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**A RELATIONAL ASPECT OF HUMANITY IN
THE LIGHT OF (SELECTED) ANTHROPOLOGICAL
ASSUMPTIONS OF THE THEOLOGY
OF THE BODY BY JOHN PAUL II**

INTRODUCTION

Theology of the body is a collection of catecheses of John Paul II delivered during Wednesday's audience in the Vatican, in years 1979-1980. Their subject matter includes the presentation of an overall vision of man, and thus his spirituality and corporality in the context of God's Plan of Salvation. The Pope bases it on the statement that "Christianity has its origin in a special relation of God towards man and vice versa. It is anthropocentric in the sense that it is fully theocentric – and at the same time is theocentric, through its anthropocentrism" (RM 12). In other words, this theocentrism manifests itself in human anthropology. The divine origin of man described in the Book of Genesis refers to this fact, presenting man as *imago Dei*. Man, and therefore the whole reality that is hidden in this "content" – along with his spirituality and corporeality – is the image of God who must be "decoded" by us. The discovery of his essence will not be possible without taking into account the theological perspective, and therefore his divine origin, originating from the creative act of God described in the Book of Genesis.

The Anthropology of John Paul II is often called adequate anthropology, because it discovers the full picture of man, taking into account the integral and coherent image of him, including his corporeality and sexuality.

Inadequate (secular) anthropology, attempting to describe a man only by categories provided by the world (visible world of bodies), does not take into account this perspective, and even consider it in separation from him, which leads to an incorrect vision “which does not discern- in the body, with its sexuality – the presence of a person, but part of a subrational nature”¹. This anthropology, limited only to the scientific cognition and understanding of the human body, is not taking into account its theological meaning. It is therefore a threat to the human being, because by omitting the truth about him, it deprives him of his space of freedom and remains outside the world of possible human choices. A figure of a man of a non-religious nature emerges from it, unrelated to the transcendent God and His plans. This inadequate, incomplete anthropology has underlie the sexual revolution in the US, the one that we currently face in Europe².

The liberal concept of “empty form of freedom”³, which is not subordinated to the criterion of truth but only to arbitrary judgments given by the individual, is at the heart of the sexual revolution as well as of the secular culture emerging from inadequate anthropology. The idea of this empty concept of freedom ignores the real truth – it is indifferent to it.

The paradigm includes the right to make arbitrary decisions by the individual, not only when it comes to human identity but also his sex, family definitions, issues of procreation, children’s rights and finally the role of sexuality in a person’s life. The concept of empty freedom reflects the meaning of Pope’s words that “Democracy without values turns into open or disguised totalitarianism” (CA

¹ R. Marczewski, *Theology of the body of John Paul II in the practice of the American Church*, WAM 2015, 33.

² *Ibidem*, 37.

³ *Ibidem*, 34.

46), so instead of granting a promised deep sense of freedom to man, it gives rise to enslavement and skepticism. The Pope describes this cultural movement as a “civilization of death”⁴.

Rev. Prof. Józef Tischner wrote: “Since man was created in the image and likeness of God, it means that the understanding of God depends on the understanding of man and understanding of man depends on the understanding of God”⁵. The lack of adequate anthropology that takes into account man in the perspective of *imago Dei* generates a false vision of human progress and abuses related to sexuality. The sexual revolution in the USA grew out of this understanding, so it popularized this kind of vision of man; eg in 1959, Planned Parenthood⁶ with the consent of the US government promoted sex education, encouraging American youth to masturbate, use contraception, carry out abortions and to homosexuality. In 1992, with regard to the one of the Planned Parenthood cases, the US Supreme Court announced that „the right to defend one’s own concept of existence, meaning, universe and the mystery of human life lies at the heart of the concept of freedom”⁷. In liberal society, debates about sexuality and human progress usually avoid or omit to mention arguments resulting from Christian revelation. The dominant of secular anthropology in American society led not only to the misunderstanding of the role

⁴ “the source of contradictions between official declarations of human rights and their tragic negation in practice is the *concept of freedom* which absolutizes the meaning of the human individual, negating its reference to solidarity with others, full acceptance of other people and to serve others (...) it cannot be denied that this kind of the culture of death as such is an expression of a completely individualistic concept of freedom, which ultimately becomes the freedom of the „stronger”, aimed against the weaker, doomed to death” (EV 5).

⁵ J. Tischner, *On God who is near to us. Introduction to reading “On the Holy Trinity” by Saint Augustine*, in: Saint Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, transl. M. Stokowska, Kraków 1996, 9.

⁶ “The organization was founded in 1916 by the birth control activist Margaret Sanger, who opened the first birth control clinic in America. Currently, Planned Parenthood has over 820 clinics in the US, and their total budget is one billion dollars”. R. Marczewski, op. cit., 37.

⁷ Ibidem, 39.

of sexuality in the spiritual development of man, but contributed to emergence of a new branch of industry: pornography, erotica and entertainment, the basis of which was inadequate anthropology⁸.

