he no longer knows what he essentially is but at the same time also knows that he does not know.”¹¹

Pondering the human dignity is at the very heart of every anthropological approach and so it is important that one does not settle for just any reduced concept of a human.¹² The etymology of the term *dignity* itself can lure to reductionism. The term *dignity* can refer to rank, merit, or competencies of a human being as a person; the ability to be worthy of something, to be capable of something, to be able to manage some task.¹³ If we limit our understanding of this etymological explanation to the point of view of reduced utilitarian pragmatism, we could, for instance, see the disease as a serious threat to human dignity.¹⁴ Philosophical anthropology, however, warns us against reductionism and directs us to transcendence of a human and, at the same time, to relationalism of being. Human dignity, *dignitas humana*, does not arise from some arbitrary decision of some authority or law. Thus, it cannot be questioned or nulled by any positive law because it arises from the very core of what it means to be a human person. Important in this context is Christian teaching and the conviction that person *created in the image and likeness of God* can no longer be “portrayed” as or reduced to something general, merely natural and determined by fate.¹⁵

It would appear that today, after a long struggle with slavery, serfdom, fascism, communism, colonialism, and racism no one would deny dignity of any person or a group of persons and relegate them to the fringes of society. The reality is different though. Old ideologies seem to be making their comeback and finding new ways of excluding certain groups of people from society by taking away their dignity, their subjectivity and their rights which belong to them naturally.¹⁶ Radical and non-balanced subjectivism, individualism, relativism, reductionism, orientation towards individual performance and consumerism all

¹¹ As quoted in Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (London and New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2004), 216.

¹² Cf. Marek Rembierz, *Interpretacje praw człowieka a paradoksy tożsamości europejskiej*, in Ryszard Moń and Andrzej Kobyliński, *Etyczne wymiary praw człowieka* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2009), 77–90.

¹³ Cf. Marián Mráz, *Humanistické aspekty ľudskej dôstojnosti*, accessed October 15, 2016, http://www.uski.sk/frm_2009/ran/2004/ran-2004-1-01.pdf

¹⁴ Cf. Bogdan Węgrzyn, “Godność człowieka a chrześcijański sens choroby i cierpienia,” in Halina Grzmil-Tylutki and Zbigniew Mirek, *Godność w perspektywie nauk* (Kraków: Fides et Ratio, 2012), 155–60.

¹⁵ Cf. Arno Anzenbacher, *Úvod do etiky*, trans. Karel Šprunk (Praha: Zvon, 1994), 225.

¹⁶ Cf. Paweł Czarnecki, *Ethics for a Social Worker* (Lublin: IPWN, 2011), 103–24.

pose a threat to human dignity and to human person as such.¹⁷ These views appear in the discourse of bioethics mainly in the Anglo-Saxon environment (among others: an Australian bioethicist Peter Singer, an American bioethicist Hugo T. Engelhardt, a philosopher from Manchester John Harris, and a German bioethicist Ursula Wolf).

Hugo T. Engelhardt claims that not all human beings are persons. They are persons only when they are capable of rationality and are self-aware. Therefore human fetuses, infants, people with intellectual disabilities, and those who are in a coma and infirm elderly people—in general, those who are not capable of autonomous life, those who are incapable of being a part of society are not persons, and therefore they can be stripped of elementary human dignity.¹⁸ Dysfunctional neurological system and brain or a very advanced old age can prevent a person from being a conscious and an active member of moral discourse. People in such condition lose the privilege of a person and they are reduced to a living human biological life. Society can take care of those defected organisms but it is not bound by a moral duty. In relation to the any *former* person, the living person has only the duties that are included in the last will of the deceased.¹⁹

In this context, it is necessary to refer to Kant's view on a human being. He sees a human being as a natural, sensual, and instinctive being as well as rational, moral, and autonomous being with absolute value and which requires a special treatment: "So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means."²⁰

Compassion and the Other

Philosophical study of dignity refers to *compassion*, which, for instance, Nietzsche rejected. Compassion shows the importance of relationship between I and you which appears in an authentic human encounter. By recognizing suffering of the other, compassion helps us create new relationships. It has a struc-

¹⁷ Cf. Maurizio Pietro Faggioni, *Život v našich rukách*, trans. Martin Koleják (Spišská kapitula – Spišské podhradie: Nadácia Kňazského seminára biskupa J. Vojtaššáka, 2007), 33–40.

