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PEDAGOGICAL PHENOMENON IN THE TEACHING OF EDITH STEIN (TERESA BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS)

Among many distinguished educators, the figure of Edith Stein (Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) Jewish, intellectual, convert, “barefoot” Carmelite, saint of the Catholic Church, deserves special attention. A philosopher by education, she was a pedagogue as an associate professor at the Institute of Scientific Pedagogy in Münster in 1931–1932. She created the basics of Catholic pedagogy on foundation of philosophical anthropology and theology, educating future teachers. The scientific dimension was combined with practical, because before taking lectures in Münster she was also a teacher in the Dominican Monastery of St. Magdalena in Speyer (1922–1931), teaching young girls, both secular and nuns, the religious (sacred) art of spiritual development in accordance with the received vocation. As a part of the academic tasks undertaken at the Münster, Stein also participated in international conventions and pedagogical congresses in Germany and other countries (Switzerland, France), cooperated with the pedagogical journal “Institut”. Her stay at the Institute was interrupted due to Jewish origin. Without readership she had to leave it¹.

In modern times, in which upbringing is strongly emphasized on the basis of Cartesian assumptions. it is worth recalling scientific reflections of Stein and indicate their timeless value; in them there is a key to understanding man, and thus to proper upbringing, taking into account the spiritual aspect.

¹ Compare Fr. A. Przybylski, *Educational activity and pedagogical thought of Saint. Edyta Stein*, Kraków 2007; M. Strembska-Kozie, *Pedagogical aspects of personalistic philosophy of Edyta Stein and Józef Tischner*, “Pedagogical Yearbooks” 2017, Vol. 9 (45), No. 1, pp. 77–90.

1. PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AS THE FOUNDATION OF PEDAGOGY

Stein, taking up issues at the Münster Institute, switches from philosophy to a new professional specialization, which is pedagogy, soberly assessing difficulties in it and own shortcomings, which is proved in her letters². Determination in the search for knowledge mobilizes her to a creative confrontation with the assistant professors of this institute formulating the outline of pedagogy. When invited to cooperate, Stein acknowledges dissatisfaction with their work. She shares this in a letter to Jadwiga Condrat Martus: "I have discredited all their basic notions so that it was decided to publish the work only when we jointly explain various problems. And this is not a trifle. Have you ever wondered what pedagogy is? It is difficult to understand clearly, without knowing all the basic issues. We are people with completely different philosophical past (...). So you can imagine how difficult it is for us to communicate. We are unanimous only in the goal of creating Catholic pedagogy; we want to look for a solution with integrity, with good will"³.

The condition for writing a solid textbook on pedagogy is to take into account anthropology, because it is the key to understanding it. The essence of education is the definition of the concept of man, taking into account both dimensions of humanity: carnal and spiritual. It is not insignificant, because some pedagogical approaches reduce man in his structure. "Pedagogy builds castles in the sand, when it does not have the answer to the

² S. J. I. Adamska, *Błogosławiona Edyta Stein*, Kraków 1988, p. 81 "The awareness of my own limitations has made great progress in me in recent months. I do not know if you remember what she told me years ago about the lack of this awareness and some naive faith in myself. I did not understand much of that at that time. Such an assessment is usually understood when the light is received from the inside. Now, when I am in constant contact with people who have grown into their work, properly prepared and educated, I see that I am actually ailing in every episode and I am useless in every respect for the world. This consciousness does not deject me. However, it is not easy to afford such a responsible institution with such shortcomings and poor hope of their equalization. But since the circumstances argue in favour of the fact that God wants to have me here, I am not allowed to desert. "" [E. Stein, *Pisma*, vol. II, Cracow 1982, pp. 160–161].

³ E. Stein, *Pisma*, vol. II, pp. 171–172.

question” What is human being?⁴ – Stein writes. “You cannot bring up without knowing who a human being, and in what direction one should be led and what ways are possible⁵” – she will add in another place.