The sources of inadequate anthropology lie in the philosophy of the Enlightenment, which developed the individualist conception of the human person being the subject of rights. It did not assumed the existence of any objective truth, no moral order, and regarded religion as a private sphere of the individual who had no right to object to the absolute control of the state over all aspects of public life⁹. In this way, indirectly, its causes were defined by John Paul II in the *Letter to the families of Gratissimam Sane*: “The age in which we live – with all and numerous declarations of a legal type – is threatened to some extent with alienation”. This is – to some extent – the consequence of the “Enlightenment” assumptions, according to which man is “more” a human being if he is “merely” a human being. Our age is threatened with alienation caused by everything that in various ways belongs to the full wealth of man” (GS 5).

1. THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AS AN ANTIDOTE TO INADEQUATE ANTHROPOLOGY

When formulating foundations of “his anthropology”, John Paul II did not intend it to be a counteraction to the sexual revolution, but he considered it a result of the search for an adequate truth about man. This anthropology regards man as a person understood comprehensively in the physical and spiritual dimension, and directed holistically (in all his dimensions) towards the Creator. The Pope says that “knowledge of the body cannot be acquired only from books, but it must be

⁸ Every year, about 15,000 so-called films, for adults’ are produced. The pornographic industry earns about \$ 15 billion. For comparison, Hollywood has a profit of about 10 billion. The porn industry earns more than NFL, NBA and MLB each year. Source: <https://thechive.com/2016/07/27/a-few-stats-about-porn-to-get-your-day-jump-started-13-photos>, access date 15/03/2017.

⁹ R. Marczewski, op. cit., 33.

elaborated above all through the inner reactions of one's heart" (MN 152). So it should be experienced also by the consciousness of the human person. He refers to the phenomenological analysis of the biblical text that describes the human consciousness of the body. "The truth that emerges from the theology of the body is essential (anthropological), normative (ethical) and internal (felt with the heart)"¹⁰.

The theological character of the anthropology of John Paul is evident because it was derived from theological reflection on the creation of the world and man, presented in the Book of Genesis. Thus, he takes into account his existence both in relation to the created world and the relation to the Creator – his divine origin. The Pope, in his anthropological investigations, goes in two directions: "one must" step back "to the beginning and one must" descend "into the depths" (MR 16). And so the "source" of this anthropology is hidden in the beginning of creation, and therefore it will be based on the *genealogia divina*, or the divine origin of man. Then some Pharisees came and tested Him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason?" Jesus answered, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh (...) Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate'" (Mt 19:4-6).

This reference to the beginning is the key to understanding of theological anthropology and, consequently, of the theology of the body, because the Pope – following Jesus – believes that it is in this beginning of creation that one can find the key to understand not only the indissolubility of marriage, but also to understand who a person is. The passage that Jesus Christ has referred to clearly indicates the principle of unity and indissolubility of marriage included in the Word of God in the earliest Revelation (MR 38). Jesus concludes the conversation with the Pharisees, referring directly to the authority of the Creator, who at the beginning of the creation

¹⁰ Ibidem, 105.

of man established an immutable law that is the way of realizing the humanity of man and woman in unbreakable conjugal unity¹¹.

This is a key passage for the anthropology of John Paul II, for he states explicitly that the calling of man can only be understood in relation to the creative plan of God. It will not be possible if one does not accept the authority of the Creator. Therefore, unraveling the so-called “Man” puzzle will not be possible without taking this perspective into consideration and will not be possible in any other moral and ethical perspective¹².

The Pope, inspired by Jesus’ reference to the “beginning”, goes “deep into” this mystery, discovering the elements of human existence – from the moment of his creation, living in the state of original innocence and unity until his fall. This will allow us to understand not only the normative meaning of the Book of Genesis account about the creation of a man, the vocation of man and woman to live in unity, but also allows to define “dimensions” in which he exists from the beginning and theological and moral implications which are essential for the man in general.

2. MAN CREATED BY GOD AND THE IMAGE OF GOD

John Paul II writes: “Genesis is – as if it were – the response which is supposed to meet our cognitive efforts. When he talks about the image of God, he suggests that the answer to the mystery of humanity is not to be found in the man’s similarity to nature. Man is more like God than nature. «You are gods», says Psalm 82:5 – and these are words that Christ will refer to in John 10:34” (MR 19).

¹¹ Cf. Mt 19:3-8 and Mk 10:2n

¹² “The human body in which and through which the personal nature of man expresses itself, in the theological perspective is a visible sign of the likeness of man to the personal God, to the Creator. Thus, John Paul II’s theology of the body reveals throughout personalistic and communitarian vision of man and his relationship with God: the Creator and Redeemer” (MN 399).

In his exploration of anthropology, the Pope pays attention to the relationship between man and God and the implications that result from it. One of them is that the mystery of man is established by his likeness to God and not to the world. This is indicated by the analysis of the story about the seven days of creation. (Genesis 1:1-31, 21:3) Man is created along with the visible world and is supposed to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1:28). God is presented here as someone who transcends the world – designing tasks to created beings and to man himself. Therefore, the Bible itself explicitly states that God is the authority that, according to his mysterious intention, endows created beings with existence, assigning them meaning and tasks. The meaning of everything comes from God, not from the world, and so the question about the meaning of the world should be formulated taking into account this very perspective. Going further in his reflection, he draws attention to the unusual “behavior” of the Creator when the creation of man proceeds: the moment the creation of man is preceded by a kind of break when God stopped his action, and “as if he turned back into himself before making a decision: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness (Genesis 1:26)” (MN 11). This picture clearly indicates that man cannot be defined in relation to the created world, but only by reference to God, of which he is a living image, and according to this image he was created. This image seems to come straight from the “very interior of the Creator”. It is not possible, then, to limit, describe and understand man in terms of the created world, because the essence of his being is established in God. And this fundamental truth applies to man, and therefore to man and woman: “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:27). The Pope summarizes this description: “it is concise, free from any moments of human subjectivity. It describes only an objective fact and defines the objective reality, both when it speaks of the creation of man, woman and man, in the image of God, as well as when it adds the first blessing to it: «God blessed them by saying to them:

Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it» (Genesis 1:28)” (MN 12).