¹⁸ Cf. Hugo Tristram Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Bioethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 135–241.

¹⁹ Cf. Hugo Tristram Engelhardt, *The Foundations of Bioethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 249.

²⁰ Immanuel Kant, *Základy metafysiky mravů*, trans. Ladislav Menzel (Praha: Svoboda–Libertas, 1990), 91.

ture and a potential to transform a human person with regard to affirmation of dignity. It is an emotion through which we are able to share the suffering. It is connected to the desire to remove or alleviate the suffering of the other person but it is not identical with empathy. Although empathy allows us to recognize what is wrong with the other person, sometimes it can work without any compassion at all. Tyrants might be conscious of the victim's suffering, they might be able to picture it, but it is all without the slightest compassion because they refuse to accept dignity of their victim and they consider the pain of the suffering as the greater good.²¹ For instance, the Nazis considered Jews as inferior beings of a separate kind, similar to vermin, or even inanimate objects. This act of dehumanization obstructed and blocked any manifestation of human compassion to such extent that many Nazi were leading a double life. They were able to show compassion to those they recognized as human and to these people they attributed dignity. Toward those whom they killed and tortured, they denied the very recognition of humanity.²²

Human freedom, as the prerequisite and the consequence of dignity, needs to re-discover high moral value connected with compassion, which creates and manifests humility, responsibility, and charity. Denial of compassion or expression of ingratitude towards the Other, be it of human or divine nature, is the expression of pride. Being proud means to focus only on oneself and deprive oneself of true clarity which arises from the authentic encounter. Freedom, which is open to compassion, reveals dignity and it is a foundation for the unique positive emotions that are important for creation of proper social relationships. These relationships are determined by showing respect to the value of human being, by recognition of liberties, justice and equality.²³

Philosophical anthropology offers convincing understanding of human dignity but the Biblical perception brings anthropological optimism based upon the message that a person is created "in the image and likeness of God" and it can no longer be "portrayed" as or reduced to something general, to merely natural determined-by-fate being *towards death*.²⁴ The Bible accentuates the unity of universal dignity for all human beings²⁵ not through logical and philosophical explanations but through life stories of biblical figures presenting fundamental moral and spiritual attributes of truth, justice, mercy, compassion, generosity,

²¹ Cf. Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 329.

²² Cf. Craven Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*, 335.

²³ Cf. Mária Nemčeková, "Poznámky ku konceptu ľudskej dôstojnosti," *Filozofia* 55, no. 5 (2001), 300–307.

²⁴ Cf. Arno Anzenbacher, *Úvod do etiky*, trans. Karel Šprunk (Praha: Zvon, 1994), 225.

²⁵ Cf. Bogdan Zbroja, "Jezus jako 'przyjaciół' osób marginalizowanych i odrzuconych w jego epoce," in Štefan Bugri, Pavol Beňo, and Miron Šramka, *New Trends in Current Social Work* (Prešov: Ústav sociálnych vied a zdravotníctva bl. P. P. Gojdiča, 2014), 189–200.

and empathy. In Lévinas's philosophy, it is encoded in the notion of *for-the-other-before-oneself*.

If a human being is created in "the image of God" then his or her personal relationship with the Creator is an inherent feature of his or her nature. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, John Paul II reminds that the dignity of the person is the most precious possession of an individual. In a virtue of a personal dignity, the human being is always a value as an individual. Therefore, he/she cannot be treated as an object to be used or as a thing. The dignity of the person constitutes the foundation of the equality of all people and their mutual solidarity.²⁶ Human dignity—*dignitas humana*—does not arise from some arbitrary decision of some authority or law. Thus, it cannot be questioned or nulled by any positive law because it arises from the very core of what it means to be a human person. Here we arrive at the highest norm that philosophical ethics can postulate and that is the personalistic norm. The norm tells us that the person is the kind of being for whom the only true and fully-fledged relationship is *love* (K. Wojtyła). Love expresses the most profound way of an ancestral place of a human in the world. It is the most natural way of a human being in the world.²⁷

Love as the foundation of every personal relationship is the greatest discovery that follows from the Judeo-Christian religion circles. The discovery of love as the essential motivational source for creation of relationships is rather novel and awaits its realization. The absolute desires of humans somehow cannot be satisfied with knowledge, wealth, or power. We can be truly happy only in relationships we establish and enjoy—vertically or horizontally. The basic aspects of humanity are revealed only through relationships. People realize their true humanity only in relationships as *homo sapiens*, but at the same time as *homo politicus* and mainly as *homo religiosus*. The post-modern people experience loneliness and alienation because they made their relationships too material, objective, rational, and directed towards *shadow* use and abuse.