One must, therefore, start from anthropology and theology, because only drawing the holistic knowledge about human enables to understand the process of upbringing. She writes: “On the basis of this kind of reflection (...) I tried to deal with this problem in the winter semester of 1932/1933, using philosophical tools. From the very beginning I realized that such ‘philosophical anthropology’, even if it was to develop much further than it was possible for me in the lecture, it requires a theological completion. I could clearly indicate to the listeners its need, discussing specific issues. But it also results purely theoretically from the attitude of philosophy (or science in general) and faith, as expressed by our Church. According to this understanding, faith has a double meaning for science: first, the importance of the principle to measure the achievements of science and which “protects and guards... against mistakes”; then the meaning of the supplement, because the revealed truth gives answers to many questions that remain unsolvable for the natural reason. On the basis of the idea of Catholic teaching, it can be said that every Catholic teacher must, in the sense of an urgent task, clearly understand what our faith teaches about man, check both his own concept of man and different in order to this context. And because now there is a new word for “anthropology” and because various anthropological concepts are being thrown onto the market from different sides and providing them to teaching, I particularly wanted to indicate Catholic teachers the criterion they must use in their assessments⁶”.

Stein – after an effort to translate from Latin *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (Research on the issue of truth) Aquinas and writing her own philosophical treatise *Endliches und Ewiges* (Complete Being and Eternal Being) – had sufficient knowledge to meet the above requirements. In her reflections, she even went beyond the Thomas’ scholastics and, based on

⁴ E. Stein, *Budowa osoby ludzkiej. Wykład z antropologii filozoficznej*, oprac. B. Beckmann-Zöller, translation. G. Sowiński, Cracow 2015, p. 46.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

⁶ E. Stein, Edith Stein, *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person. Vorlesungen zur philosophischen Anthropologie*, Freiburg 2004.

the phenomenological method, undertook to develop her own concept of education. According to her, bringing up means “lead people to become what they should”. Therefore, she refers to the main ideas of pedagogy, which is “leading” and “standing”, covering the whole of human life to reach maturity⁸. The help is provided by teachers who should be specialists in leading a young person to meet life’s tasks and fulfill their destiny.

What Stein points out in her deductions written in the Institute of Educational Pedagogy in Münster entitled the *Ontic structure of the person and her epistemological problems*. As a philosopher, she begins research from the ontical structure of the human person, listing the triad of material body, understood as a living entity, then soul and spirituality⁹. She explains that the live body (*Leib*) is “significant and comes from the pure material body (*Körper*) that co-creates it and differs, that it feels or can feel its own state and everything that happens to it. All corporality has its inner side, because where there is a body, there is also internal life¹⁰”. The body, therefore, indicates the soul inhabited in it, whose life is not moved from outside, but directed from above, which means simultaneously from the inside¹¹. She explains: “To reach the higher regions, into the realm of over-nature, means for the soul, enter completely into yourself. And vice versa: every strong grasp of yourself takes a soul above into the kingdom of heights¹²”. The soul, therefore, dwells in its depths, anchoring itself “up” and becoming separated from the impressions penetrating the world, but belongs to the supernatural world¹³, striving for continuous becoming. It is on the move, thanks to which it is an educational factor¹⁴. This is confirmed by Stein’s studies devoted to women’s shaping. After her death, she was captured in the fifth volume of her works titled *Die Frau. Ihre Aufgabe Nach Natur und Gnade* (Woman and her task according to nature and

⁷ E. Stein, *Autoportret Edyty Stein w jej twórczości. Wybór pism duchowych*, translation I.J. Adamska, Poznań 1999, p. 60.

⁸ Por. M. Strembska-Kozie, *Pedagogiczne aspekty filozofii personalistycznej...*, op. cit., pp. 82–83.

⁹ Compare *ibid.*

¹⁰ E. Stein, *Twierdza duchowa*, translation p. J. I. Adamska, Poznań 2006, p. 69.