And finally, only after the creation of man God says the words: “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). And so the whole work of creation is completed by means of a seam that is a man: a man and a woman. This image of God present in them constitutes an ontological perspective in which they find the content of the mystery that has been essentially inscribed in this image. It could also be described by the analogy of plants and light: only when the plant is facing the light, it is able to grow, and thus to fully reveal what it is in its essence (within the genre and with regard to its specific features). This is how this similarity to God can be manifested in man only in a visible way when he is turned towards God, and thus by accepting and confirming this “similarity”, he is becoming His full image (*imago Dei*). This mystery will be therefore, revealed in man in a visible way, if man is turned to God as his internal Prototype, which is his full realization. In this part of the story this is the case, because man is in full communion with God. He is in paradise, – so between him and God there is no barrier or obstacle that would be caused by sin-disobedience. Adam exists – as if – in the dynamics of perfect openness to the creative plan of God¹³.

¹³ “The Paradise described in the second chapter of the Book of Genesis (8-25) is not only a place of wonderful material abundance of God’s gifts, but also a state of perfect harmony, manifesting in three dimensions: 1. transcendent harmony resulting from a loving relationship between God and the first man. It manifested itself in the attitude of trust, or even the intimacy of both sides of the relationship, direct communication (the naturalness with which one can hear God’s voice), etc. 2. Internal (immanent) harmony was the direct result of man’s unity with God, determined by a specific internal order consisting in the absolute primacy of the spirit – completely subordinate to God – over the soul and body which were considered something like vessels in which God’s eternal part (human spirit) is kept. 11. This ensured perfect integration of the human interior, deprived of all internal struggles and conflicts. 3. External harmony expressed in the attitude of man considered as the wise and full of dignity the administrator of the world’s goods entrusted to him by the Creator”. E. Stawnicka, *The condition of a fallen man and the problem of interrupted dialogue*, “Poznańskie Studia Filozoficzne” 18(2005), 240-241.

According to the Pope, the first chapter of the Book of Genesis formed an indisputable point of reference and a solid foundation for anthropology and ethics, the foundation expressed in the following sentence: “Good is identical to being”¹⁴ – “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). God “wished” to reveal himself to the world visible through man and his humanity. And the fullness of humanity constitutes His perfect image (MD 7). Since good is identical with being, He gives rise to a fundamental consequence for the understanding of the body. This means that the body is a visible reality that is to reveal a perfect picture of humanity, expressed in the body and through the body. Thus, one can risk the thesis that the body and its theology should reveal God – present His visible image.

3. THE BODY THAT REVEALS GOD

In order to try to explain the meaning of corporeality, the Pope directs his attention to the second description of the creation of man. In contrast to the description of the first one, he reveals in detail the reality of creation and the original existence of man (Adam)¹⁵.

a. Original loneliness

It is difficult for the human imagination to assume that in paradise there may be room for any discomfort in the form of a sense of insufficiency or loneliness. And yet this original experience of loneliness appears already at the beginning of human existence. The presence of this experience reveals that it is inscribed in a necessary

¹⁴ Cf. RM 45

¹⁵ “The Hebrew text refers to the first man as «adam», whereas the term «iš» (male) is introduced only when it compares him with a woman «išša»” (RM 290, footnote 9). “The Hebrew term «ādām» is a collective name denoting a human species, meaning a human being, as long as it represents humanity. (...) Opposing «išš» – «iššah» emphasizes the gender difference” (RM 291, footnote 12).

way in God's creative plan. This is expressed in a short sentence: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Gen. 2:18). Man in the created world is present through his body, so this loneliness also results from his personal experience of the body. According to the Pope, the second chapter of the Book of Genesis describes the circumstances by which man began to exist as a subject, as a person. It was possible thanks to the experience of the original loneliness felt with regard to God and to the whole world¹⁶. Man through the body can act in the visible world and also through the body to achieve knowledge of this world and be capable of changing it. The quote mentioned above seems to precede the creation of a woman directly, but the narrative of the Book of Genesis does not correspond with the reader's expectation, because the Creator chooses a different order of actions leading to her creation¹⁷. The economics of God's plan has a different logic than the one assumed by man. So he creates first all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found" (Gen. 2:19-20).

Man is the psychophysical unity of spirit and body – "he is a person to the extent to which a person belongs to the physical world. We are not souls attached to bodies: «we are corporeal persons»"¹⁸. The human body allows one to define oneself with regard to other corporeal creatures. The Pope explains this process in the following way: "Thus, the created man is from the very first moment of his existence, so to say, in a search for his essence, we can say in the search for his definition" (MN 22). It is essential that it was God who wanted man in this cognition to experience the truth that he is the superior being with

¹⁶ Cf. P. Kopycki, *Elementarz teologii ciała według Jana Pawła II*, Częstochowa 2013, 19-21.

