

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC (IN ENGLISH)

The aim of this research is to present an answer to the fundamental questions: who is a human person and does she/he necessarily have human dignity? The answer to those questions will be formulated based on the philosophy of a XX-century German-Jewish thinker, Edith Stein, who in her life-long anthropological reflection reinterpreted the rich legacy of classical and medieval philosophy. Her theory of a human person will be analysed in the light of the philosophical and theological answers to the problem of man's identity and dignity that were formulated by the Church Fathers and Doctors of Church, answers that today comprise the foundation of the contemporary Christian notion of dignity. The detailed questions that the project aims at answering are: Who is a human person?; Is a human person necessarily a subject of dignity?; What kind of dignity is essential to Christian anthropology?; Does Christian anthropology accept the inalienability of human dignity?

The proposed thesis will investigate the topic in the following order. The introductory part will present the key questions, methodology of the project and the current state of research concerning E. Stein's philosophy. The second part of the research discusses the general framework of E. Stein's philosophical anthropology. During this phase a question concerning the necessary criteria of being a person is discussed. The analysis concentrates on the difference between a person and a human being. In the third part, a question concerning a notion of human dignity essential to Christian anthropology is examined as well as a linkage between a human person and human dignity. The question concerning the Christian notion of dignity is developed in the light of the writings of The Church Fathers and Doctors of Church. Conclusions will be confronted with E. Stein's anthropology. The final chapters draw conclusions relevant to the key questions of the project.

Edith Stein's diagnosis of what it is to be a man, when put short, states: to be a man is to be a person. The philosophical anthropology of this German-Jewish thinker is particularly valuable today. It is an hermeneutic achievement of reinterpreting existent thinking traditions that confronted classical and medieval anthropology, analyzed it, criticized, adjusted and updated it to the scientific achievements and social needs of her times. For this reasons Stein's answer to the problem of a man is both past-conscious and actual at the same time. The result of this reflection is a rich, historically grounded, yet actual vision of a man, in which the notion of a person, leading and frequently used in contemporary societal discussions, plays a key role.

The significance of that notion for contemporary European and American cultures is manifested in its presence in legal (especially those concerning human rights), sociological, philosophical, theological and biological debates. This points out to the necessity of an in-depth analysis of the historical evolution of the concept of the person and his/her dignity. This necessity is partially addressed by the existent analysis in the fields of philosophy and history of ideas, yet the lack of a monographic study of the genesis and evolution of that concept in the thinking of Edith Stein, an important European philosopher, is distinct. The present project aims at filling that gap.

The research methodology of the project comprises of various kinds of analysis. The scientific methodology involves a critical analysis of the original works, the method of excerption, the hermeneutical approach, a comparative analysis, a conceptual analysis, a consideration of the existent research on the discussed topic and an analysis based on the methodology of the history of ideas.