¹¹ Compare *ibid.*, p. 38.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Compare *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

grace). The author recalls in them the basic principle that there are no obstacles so that man can shape himself, but tools are necessary to achieve it. Pedagogy has all the possibilities.

Stein, discussing the concept of man, in addition to the body and soul, mentions the spiritual person and her spiritual sphere¹⁵ coming from the person and finding the center inside her. To connect the human person with the spirit means “enter the spiritual sphere and let it fill up and submit to the person who is the center of this sphere¹⁶.” No wonder that Edith recognizes the body – soul – the spirit, for the triad drawing from the triune God. She writes: “If we compare this unity with the divine triad, it is in the soul as a source that draws from itself and shapes the body and spirit, we will see the image of the Father, and the image of the eternal Word, and in the spiritual life, as a strongly outlined expression of the essence – the image of the eternal Word, and in the spiritual life – the image of the Spirit of God. (...) The soul creates itself, shapes itself into a specific character and emerges from itself in its spiritual life. Its threefold existence thus reflects the inner life of the Deity. (...) Opening inwardly to the reception of divine life, the soul is formed, and through it the body, in the image of the Son of God, and it makes ‘streams of living water,’ renewing the face of the earth from the Spirit¹⁷”.

Stein’s thoughts allow us to understand that human being shapes oneself only in the interconnection of these three elements. In this way one transcends oneself and nature always with the proviso that in the name of the received freedom one can choose good or bad, give in the spirit of good or the spirit of evil¹⁸. Professor A. Grzegorzczuk explains that “kind” of ‘connecting’ to one of these worlds decides about free choice and about free development¹⁹”. Therefore, “the reference of an empty self to the objective world of nature determines its regression, the re-enslaving by the laws of this world. Being in the possession of subjective reason leads to lawlessness, self-power, self-determination, to closure in own selfish self, without being supported by values that transcend them,

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ E. Stein, *Byt skończony a Byt wieczny*, translation. J. I. Adamska, Poznań 1995, p. 462.

¹⁸ Por. A. Grzegorzczuk, *Wprowadzenie*, [in:] E. Stein, *Twierdza...*, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁹ Ibid.

and in extreme cases, to lack of understanding²⁰. When a human opens oneself to the kingdom of grace, unites with God²¹, thanks to which one has all possibilities of development.

It is worth adding for information that the classes that Stein conducted in the first half of the academic year 1932/1933 concerned the modern upbringing of girls, and in the second the formation of the human personality. Because they took into account the spiritual dimension of human and the appeal to God, they caught the attention of the young. Above all, “they were characterized by clarity and scientific precision. Even students from the university came to them, as free listeners, which was especially pleasing to her. Students invited her to the university for discussion evenings²²”.

2. LOVE AS A PRINCIPLE OF EDUCATION

Philosophical research on the human person leads Stein to say that she is realized individually and in the social space, that is, she goes beyond herself and strives to establish a relationship with another man. Therefore, it is impossible to understand people without knowing them and placing them in the space of other people. Being a person in the social dimension is something basic²³. The community affects the individual because it allows to develop, integrating both forces and abilities exceeding the unit's possibilities of action.

The most important value and principle on which Edith Stein bases upbringing in the individual and social dimension is love. Thanks to love, a human shapes own personality based on relationships with other people²⁴. It is a fundamental value that allows one to participate in the life of another human being. Stein explains this in the following way: “To love someone means to respond to one's personal value and get a share in that value; in addition, to protect it and keep it. To desire love means to desire someone else's affirmation of one's personal value, to be assured of self-worth by

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ S. J. I. Adamska, *Błysk głębi. Doświadczenie i nauczanie Świętej Teresy Benedykty od Krzyża Edyty Stein (1881–1942)*, Nowa Ruda 2003, p. 139.

²² Quotation for: S. I. J. Adamska, *Błogosławiona...*, op. cit., p. 86.