¹⁷ Cf. Genesis 1:27.

¹⁸ M. Healy, *Men and women come from paradise. A guide to the theology of the body of John Paul II*, transl. J. Jaworska, Warszawa 2008, 23.

regard to the created world and that he lives in the world of animal bodies with his otherness and uniqueness regarding his body¹⁹.

The likeness of man to God manifests itself in the ability to enter into a personal relationship, but such a relationship has not revealed itself and could not be revealed in relation to the created world – also with regard to the dimension of the body, because “there was – not yet –” appropriate helper so that it could happen. The first helper were animals that God brought to him, but man did not find among them a being equal to him with regard to dignity. He only recognized that he is radically different than the creatures he gave names. The Pope describes this experience of otherness – also in the dimension of the body – as the process of “the separation of man from the entire visible world of living beings in which his self-consciousness manifests itself. Self-awareness accompanies the consciousness of the world, of all visible creatures, of all living beings, to whom the first man gave «names», in order to manifest his separateness in relation to them. So the fact of being conscious makes man the one who has the power to learn about the visible world. Along with this cognition, which somehow makes him transcending his essence, man reveals him to himself in all his distinctiveness” (MN 23).

It can be said that this process is tantamount to the emergence of awareness of his individuality which must also be confirmed in the dimension of the body that allows him to experience it. According to the Pope, “loneliness also means subjectivity” (MN 23). This is of great importance for human development, because it is through

¹⁹ It applies to every human being, because being a person concerns the feeling of being separate from any other being, and this leads to reflection that the way of life of each person – in an internal experience – is as if different. It is a personal, intimate, deep human experience that demands being supplemented with the truth – God’s truth. The experience of this anxiety associated with the discovery of one’s own „otherness” is very typical for a young adolescent. This internal anxiety born of a sense of otherness: with regard to parents, siblings, other people (despite similarities), prompts a man to ask very serious questions: about the meaning of his life, the choice of a personal way of life, and finally God’s Plan for him.

this experience that a person begins to pose questions about his own way of life – his own personal calling and his own place in the world and, consequently, can open himself towards it. The first man lives in a space free of sin, and thus his existence is realized in full openness to the creative plan, and this experience constitutes the next step in the creative plan of God.

This stage of “distinguishing oneself as a person” confirms that the plan of creation is a process that exists in time and is not a one-off act. It continues in the entire history of man in the historical dimension and lasts until he achieves a complete resemblance to God, which is the culmination of the creative plan. The Pope extends this experience of the original loneliness of man to every historical man²⁰. Discovering one’s individuality is part of becoming God’s image. The Book of Psalms present a sort of paraphrase of this effort: “My heart says of you, «Seek his face! Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide your face from me»” (Psalm 27:8-9). The task of realizing God’s likeness is the meaning and purpose of human life.

In the first description of the creation of the world, after the creation of a man and a woman, for the first time God states that: „all that he had made (...) was very good” (Genesis 1:31). And so this “otherness” of the man with which he appeared in the world has a dimension of a special good for both the created world and for himself. It can therefore be said that the state of the original loneliness of man is

²⁰ J. Kupczak, *Dar i Komunia*, Znak, Kraków 2006, 31, footnote 16: “It is worth noting that the theological truth about unity between the biblical Adam and every living man was always present in the poetic work of Karol Wojtyła. In the play *In front of the jeweler’s shop* from 1960, the mysterious figure of Adam is described as «the representant of all of us, and at the same time as our spokesperson and judge» (Karol Wojtyła, *Poezje i dramaty*, Kraków 1979, 226). Kenneth Schmitz believes that Adam represents in this way “the modern figure of Average Man” or «human nature common to all of us» (K.L. Schmitz, *W sercu ludzkiego dramatu. Antropologia filozoficzna Karola Wojtyły – Papieża Jana Pawła II*, transl. W. Buchner, Kraków 1997, 25). Also in two important poetic statements by Wojtyła from 1964, *Considerations on paternity and drama Radiation of Fatherhood. A Mystery*, Adam describes himself as “a man who can be put before parenthesis and again substituted for the history of all people as a common denominator”.

an indispensable part of the plan of creation. God helps man in discovery of this plan and its realization²¹.

The first man is presented in the dynamic process of becoming. The Pope notes that first he receives a body thanks to which he can accomplish the task of ruling the earth and making all beings subjected to him (in a proper way only to him), then he becomes aware of his dignity with regard to created beings (when he names them) and finally – in the scene when God shows him the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he is endowed with freedom and the ability of being in charge of himself. Therefore, man manifests this likeness to God in three dimensions: freedom, dignity and corporality²², through which he can experience his individuality and realize his mission in the world. Feeling the primeval loneliness in the experience of the body is crucial for the next stage of becoming a being created in the image of God, because this dimension exists in man but is not yet realized by him in experience. Teaching of the Church confirms this: “Man rightly thinks that by participating in the light of God’s

²¹ The evangelical “rich young man” did not use this “help”, he remained turned towards things created with a feeling of sadness – he did not open himself to the perspective of God – because he remained focused on his many possessions. In a sense, it is the image of the first man who has not yet “managed to give names to all created beings” and the consciousness of this otherness was not mature enough to enable him to make a radical choice – to open himself to the plan of God realized in Jesus Christ, leaving all previous life behind him. This is also evident in the parable of the prodigal son. The radical decision to return to his father was made after getting rid of illusions about the world in which he squandered all the assets in search of satisfaction. It was only when the “pods with which he fed pigs did not satisfy his hunger” he decided to return, i.e. to radically turn away from the current life. In the history of the first man, this element of turning to the world in search of “proper help” is an important experience. The difference, however, between the prodigal son and the first man was that the latter broke off the relationship with his father while the former remained in it, which opened the way for God to the subsequent act of creating a woman.

