

THE PERSON: A NEW PRINCIPLE

The Person: A New Principle is a study devoted to the crisis of the idea of the person in the modern world. The author notes that the crisis was brought about by such currents of modern thought as materialism, positivism, Darwinism and contemporary naturalism, where the problem of the person and the soul was replaced by the question of mind-body, I, consciousness, and anthropological problems were substituted by ethical questions. Theses proclaimed by those currents were also strengthened by antipersonalism and nihilism. The considerations contained in this book raise anew anthropological problems, which—in the author's opinion—beside widely discussed ethical problems, should contribute to the renewal of politics, democracy and the democratic ideal in the modern world, as well as they should give occasion to the renewal of the very philosophy of the person. In the investigations on man and his action, it is not enough to limit oneself to the terms 'consciousness', 'subject' or 'individual', referred to by many contemporary philosophical currents. The term 'person' is primary and basic, it is characterized by depth and durability which are absent in the aforementioned categories. In view of the increasing power of media, economy, army and science, which often tries to diminish the man, humiliate and enslave him, there is—according to the author—the need of a personalistic rebirth.

The Person: A New Principle is a book consisted of three parts. The first part entitled "The Metaphysics of the Person" includes three chapters: 1) "The Person in the Theory of Being," 2) "Existence and the Person: Six Reflections," 3) "Soul, Mind, Body and Immortality. The Challenge of Naturalism." In the first chapter the author addresses the issue of the person in the theory of being, and then shows the way and results of the departure from the philosophy of the person in modern and contemporary

times. In the second chapter the author presents the project of the renewal of "the rule of the person," the project which is to consist in deepening and enriching deliberations on: a) the relationship between substance and relation, b) ecstatic interior, love and interpersonal communication, c) the psychic and moral awareness, d) paradoxes of the person, e) theological and theocentric personalism, f) the relationship between secular humanism and the human condition. In the third chapter the author draws attention to the relationships: mind-body, soul-body, mind-brain, and formulates the thesis that the question about the soul goes beyond the issue of the brain or the mind, which results in the fact that the study reduced to the mind-body relationship cannot solve the problem of the soul. In this context, the author also considers the issue of human immortality.

The second part of the book entitled "Contemporary Issues. From the Philosophy of the Person to Bioethics" consists of two chapters. The first chapter, "Ontogenesis: The Embryo and the Person," presents bio-ontological issues (the status of human embryo), bioethical issues (*in vitro*, the issue of embryo freezing), and bio-legislative issues (the embryo's right to life). The second chapter, "Changing Human Nature with the (Bio)Technology. Some Questions," concerns the concept of human nature and issues related to technological interference in human nature and its consequences.

The third part of the book entitled "Contemporary Issues II. Personalism, Peace, Democracy" consists of two chapters. The first chapter, "Personalism and the Abolition of War," is devoted to the issues of war and peace as the greatest of contemporary political issues. The author claims that personalistic thought can lead to the abolition of war, because the idea of peace is dependent on the idea of man. Further the author discusses the phenomenon of political globalization and the strategy of passive political struggle, called nonviolence, involving the rejection of violence under all conditions. The second chapter, "Personalistic Foundations of Democracy," discusses the various theories of democracy (elitist theories, Marxist-Leninist theories, democratic theories epistemologically motivated, theories of discourse or communication practice or communication consensus, personalistic-communal theories, and political theories developed in the Anglo-Saxon world, flowing from counteractualistic and utilitarian approach). In the remainder of the chapter, the author addresses the issue of reciprocal relationships between democracy and culture, and between democracy and religion, and tries to answer the question of which type of culture is most conducive to democracy.

The book is an attempt to rationally justify the belief that "the principle of the person" finds its solid foundation in ontological personalism rather than merely in ethical personalism, and its best guarantee in the philosophy of being. The concept of "the principle of the person" is based on two fundamental philosophical and theological assertions which claim that man is endowed with intellect and free will, and that he is created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore metaphysical personalism is also and essentially theological personalism which conceives being a person as a relationship with the Absolute. From the metaphysical perspective adopted by the author it results that the person cannot be reduced only to the coming-to-existence of history or cosmos, that he cannot be an object instrumentally used by biotechnology or politics, and that any interference in human life without reference to man's status as a person always ends with the drama of either individuals or societies.