²³ M. Strembska-Kozie, *Pedagogiczne aspekty...*, op. cit., p. 81.

²⁴ Ibid.

others and to have a safe haven in them.²⁵ Charity means discovering and enriching your own world of values and getting to know yourself better. This truth is further explained by Stein: “The love with which I approach another man is able to fill that person with the new power of life when one’s own strength ceases. Even ordinary staying with people of intense vitality can act revitalizing on the weak and exhausted, unable to carry on with any activity. (...) The love that I meet strengthens and revives me and gives strength to unimaginable achievements, whereas lack of trust – paralyzes and takes away power for action²⁶”. These rules are extremely important in upbringing, because showing help to a mentee in difficult life situations allows one to survive this time and get out of the tunnel of darkness to see new perspectives.

Love, which effectively affects others, is not compatible with hatred. “The one who loves me, does not feel the loss of strength, with which one revived me, whoever hates me, will not be enriched by the power that’s destroyed within me. On the contrary: love works in the loving as inspiring power of life, providing more strength than one’s experience consumed; The hatred, on the contrary, destroys and devours. Love and positive attitudes not only wear out, but they are also a stimulus to help others without their own impoverishment. The loving is in self inexhaustible; one can stop temporarily or completely only because of the fact that one’s strength absorbs some spiritual action so strong that one is unable to accept other life-giving contents,²⁷” Stein writes.

In the attitude of devotion to the other, the order of love of a human is expressed, which teaches to see in one a brother who is appointed to happiness. Common dialogue and interest in one’s fate are important. Hatred and selfishness entail only negation and annihilation.

True love is God’s love. The history of mankind speaks for this because, where love is present, people usually live in peace and prosperity. When there is a lack of it, destruction, violence and aggression appear. Stein’s life confirms these matters in an obvious way that truth should be treated as

²⁵ E. Stein, *Budowa osoby ludzkiej...*, op. cit., p. 272.

²⁶ E. Stein, *Beitrage zur philosophischen Begrundung der Psychologie und geisteswissenschaften*, [in:] *Jahrbuch fur Philosophie und phanomenologische Forschung*, Freiburg 1922, p. 189.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

a determinant of progress and good in the world. Thus, her attitude and values, which she lived, contradicts all feelings of hedonism, which does not want to know anything about suffering and death²⁸, rationalism, because it is not able to accept the idea of sacrifice for others²⁹ and the ideology of autonomous self-realization which does not take into account the truth about a human whose the fullest development is associated with the love of God and neighbor³⁰. It is not insignificant, because these ideologies reduce the concept of human, not including transcendence.

Sartre wrote that “it is enough that one man hates another and slowly infects all humanity. It’s enough that one man loves everyone and love extends to all humanity³¹. “We know who in the days of Stein was the originator of spreading hatred that killed millions of people and destruction of property. We also know what love and admiration Stein aroused among believers and non-believers, becoming a sign of opposition to Nazi practices and a symbol of the reconciliation of nations. She teaches education between nations.

3. GOD AS THE EDUCATOR

In her scientific research on pedagogy, Stein states that a human cannot be well educated without having regard to God. As our Father in Heaven is the first and the most important educator, and Jesus is the model of all perfection, because “he sets before us the goal of all forms of formation a man in a concrete-vivid-personal way³²”. An extension of this issue is found in her work *Theresa of Jesus*, a teacher of the human personality. She writes: “Holiness, perfection and special formation of personality, corresponding to specific tasks in the kingdom of God, are goals that go beyond the limits of human means. (...) Holiness is the condition of the soul which must flow from inside, from the inaccessible depth neither from the outside action nor the effort of the will. (...) Sanctification and preparation for specific

²⁸ Por. S. J. I. Adamska, *Sól ziemi. Rzecz o Edycie Stein*, Poznań 1997, p. 197.

²⁹ Compare *ibid.*

³⁰ Compare *ibid.*

³¹ Quotation for: S. Palumbieri, *Amo dunque sono. Presupposti antropologici della civiltà dell'amore*, Torino 1999, p. 26.