²² Extensive considerations on “being a body” can be found in: C. Anderson, J. Granados, *Wezwani do miłości*, transl. M. Romanek, Warszawa 2011, 34-44.

thought and by the fact of his reason, he has dominion over the world of material things” (KDK 15).

Therefore, God wants man to gain this experience independently in relation to the created world. This is what happened when a man did not find a proper helper for him to free himself from the feeling of deep loneliness in the experienced otherness.

b. “Mysterious”, deep sleep of man

The Book of Genesis reports that “for Adam no suitable helper was found” (Gen. 2:20), he became immersed in a deep dream sent by God²³. Having experienced loneliness, the first man falls into a deep sleep and wakes up as a man to experience the original unity in a meeting with a woman²⁴. One can see here, as it were, the plan of God to lead man through “the path of maturation” towards the relationship: first a relation to God, then a relation to the created world and the experience of loneliness, and now the next stage of creation that introduces him to the relationship with a woman as

²³ “Adam’s dream (tardēmāh) is a state of deep sleep in which man falls without any consciousness or dreams. (...) A deep sleep (tardēmāh) is a term that occurs in Scripture in a situation when during this dream or directly after it some special events are to take place (cf. Gen. 15, 12, Iz 29, 10; Hi 4, 13; 33, 15)”. In the theology of the text of Jahwist the dream that was sent to the first man by God underlines God’s exclusive action in the act of creation of a woman. Indeed the man had no conscious participation in it. In the Pentateuch, “tardēmāh” appears only once, in a mysterious context: Abram, according to the order of God, prepared animal sacrifices and warded off predatory birds from them. “As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a terrifying darkness came down over him (Genesis 15, 12). That’s when God speaks and makes a covenant with him: it is the peak point of revelation given to Abraham” (MN 30, footnote 11 and 12). In the context of the Book of Genesis, “when it refers to deep sleep (tardēmāh), God’s special action is performed, or the «Covenant» with significant consequences for the entire history of salvation: Adam gives rise to humanity, and Abraham gives rise to the chosen people” (RM 292, footnote 14).

²⁴ Cf. Y. Semen, *Seksualność według Jana Pawła II*, trans. Z. Denkowska, J. Urbaniak, Poznań 2008, 65-70.

a response to the experience of loneliness. It is possible to indicate in the Bible a few examples in which man falls into a “deep sleep” leading to a radical change of the person concerned. One of them is the scene of healing Jair’s daughter. Jesus says to the gathered household: “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep” (Mk 5:39). He refers to the human understanding of death but calls it a dream. To fully reflect the meaning of this event, one must remember that a moment earlier Jesus says to Jairus: “Do not be afraid any longer, only believe!” (Mk 5:36). Maybe for God the death of a man dying in faith is only a „deep dream” which is a necessary element of the resurrection- an act of creation of a new man. It is surprising that the last moments of Jesus’ life are also experienced in a sense of profound loneliness. It is preceded by the confession of Jesus: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me” (Mt 27:46). Then Jesus dies and arises as the Risen One – Christ the Lord and Savior.

In the Book of Genesis, man is already awakened as a man and a woman, in the experience of a personal relationship that involves his entire person – also the physical dimension in the experience of the body. Man got to know and experienced what he could not find in relation to the animal world. So far he has lived in a personal relationship with God, but taking into account the bodily dimension he was aware of his essential separateness. Thus, the original loneliness of man is an experience necessary for man to discover his otherness and to find its complement²⁵. Book of Genesis says that it can be fully revealed and experienced only in a way that God has described in his creative plan – because he creates and brings animals to man who is supposed to give them their names, He sends a deep sleep to a human being and finally makes a qualitative change by making him a man and a woman. Loneliness according to the Pope

²⁵ “Loneliness plays a very positive role because it signals the need to initiate a relationship with another human being”. P. Kopycki, op. cit., Częstochowa 2013, 20.

is: “opening and waiting for the” communion of persons (MN 32), and thus the beginning of the path one takes towards the others.

4. THE RELATIONAL DIMENSION OF THE BODY

a. The filial relationship as a starting point towards the spousal relationship

Man is alone being: it means that due to his humanity, through what he is, he enters into the only, exclusive and unique relationship with God himself. He is a person able to be a partner of God, because he must consciously distinguish and choose between good and evil, between life and death. Words of God’s first command are following:

“«Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat (...) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die», which speak directly about submission and dependence of man – as a creature – on the Creator, indirectly indicate a plan for a man who participates in the Covenant and is the partner of the Absolute” (RM 63).