Freedom allows a human to enter into the realm of good and evil. At the same time, a human assigns himself or herself to good or evil. Tischner holds that the world of values demarcates the boundaries of our freedom: "Our freedom is not without limits. We are free in relation to good and evil and we are accountable for our decisions."²⁸ Every act of choice between good and evil, between the lower and higher value, influences us, shapes our character and our

²⁶ Cf. John Paul II, *Christifideles laici* 37, accessed October 15, 2016, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici.html

²⁷ Cf. Ján Šlosiar, "Láska ako spôsob ľudského pobytu vo svete," in Anna Remišová, Mariana Szapuová, *Filozofia výchovy a problémy vyučovania filozofie* (Bratislava: SFZ IRIS, 1998), 163.

²⁸ Cf. Józef Tischner, *Pomoc w rachunku sumienia* (Kraków: Znak, 2002), 9.

human dignity. When we opt for good, we are on the path to liberation, if “the liberation means being liberated from what enslaves us. And what enslaves? Evil does”²⁹—evil obstructs the affirmation of our own dignity and the dignity of others. “We must do a lot in this life. But we do not have to do evil.”³⁰ Freedom is the force which gives hope because the person is never fully defeated. A human can always rise from the abyss of hopeless despair. Freedom stays closely bonded with good; this relationship mostly plays out within the person. For the individual person to be good, one must want to be good. The decision to be good must be a free one. Freedom expresses and embraces goodness. Good cannot exist by the sheer force of necessity. It must be chosen and confirmed by the free will by a choice of a conscious subject. “To be good, the good must ‘want to be good’ in itself. Similarly, evil must want to be evil.”³¹ Contrary to good, evil is enslaved in itself since it is tied to hatred. Evil is destructive to human dignity. For Tischner, evil and good are both the values which represent our external goals. Humans “yearn” for good or evil and thus “appropriate”³² the value which they were given as a choice. Thus humans partake in good or evil,³³ they partake in affirmation or negation of dignity.

Humans create themselves through answering the call of values, fulfilling the hope that has appeared in the encounter with another person. The quality of this answer defines one’s dignity and whom the person really is—“depending on how one answers the call, one might be said to be a traitor or a saint.”³⁴

Unlike a Jean Paul Sartre’s claim, the Other is not hell because the encounter with the Other is the call to fulfill and cultivate one’s freedom. The answer to this call allows freedom to become a mature and responsible freedom. Freedom evolves from the reflection of “I,” but at the same time, it becomes freedom for the other. While making authentic contact with the other, human “I” must purify itself from everything that is not worthy of humanity—it must peek inside to find the certainty which is able to enter into a liberating communication whose essence is in respecting the freedom of the other.³⁵ “Who despises freedom of the other, despises one’s own freedom.”³⁶ Tischner points out that “[...] there is a close link between the experience of freedom and the experience of the other person.”³⁷ Without the encounter with the Other who presents to us the gift of his/her freedom, we would be unable to reveal the freedom. “Freedom does not

²⁹ Cf. Józef Tischner, “Wolność w modlitwie o wolność,” *Znak* no. 461 (1993), 5.

³⁰ Cf. Józef Tischner, *Pomoc w rachunku sumienia* (Kraków: Znak, 2002), 42–43.

³¹ Cf. Józef Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka* (Kraków: Znak, 1998), 317.

³² Cf. *Ibid.*, 305.

³³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 308.

³⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, 299.

³⁵ Cf. Józef Tischner, *Polski młyn* (Kraków: Nasza Przeszość, 1991), 254–55.

³⁶ Cf. Józef Tischner, *Nieszczęsny dar wolności* (Kraków: Znak, 1996), 11.