³² E. Stein, *Kobieta jej zadanie według natury i łaski*, translation p. J. I. Adamska, Tuchów 1995, p. 149.

tasks is a new formation of the soul, an educational work that God himself completes at the final stage.³³

These statements show that being a mature person is possible in connection with God. Stein will not hesitate to write that “people can only help here as tools; because they are not dead tools, but living and vulnerable to grace, one can say with certainty that they shape man. Their activities are manifested in various ways: as a gift of seeing the soul, realizing its state, recognizing its needs in achieving what God has foreseen for it. It happens, however, that human help cannot directly work to bring souls to the goal. Maybe only by the strength of its prayers, one can ask for help from God³⁴”.

Stein emphasizes that in education one cannot stop only on the human factor, but transcendental, even exceeding the reason. She writes: “Apart from true cognition, there is a mistake as a possible result of free operations of reason. The cognitive mind can go astray, and the person following it can be wrong; the principles that guide in the life of the soul are only illusory to reason and the life of the soul will indeed be ordered and enlightened, but unreasonable and as such it stands below the animal³⁵”. Stein explains that whoever wants to possess a soul must know that not only natural but supernatural values are needed. “Based just on its own freedom, it can only gradually empty itself, and completely released, destroy itself entirely³⁶”. It is no more than grace that allows to gain a new fullness of the soul and become your own home³⁷. This does not mean that the person is already liberated. It requires the spirit with whom person got involved and everything that gives connection with it.

It is the spirit of God who “is immeasurable and when it is given, it is independent of the importance of whom it serves. The finite spirit, due to the limited reception capacity, is unable to accept the infinite. But because of what is given to it, the ability to receive strengthens, and thus filling and rising is no longer organic by finite matter³⁸”. Thus, the spirit penetrates

³³ E. Stein, *Teresa od Jezusa, wychowawczynie ludzkiej głębi*, [in:] *Z własnej głębi*, vol. II, translation p. J. I. Adamska, Kraków 1978, p. 132.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

³⁵ E. Stein, *Twierdza...*, op. cit., p. 42.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ E. Stein, *Byt...*, op. cit., p. 247.

human life with vital force, shapes it and fills with grace needed for maturity. It gives holiness to all who desires.

Practically it means that "(...) in the holy men we perceive feminine delicacy and goodness and truly motherly care for the souls entrusted to them (...)">³⁹". "In contrast, holy women are characterized by masculine boldness, efficiency and determination."⁴⁰ But the discretion the Spirit turns to men and women in order to skillfully cross the earth-natural boundaries, it does not destroy male and female nature, but it develops and fertilizes it. Stein reminds that since a man is characterized by a pursuit for knowledge, rational and objective reality insight. In this case woman is marked by emotionality, subjectivity and empathy with reality experience⁴¹. One and the other traits combined into a whole, balance the relationship between cognition with reason and cognition by heart and create a perfect humanity. It practically means that a woman on par with a man can undertake social tasks, but they must be professions that would creatively develop and protect her against degeneration. According to the specificity of women, they are: upbringing, nursing and care. She also emphasizes scientific work, being a translator and exploring humanities⁴².

What does this mean in the spiritual development of Saint. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross? As father Przywara writes - "she possessed a deep, feminine sensibility together with ability to sacrifice herself while being strict, male objectivity, reaching the edge of the knife, making at least the impression that she wants with a sharp cut to armor her subtle femininity"⁴³". The masculinity and childishness of Edith Stein is also emphasized by her affectionate friend and godmother Jadwiga Conrad-Martius, based on her words characterizing essence of pure angelic spirits⁴⁴, in which we

³⁹ E. Stein, *Zawód mężczyzny i kobiety według natury i łaski*, [in:] *Z własnej głębi...*, op. cit., p. 60.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ E. Stein, *Kobieta jej zadanie...*, op. cit., p. 55.