The Pope notes that the first human relation is a unique partnership with the Creator. Therefore, from the very beginning of his existence, man develops in a relationship and a personal relationship with God. This kind of relationship is not possible with regard to the created world, because trying to establish it in the past he experienced loneliness. The first relationship in which man participates in paradise is the relationship of being a son of God, while in relation to the outside world, it is a fraternal relationship. It can be said in this manner because both man and the world is created by the Creator (the spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi draws here the inspiration to discover the kinship of creatures)²⁶. This means that man as such (not only by reference to a woman) is inherently a relational

²⁶ St. Francis of Assisi, *Pieśń słoneczna*, transl. by R. Branstaetter, *Anthology of Polish poetry about Saint Francis of Assisi*, Kraków-Asyż 1976, 244.

being. His first experience is his relationship to God and a fraternal relationship with other people²⁷. And the essence of the relationship is established in man by his similarity and relationship to God, and in the Book of Genesis, it is a relationship expressed in obedience to His commandment: “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying: Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat (...) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17). This is of great importance for the theology of the body, because this process of becoming God’s image begins with a filial relationship based on trust and fidelity, develops further in a fraternal relationship with respect to another human being and leads to a spousal relationship that will occur after the creation of a woman. However, before a spousal relationship occurs, people live in a relationship of brother and sister²⁸. The language of their bodies is also to express this truth. And the spousal relationship is constituted when “He leaves his father’s man and his mother, and joins his wife, so that they become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24) Thus, only in this relationship constituted by marriage, their body language can confirm this in intimate closeness.

And the spousal relationship is expressed in the sacramental relationship of man and woman. The Bible clearly defines the order of constituting the spousal relationship: (1) a reference to God expressed in a partner relationship, (2) he leaves the existing family

²⁷ In the translation of the Bible – the Edition of Saint Paul, Częstochowa 2015 – the moment of the creation of man has been translated in the following way: “Let us make mankind in our image. (...) So God created man in His own image” Genesis 1:26. This translation unambiguously emphasizes the relational nature of man directed to people.

²⁸ “With regard to Him (the Creator), they were both in the whole truth of their bodies, their masculinity and femininity, above all «brother» and «sister» in the unity of humanity (...) And this mutual «brother-sister» relation was inscribed in their being as the first foundation of the communion of persons, in a sense as a constitutive condition of mutual destiny, also in the dimension of this vocation, by which they were to become a «husband» and a wife” (MN 337).

to create a marriage with a woman, (2) “connects with her” and they become one body.

According to inadequate anthropology, sexuality is realized in isolation from the relationship to God (outside of marriage), i.e. they act sexually, “not leaving their father and mother” and thus their unity of bodies without reference to God – is not fully relational because it excludes or does not take into account the relationship to the Creator. And since man’s existence develops in a dynamic way before they both enter a spousal relationship, they must learn the relationship of „brother-sister” (a relationship that includes a reference to God), it is a necessary task according to the Pope (see footnote 38) because it is necessary precondition of establishing a spousal relationship. This idea is reflected in the Book of Genesis and is fundamental to understanding and establishing marital relationship, because man expresses himself through the body – in body language. Therefore, the relationship “brother-sister” in body language will be expressed differently than the marital-spousal relationship. For this reason Jesus considers the lustful look as inadequate body language: “And I say to you: Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mk 5:27) This speech which does not express a relationship but usurps it against the will of a woman, and against the will of God, that’s why Jesus calls it adultery – because of the personal nature of the relationship, in this case the lack of it. We have an object-oriented relationship here, as if the person on whom the man looks lustfully was not a human but “undefined, in terms of identity, sexual object”, object possible to achieve knowledge of the ability to live in a brother-sister relationship – when it comes to body language – is needed to respect the gift of fertility in which a man and woman are equipped. In order to – as Pope Paul VI says – “fulfill the internal task of a marital act which is procreation” (HV 11), entering the spousal relationship requires learning the specifics of the relationship “brother-sister” and thus the ability to subject sex drive to the Christian ethos – the ethos

of love²⁹. It is a task which the pope defines as love-oriented education for. The Church teaches that there can be no “real contradiction between God’s laws regarding the transmission of life on the one hand and the cultivation of true conjugal love on the other hand” (KDK 51). Thus, cultivation of conjugal love (conjugal relationship) should take into consideration the reference to God in the language of their bodies when they would like to exclude the aspect of fertility from sexual intercourse. For this reason, the Church’s teaching condemns the various forms of contraception. (HV14).

And in the period when they are not planning to give birth to their offspring, cultivation of conjugal love should be manifested in a different body language, one that does not destroy communion with God but that which takes place in reality in this communion. The most important, however, is the fact that this relationship between a son and God and a fraternal relationship between each other is a necessary step on man’s way to elaborate a spousal relationship between a man and a woman which is established by the sacrament of marriage. And this relationship is to become a real, personal experience of a man and woman before they get married. This is an important – from the point of view of the teaching of the Church – implication to be taken into account in preparing young people for marriage³⁰.

b. The spousal relationship – *communio personarum*

The very concept of *communio personarum* is derived by the Pope from the teaching of the Second Vatican Council: “Man, being the only creature on earth, whom God wanted to create only for himself and because of himself, cannot find himself completely fulfilled except

²⁹ K. Wojtyła, *Miłość i odpowiedzialność*, Lublin 2015, 123-124.