³⁷ Cf. Józef Tischner, “Wezwani do wolności,” *Znak* no. 362 (1985), 205.

get to a human after reading a book. Freedom comes after an encounter with another free human.”³⁸ Freedom cannot be grounded in independence because it would remain empty and idle.³⁹ “Freedom is the kind of value we ought to share with others. Freedom is complete in WE.”⁴⁰

Conclusion

Without compassion and recognition of the existence of the other, people could not be certain of who they are, they would not find the whole truth about their own being, they would not discover their own dignity and the weight of their responsibility for the being of their own as well as of the others. “Experience with the other through the prism of value is inseparably linked to experience of some kind of hope. It is always “I” who recommends some value to the other hoping that he or she might accept my proposition or the Other recommends to me something similar enjoying the similar kind of hope.”⁴¹

The legal and political need to define human dignity in an exact way seems to overlook its inner dynamics but at the same time points to its axiomatic character which confirms that dignity is closely linked with being together and with the goodness which manifests itself through compassion, love, respect, care, mercy, help, friendship, protection, and so on. Human dignity, compassion, and good relationships with others are complementary realities, which foster humanity, create the good for the future generations, clarify the parameters of the present-day rapid changes, and set the boundaries which allow the human person to remain human.

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³⁸ Cf. Tischner, *Spór o istnienie człowieka*, 298.

³⁹ Cf. Karl Jaspers, *Malá škola filozofického myslenia*, trans. Patrícia Elexová (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2002), 148.

⁴⁰ Cf. Józef Tischner, *Ksiądz na manowcach* (Kraków: Znak, 1999), 208.

⁴¹ Cf. Józef Tischner, “Etyka wartości i nadziei,” in Dietrich von Hildebrand Jan Andrzej Kłoczowski OP, and Józef Paściak OP, *Wobec wartości* (Poznań: W drodze, 1982), 87.

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Pavol Dancák

La dignité de l'homme et sa place dans le monde

Résumé

Bien que l'objet de la dignité humaine n'ait pas été—dans bien des cas—pris en considération dans l'histoire de la culture occidentale, il n'est pas définitivement clos. Même aujourd'hui, étant donné les opinions et les points de vue divergents sur ce sujet, il y a un besoin d'ouvrir de nouveau ce débat. Le temps présent—sous l'influence de la mondialisation culturelle et économique, du développement de nouvelles technologies et de la science—offre à l'homme de nouvelles possibilités, mais en même temps il ouvre des questions sur les nouvelles possibilités de comprendre la valeur et la dignité de l'homme, étant parfois contradictoires avec les interprétations philosophiques et théologiques traditionnelles. Il s'avère que la tendance actuelle, qui souligne de nouvelles réalisations de la science et la croissance économique constante, influence également la compréhension même de la dignité de l'homme. Du côté de la science, on peut observer la renaissance de l'approche réductionniste quant à la compréhension de l'homme et de l'économie dans la transformation de ses valeurs en ressources humaines. Les conséquences de ces tendances apparaissent avant tout dans la dimension éthique de la vie humaine. La dignité humaine et la compassion, les bonnes relations avec les autres sont des faits complémentaires qui conduisent au développement de l'humanité, créent le bien pour les générations futures, expliquent les paramètres de rapides changements actuels et indiquent les limites qui permettent à l'homme de rester l'homme.

Mots clés : homme, société, dignité, compassion, liberté

Pavol Dancák

La dignità dell'uomo e il suo posto nel mondo

Sommario

Malgrado l'argomento del valore umano in molti casi non fosse stato preso in considerazione nella storia della cultura occidentale, non è definitivamente chiuso. Persino oggi esiste la necessità di riaprire il dibattito, considerate le vedute e le opinioni divergenti in tal materia. Il tempo attuale, sotto l'influenza della globalizzazione culturale ed economica, dello sviluppo di nuove tecnologie e della scienza, offre nuove possibilità all'uomo, ma nel contempo apre domande sulle nuove possibilità di comprensione dei valori e della dignità dell'uomo, talvolta discordanti con le interpretazioni filosofiche e teologiche tradizionali. Risulta che la tendenza attuale che

enfatisza le nuove conquiste della scienza e la costante crescita economica influisce anche sulla comprensione stessa del valore dell'uomo. Dal lato della scienza è possibile osservare la rinascita di un approccio riduzionista alla comprensione dell'uomo e dell'economia nella trasformazione del suo valore in risorse umane. Le conseguenze di tali tendenze si manifestano soprattutto nella dimensione etica della vita umana. La dignità umana e la compassione, i buoni rapporti con gli altri sono fatti complementari che portano allo sviluppo dell'umanità, creano un bene per le generazioni future, chiariscono i parametri dei cambiamenti rapidi attuali e definiscono i limiti che permettono all'uomo di rimanere uomo.

Parole chiave: uomo, società, dignità, compassione, libertà