⁴² Compare S. J. I Adamska, *Błysk...*, op. cit., p. 168.

⁴³ W. Herbstrith, *Edith Stein – einneueslabensbildin Zeugnissenund Selbstzeugnissen*, Freiburg 1983, p. 176.

⁴⁴ „Forces are named after their brave, fearless masculinity, flowing down to their every action and not allowing anything that could inhibit the light that God gave them. It strives for all people to follow God, and does not hesitate in a cowardly weakness in view of what His movement requires; constantly staring at the superna-

talk about strength and fearless bravery. That's why she writes: "(...) Excellent determination of action and suffering, unwavering courage, persistent pursuit of purpose – that is exactly Edith Stein. She had that something masculine in herself, a thing that could not be explained. Not that she would not be a woman. Anyone who knew her or seen her on a picture would know that. But the other side of the personality, so unexplainable, came from her childhood characteristics. Stein told me with a laugh that in some circles she was always called a precocious child. It seemed that she recognized herself in this term. It is like 144,000 virgin men from the Apocalypse. Masculinity and childhood. The strictly psychic, affective domain in which sensitivity, liability and softness takes place, typically female weaknesses and emotionality, seemed not to concern her⁴⁵".

Sister Immakulata Adamska O.C.D. will confirm that her internal integration and maturity are the result of a deep spiritual life, the source of which was the Spirit⁴⁶. Therefore, Stein's words are understandable, as opening to the Paraclete means "the original sensitivity of the soul reborn in the Holy Spirit, accepting everything that comes in the right way and at the appropriate depth, with strength unrestrained by any perverse inhibitions and compulsions, vital, dart and ready for shaping that easily and willingly allows itself to be formed and led by what it takes in itself. When the truth of faith comes across such a strength, it becomes knowledge of saints in the soul."

These statements are important for everyone: educators and mantes. Everybody should be an internally integrated, mature and happy.

4. THE FORMATION OF HUMAN

The process of upbringing a man takes into account the following elements, such as the purpose of education, pupil, educator and tools used in the process of upbringing⁴⁷. Mantee is the most important because that's

tural and creative force of God, it is – as much as possible – its reflection „[cit. per: S. J. I. Adamska, *Blessed...*, op. cit., p. 165–166. [cit. per: S. J. I. Adamska, *Błogosławiona...*, op. cit., pp. 165–166].

⁴⁵ S. J. I. Adamska, *Błogosławiona...*, op. cit., p. 166.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 164.

⁴⁷ Compare E. Stein, *Bildung und Entfaltung der Individualität. Beiträge zum christlichen Erziehungsauftrag, Edith Stein Gesamtausgabe*, vol. XVI, Freiburg–Basel–Wien: Herder 2001, p. 51; A. Przybylski, *Działalność edukacyjna*, op. cit., p. 179.

where the eyes of the mentor are directed aiming to help in personality development. Because of its unity and uniqueness, appropriate methods should be set to achieve the goal. Hence, getting to know one's nature, that is, what constitutes a personality, should be drawn into the whole upbringing process.

Stein emphasizes that "formation" means development of a human in order to enable one to achieve destiny⁴⁸. She states that "education is not meant to be an external control of knowledge, but education of human personality under the influence of various foreign forces, namely the process of its formation. The material that is shaped is first the corporal-psychological ground that human brings to the world, as well as the building material that is constantly drawn from the outside and assimilated by the body. The body takes it from the material world, the soul from the spiritual environment, from the world of persons and goods that serve as food⁴⁹". In turn, with whom a human meets and what values one receives, it affects its development. Knowledge is important, but not the most important, because it is not enough for a man to be fully mature. A human being is not satisfied with it completely, because it is connected with a partial vision of truth and leads to a fragmentation of meaning, and thus prevents human being from achieving internal unity. Knowledge invokes spirituality to see the ultimate meaning and purpose of reality.