³⁰ “In this context, it is indispensable to raise children in a spirit of chastity, as a virtue that leads a person to achieve real maturity and enables it to respect and develop the «spousal sense» of the body. What’s more, if Christian parents recognize in children the signs of God’s calling, they will do all they can to raise them in the spirit of virginity as the highest form of this gift of themselves, which is the essential meaning of human sexuality” (FC 37).

through offering a selfless gift of himself” (KDK 24). For the pope, a prerequisite for the existence of a personal relationship is a “divine particle” which constitutes this dimension of gift – a key concept for understanding the essence of man: “... conjugal union, biblical” one body “(una caro), cannot be fully understood and explained otherwise than in terms of «person» and «gift»” (MR 127). Loneliness, according to the Pope, is: “the path to this unity of the two, which according to the teaching of Vaticanum II can be described as «communio personarum», is an openness to the” communion of people” (MN 32). The entrance of the first man and woman into the reality of the gift constituted their perfect unity. At this point, it is worth mentioning the role that the body plays.

In the experience of this original unity, the human body, through its masculinity and femininity, becomes a kind of “material” of their communion. It is capable of expressing it and it serves for its realization. It is through this experience that the first man is able to fully understand and define himself as a relational person, that is, one who remains in the relationship³¹. Sexual desire and erotic pleasure must be understood and experienced in the context of the whole person, because man discovers his fulfillment in the personal relationship of the gift, and the sense of the body will be fulfilled not by sensual satisfaction of sexual needs but by the affirmation of the whole person, which is most fully expressed by the language of bodies in their intimate union³². This first meeting of the first parents is an experience of “inviting” people to mutual communion, which is expressed by their body language, but also a task that becomes a lifelong vocation for them. It will be complemented by the ability to transfer life and give birth. That is why God addresses them (first description of creation): “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28).

Both man and woman become help for themselves in crossing their loneliness and becoming an image of God, through their mutual gift

³¹ R. Marczewski, op. cit., 111.

³² See *ibidem*, 111.

offered of themselves and expressed in the communion of persons. Thus, the similarity to God will appear in the transformation of the world into a more human and cooperation oriented on the transmission of life (fertility) that are possible through the body (these are tasks). The “biotope” of this similarity is their mutual communion. In the whole reality of femininity and masculinity, along with corporeality, man is called to reveal his similarity to God with regard to himself and to the whole created world.

It concerns not only the relations of the first parents with respect to each other but also, through obedience to God, concerns their communion with God, in which they are to help each other. In this dynamic, *Imago Dei* embodies their personal relationships as well as their human reality. Together, they also become a gift for the created world, in the course of subduing it.

Their perfect unity can only be possible in the reality of communion understood as a gift offered of oneself. “By accepting the loneliness of the other person as one’s own, man and woman affirm each other. *Communio personarum* depends on loneliness (not on lust) and affirms it”³³. So this desire for unity is inscribed ontologically in the internal structure of man and can be identified with the reality that defines him. Inwardly manifesting himself in a man, it is a dynamism which “taking into consideration his free decision” contributes to creating the image of God in him.

c. The sacramental dimension of the body

According to John Paul II, together with man, “sanctity entered into the visible world created for him. Sacrament of the world and the sacrament of man in the world” (MR 137). So man is not only a gift but his being becomes sacramental with the awareness of the gift that fills his life.

“Man is called into being in the visible world as the highest point in God’s act of giving, bearing in himself its inner dimension, which is

³³ *Ibidem*, 109.

the dimension of gift. With regard to this dimension he manifests his special resemblance to God. (...) it also includes all his «visibility» in the world, his corporeality, his masculinity / femininity, his nudity” (MN 62). The fact that a man and woman are conscious of the gift which they both constitute themselves, is conditioned by this sacrament of the body: “human being feels in its body of a man and a woman as participating in holiness” (MN 64). This sacramental dimension of the body, manifested in the primitive innocence and the survival of the spousal sense of the body, is “sanctity itself allowing man to express himself fully with the help of the body – by offering a selfless gift of himself” (MR 137). Considered not only in the sense of a marital but also in a fraternal, filial relationship expressed in love, only by which a person can express oneself, because it is a “form of expression” of man’s likeness to God and therefore of the quality that has its origin in God’s reality and which is subsequently present in Man.

“Also the awareness of the spousal meaning of the body, marked by the mystery of original innocence, is a reflection of this likeness to God. Thus, in this dimension, the original sacrament is established as a sign that brings to the visible world – in an effective way – the invisible mystery hidden in God for centuries.. (...) For the body and only the body is able to render invisibly what is invisible: spiritual and divine” (MR 136 and 137). It was created in order to “bring into the visible reality of the world a mystery hidden in God for centuries and thus be a sign of this mystery. The following words of Book of Genesis «Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame» (Genesis 2:25) express through the depth of their anthropological sense the fact that along with man sanctity entered into the visible world created for him” (MR 137).