Stein also describes that basic education comes from the interior, which gives development a specific direction. "Human defines the form of a goal for blind efforts, that is reaching a mature, fully developed personality, and a personality with a quite specific, individual character⁵⁰". There are no two people who are the same, that's why education should be adapted to the individuality of a human being. Only with the help of a pupil and educator, who can never humiliate, so it is possible to shape a mature humanity.

External forces also belong to education, because child is subjected to the hands of educators. "It is them, who will provide the body and soul what is necessary for growth, and the food - digested or not, healthy food or poison – depends on what it was intended for. The essential part of the overall process and formation consists in educating the organs needed by the

⁴⁸ Compare E. Stein, *Kobieta jej zadanie...*, op. cit., p. 85.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

body and soul to receive and process their food. It's about mental organs, including senses, mind, will and feelings⁵¹". The poison means a variety of dangers, such as addiction to drugs, alcohol, and pornography, which destroy human mental and spiritual life often leading to tragedy.

Stein, analyzing the process of environmental impact on upbringing, observes that "only what passes from the outside world into the soul is accepted not only by the senses and mind, but by the "heart and feeling", which actually grows with soul, is the real building material. Forming the soul, it ceases to be only material; starts to work automatically, shapes and creates, it helps achieve the soul of the designated character⁵²". Then the human heart is spiritually expanded, because it takes up the education with all its limitations and freedoms.

Because the child is entrusted to the hands of the educator when he or she is brought up, the adult is shaped by free will, because being a one that can create it, dispose of strength, take care of their development and open oneself as well as close to shaping influences. "Nobody can make something of oneself that is not by nature,⁵³" as Stein writes. It is not possible to change nature and shape someone completely different.

5. MARY AS AN EXEMPLAR OF WOMAN EDUCATION

In connection with the issues related to upbringing and education of girls, Stein notices threefold development in the female nature, which includes humanity, femininity and individuality⁵⁴.

With regard to humanity, she notes that the creation of a man and woman was a perfect act and their nature fully developed. The sin has weakened the nature, that is why human is unable to realize that one can reach full maturity with one's own strength. The grace that comes along with the Christ's consecrate is needed. Thanks to it, the nature is renewed both in relation to man and woman⁵⁵. Human realizes that supernatural

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., p. 86.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Compare *ibid.*, p. 142.

⁵⁵ Compare *ibid.*, pp. 144–147.

destiny in its cooperation belongs to God's gifts. Grace unites human with God, creating one's new "likeness" to the Trinity.

In a similar way, Stein explains the essence of femininity. Referring to Paul's statement that a woman is "for a man," Stein does not see any woman's humiliation in this statement, unless someone interprets these words in such a way that a woman serves a man as a mean to achieve his goals and satisfy lust⁵⁶. Meanwhile, a woman should be helped by a free decision enabling her to become who she should be⁵⁷. On the basis of these explanations, Stein notes that the girls' education must show and confirm the property of a woman's being⁵⁸ and the vocation of a women and the preservation of their individualities.

Mary is an exemplar in education, because it is the "goal of shaping women⁵⁹". Being a liberated woman, does not bother her to be a mother. Maternity belongs to the calling of a woman, and motherhood to Mary exceeds nature according to the body⁶⁰. Stein asks: "Is there a proper picture of divinity in this femininity that is a servile love?⁶¹". And she adds: "Servant love is the help given to every being, to reach its fullness; this is the title given to the Holy Spirit. In the Spirit of God, poured out on all beings, we see the model of a woman's being whose most perfect image is the Blessed Virgin, the Bride of God and the Mother of all people⁶²".

Hence, "the exaltation of a woman takes place in Mary, the human Mother of the Savior, who is the gate through which God entered into mankind... A woman submitting to a man willingly and with love is to worship in him the image of Christ and reflect the features of the Mother of God. This in turn means to be similar to Christ⁶³". Stein emphasizes the royal position of Mother, Mother of the King. A woman therefore has the promise given in the Book of Genesis and the Apocalypse. "Fight against

⁵⁶ Compare *ibid.*, pp. 147–152.

⁵⁷ Compare *ibid.*, p. 148.

⁵⁸ Compare *ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

the evil and bring up the offspring – this is her calling from a sinful fall to the Mother of the Son who won the death and hell⁶⁴ – she explains.

Mary is therefore an excellent personality and exemplar for women and men, according to whom, everyone should shape their personality. With regard to women, she would add that first they need seriously consider what they should become and strive for it, because in this way they improve own humanity and lead individuality to a perfection. She writes: “The existence a woman is the becoming, in which she should develop seed forces brought into the world with the ground; she develops the strengths while using them⁶⁵”. So a woman can achieve the ideal, possibly full development of her personality only when she uses her strength.” For those women who are overcome by powerlessness, being unable to fulfill their vocation, she explains: “God, as the faith teaches, and the experience of living in faith confirms, does not require things from a man to whom he would not give strength at the same time. (...) God’s Spirit is sense and power. It provides the soul a new life and enables it to do things so it would not live up to in its nature, and at the same time, Spirit shows the direction of action⁶⁶”.

Stein’s thoughts of Mary were created during her stay at the Institute of Pedagogy. Referring to them on the human’s ontical structure, she emphasizes that the goal of being a perfect woman is not just a great lecture about Mary and about education in general, but the fact that She must be imitated. Stein writes: “The goal will not only be to admire Her, but trustingly adhering to Her, to walk with Her, and not alongside, and it is through the way of following Christ: to imitate Mary – to imitate God. She was the first of his imitators and the first, the most perfect picture⁶⁷”. She, the Mother of God, is the most competent teacher, because she stands at the side of the greatest Teacher, which was her Son.

That is why Stein, while writing about the educational process, imitated Mary herself so that she could become who God wanted from her to be. “She was simple, modest and natural, she walked quietly and unnoticed through the way of her duties, always equally kind and

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 144.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 67–68.

⁶⁶ E. Stein, *Byt...*, op. cit., p. 446.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 152.

open to all who sought her help... Every day we saw her, when she was kneeling at the front, in the choir, on the kneeler during the Holy Mass. Then we understood a little what it means to unite in one faith and personal life... I could not cite any of her statements - not because none was fixed in the memory but rather because the doctor was a quiet and silent person who led us the most by her being. She was a perfect combination of goodness and justice... Open to everything that is noble and beautiful, while at the same time being deeply united with God." Does not this attitude bring more advantages among students than the wisest lectures?⁶⁸

This way of realizing her vocation is not only addressed to her, but to all women. She explains: "In the person of Mary, God called women of all times to the most intimate union with each other and chose them as women of their love, as propagators of their will, even to kings and popes, to precursors preparing the ways of his reign in the hearts of people. There is no higher vocation over the '*sponsa Christi*'- over the Bride of Christ – and for whom this way is open, does not desire any other⁶⁹".

Here are the fragments of Edith Stein's pedagogy. Thanks to these, Stein is able to understand herself and women.

* * *

Stein creates a catholic pedagogy based on philosophical anthropology and theological assemblies concerning human nature and one's redemption through Christ. The formation of a person is based on the development of spiritual life that flows from the human soul. It is necessary for human to achieve the intended goal, which is mature humanity, while the tools fulfilling a helpful role in achieving this goal are teachers.

In the process of education, Stein is the most remarkable about women, and she shows Mary as an exemplar of all formation and reading in Her of missions as a mother, wife, scientist, and a teacher. In this way, by accepting love and developing it, man realizes a vocation in the individual and social dimension.

⁶⁸ Teresa Renata od Ducha Świętego, *Filozof i karmelitanka*, tłum. M. Kaczmarowski, Paris 1973, pp. 64–70.

⁶⁹ E. Stein, *Kobieta...*, op. cit., p. 45.

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