In his reflections on the origin of man, John Paul II discovers the extraordinary depth of the relationship between man and God, which mysteriously exposes the corporeality of man, and then his relationship with another human being in the dimension of communion. It causes that man still maintains his subjectivity and individuality, and yet – in the context of his awareness of gift – he lives

as if in another dimension. It develops, continues in the dynamics of the gift – similarity to God, but it does not cease to be a gift for the other person and for the world at the same time. It happens thanks to the fact that God does not cease to be a gift that bestows similarity to Him to the man. In this way, a dimension of communion is created that makes the dimension of holiness visible through the body in the created world and it affects it. As if created world demanded such a man imbued with the theology of the body as expressed by Saint Paul: “For the creation awaits with great anticipation the appearance of the sons of God” (Gen. 8:19) – that man turns to the Creator and finds in him the meaning of life and the image of his humanity. Then he will become a real blessing that has been granted the gift of being able to sanctify the created world because man has been – in a way – called into being in this world in order to – through his likeness to God – reveal Him to the created world³⁴.

Having such awareness of the role of the body, human being – man and woman – enters the world as an entity possessing truth and love. And although soon – the horizon of sin and death will be tightened (see Genesis 3) on this original celebration of the – so to say – marriage of God with the world – through the full awareness of the gift of man and woman for each other and for the world created, however – already in the mystery of creation – we find the source of our first hope. Namely, the hope that the fruit of the God’s revealed economy of Truth and Love is not death but life, not the destruction of the body of man created in the image of God, but rather the “call to glory (compare Gen. 8:30)” (MR 138).

CONCLUSION

Anthropology which John Paul II formulates is a synthetic lecture of the original human experience contained in the Book of Genesis. He portrays him as a being who is relational in his nature. The direction of this relationship is first conditioned by the relationship of being

³⁴ Cf. MR 136.

a son of God (first human experience), by a fraternal relationship with another human being, and finally by a spousal relationship that takes place in a marriage. Thus, human development proceeds according to the rules of relational dynamics, which is realized in the visible experience of the body reflecting the human image of God. The “divine particle” which constitutes humanity and most fully expresses a man’s likeness to God, has the dimension of a gift which man offers of himself, a gift which has the form of *communio personarum* in the spousal relationship. So only when a person develops in the space of a selfless gift offered by oneself, he becomes the most human. To be a gift offered to someone is to love him, wanting good for him³⁵. And loving a person is tantamount to accepting another one as a gift. Theology of the body is of inestimable evangelization and catechetical value, because it presents the original image of man – his dimension to which man has a chance to return from the condition which was caused by his being entangled in sin. It is a complete vision of a man giving meaning to his full bodily and spiritual structure. The first step of the process of the development of the theology of the human body is the recognition of the Creator’s authority and from this perspective the experience of one’s being in relation to the created world. Man is effectively called by the experience of his heart, which he should follow³⁶.

³⁵ Cf. Benedict XVI, *Reflection before the Angelus prayer*, Vatican November 4, 2012.

³⁶ “Man is called to do so by the word of the Gospel, that is «from the outside», but at the same time he is called «from the inside». The words of Christ, who refer to the „heart” in the Sermon on the Mount, guide the listener to this internal calling. If he allows them to act in themselves, they will help him to hear at the same time in his inner being the echo of this «beginning», the good «beginning» to which Christ referred to another time to remind his listeners who the man and woman are and who they are they are for each other with regard to the work of creation. Christ’s words spoken in the Sermon on the Mount are not a calling directed into the void. They are not directed to a man who is completely concentrated on the lust of the body, unable to seek another form of mutual relations in the circle of this eternal attraction that accompanies the history of a man and a woman «from the beginning». The words of Christ confirm that the original might (and therefore

It is through it that the experience of primeval loneliness is revealed, which is crucial to discovering the fullness of humanity. It opens him to transgress himself in the act of trusting God's plan of creation, in which man was effectively called to being. Thus theology of the body can be regarded as the Gospel, or Good News about human corporeality. In a world that does not know what to do with corporeality, this theology gives an answer, pointing to its full sense, in the three-dimensional vision of a human – taking into account its beginning, development and ultimate meaning. In essential “DNA” of man God's perspective of his development is inscribed. It is possible for every human being – because every human being is effectively called and taken into account in the divine plan of creation. And being a human means to be able to live in a relationship based on the awareness of being a gift offered to God, to another man and to the created world.

Summary

The aim of the article is to present (selected) assumptions of anthropology that underlies the theology of the body of John Paul II. The author analyzes its main assumptions and confronts them with inadequate anthropology, which underlies the sexual revolution that is considered as distorting the sense of the human body in the light of Revelation. This study focuses on the analysis of the contents of the catechisms of John Paul II referring to texts about human relativity and the role that the body plays in this context. The analysis does not include those texts that refer to the reality of the sin of the first people. The text also aims at

the grace) of the mystery of creation for each of them becomes the might (or grace) of the mystery of redemption. It concerns the very «nature», the very foundation of humanity, the very deepest impulses of the «heart». Does man, along with his lust, not feel at the same time a deep need to maintain the dignity of these mutual references, which find expression in the body thanks to his masculinity and femininity? Does he not feel the need to fill them with all that is noble and beautiful? Does he not feel the need to give them the form of this highest value, which is love?” (MN 147).

emphasizing the importance of the theology of the body for modern man and his spiritual development.

Key words: theology of body, John Paul II, adequate anthropology, sexuality, sexual revolution, pre-marital purity, meaning of life, humanity, image of God, *communio personarum*, *imago Dei*, man, sacrament

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