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Value and Importance: For the Ethics and Metaphysics of the Person

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This article will refer to the analysis carried out by Dietrich von Hildebrand about the human person to elaborate on the anthropology of the person. The notion of value and the notion of importance. From the phenomenological method and the influence of philosophical realism, Hildebrand will renew the Aristotelian notion of the person to express its uniqueness and the possibility of capturing value and realizing it as a guideline for the solution to the current crisis of values and humanity as philosophers like Byung Chul Han or Günther Anders have described it.

Keywords: Dietrich von Hildebrand, value, importance, person, personality

Anonymous or persons? What are we? What makes us what we are and who we are? Suppose in the past; the individual had a name, a legal power, and a history that protected him from oblivion. In that case, today's anonymous person has nothing more than a click to update his digital profile and his purchases at the prime user level as a defining feature of the human. A century ago, the people had collective power, but today the anonymous person has no presence or rights. The person is the forgotten of global history. What we call the anonymous man has

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imposed itself in the emptiness of all the fragile spaces left by the concepts of people and individuals due to their mutations, remaining invisible in its conceptual shell until the present moment. Anonymous is a concept that designates what has remained invisible, hidden, and lost from the people and the individual. Against the anonymous we find the personal, the intrinsically human. In contrast to Melville's scribe Bartleby, who spends his days in his office as an animal labourer and subject to eternal fatigue,[2] we find the challenge of being oneself, as R. Safransky has highlighted in his latest book.[3]

The aim of this conference will be to provide some guidelines for reflection in order to recover the notion of personhood in a post-personal and transhuman world (Hadjhaj and Berkel).[4] To do so, we will make use of the analysis carried out by the German philosopher D. von Hildebrand and his peculiar phenomenological theory of values. In this thinker, we find one of the key authors of the phenomenological ethics of values, together with Husserl, Scheler or Hartmann, who went beyond Max Scheler's ethics of values by developing the concept of value.[5]

The Philosophical Method when "Things Themselves" are the Human Being

First, we will give some notes on his philosophical method to understand his access to personal reality. Hildebrand, in the line of Brentano and Husserl, starts from a confrontation with the psychologism of his time, which presupposed a naturalisation of all thinking and living, that is, the reduction of the soul or consciousness and all its acts to the material (be it organic, genetic, and

[2] Byung-Chul Han, *La sociedad del cansancio*, transl. Arantzazu Saratxaga Arregi, Alberto Ciria (Barcelona: Herder, 2017), 10.

[3] Rudiger Safransky, *Ser Único: un desafío existencial*, transl. Raúl Gabás (Barcelona: Tusquets, 2022).

[4] *Postsexualität: Zur Transformation des Begehrens*, ed. Irene Berkel (Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag, 2009); Hadjhadj Fabrice, *Últimas noticias del hombre (y de la mujer)* (Madrid: Homo Legens, 2018).

[5] Juan José García Norro, "Presentación del traductor," in: Dietrich Von Hildebrand, *Ética*, transl. Juan José García Norro (Madrid: Encuentro, 1997), 9.

economic). Starting from Brentano's descriptive or phenomenological psychology, Hildebrand studies the experiences and the fundamental concepts of ethics that have intelligibility and legality by themselves. Husserl, in this psychology, had searched for an absolutely unquestionable foundation of philosophy to be found in the realm of knowledge and experience in which we find necessary truths. For these authors there would be an immanent objectivity of psychic phenomena. Consciousness is always consciousness of something.[6] A person's experiences are intentional because in them the subject not only experiences that he knows, thinks, hates, or loves and thus experiences himself, but also experiences concrete contents independent of himself, what he knows, thinks, hates or loves. Hildebrand will clearly differentiate between intentional and non-intentional experiences, no doubt bearing in mind Scheler's doctrine of tendencies.

It must be made clear that phenomenology does not aspire to the knowledge of the phenomena that are the manifestations in my consciousness, but of the things themselves. The phenomenon is nothing, but a starting point covered with multiple layers of appearances that conceal the essential, which must be got rid of. The aim is to arrive at the universal truths that are given to us as self-evident. The transition from the empirical to the essential is not made by induction or abstraction, but is given to me by intuition.[7]

What characterises Hildebrand's thought in a central way is a phenomenological realism with an attitude that proposes to be awake to hear the voice of being.[8] To begin with, Hildebrand will attend to "the given" which, against theories, interpretations, and hypotheses, in Hildebrand's own words,

> is always a necessary and intelligible entity, the only true object of philosophy, as are for example being, truth, knowledge, space, time, man, justice, numbers, love and many others. It is the object which possesses a necessary, profoundly intelligible essence, which imposes itself on our spirit, which reveals itself and shows itself to be valid when viewed in an intellectual intuition.[9]

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[6] Edmund Husserl, *Investigaciones Lógicas. I: Prolegómenos a la lógica pura*, transl. Manuel García Morente, José Gaos (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1929), 129.

[7] *Diccionario de filosofía*, ed. Ángel Luis González (Pamplona: Eunsa, 2010), 256–258.

[8] Hildebrand, *Ética*, 15–16.

[9] Ibidem, 21–22.

It is a matter of exploring things in depth, of going deeper, of discovering. There is an abiding truth in the nature or essence of things, which goes beyond the material. Hildebrand avoids the prejudice that immediate data are mere subjective impressions. Truth exists and can be known. Therefore, for Hildebrand it is absurd to distrust that there can be a truth that is given to us. Those who distrust are those who end up reducing everything to material explanations, beauty to a contraction of the viscera and love to a sexual instinct. This, for Hildebrand, is a glaring error that consists in identifying the object with something related to the person by a causal nexus.[10]

It is noteworthy that in the 21st century, in the midst of a supposedly post-metaphysical era in which, since Kant, the category of cause has been called into question for everything that is not the physical world, the materialisms in which consumerisms, hedonisms and the totalitarianism of welfare and infocracy are rooted owe their anthropological reductions to this notion of which they take all its connotations for granted.[11] As Han has stated, there is a need for a pedagogy of the gaze.[12] It is not that phenomenology consists in describing the universe as it is given to us by naive experience, but that it consists in learning to take reality seriously and to separate what is given to us in experience from the opinions that man elaborates as soon as he begins to reason, compare, or listen to theories. It is therefore essential to purify our image of the world in order to attain this prior knowledge of our contact with being. It is necessary to set aside the partiality of human experience, which is often biased by our pragmatic access to being.[13] The given is not the sensations of empiricism, nor is it what is admitted by all.[14] The "given" is a prise of conscience, a realisation, just as those who formulated the principle of non-contradiction or the weight of the heart in man, which can be seen in Saint Augustine, realised it.[15]

[10] Ibidem, 17.

[11] Fernando Inciarte, Alejandro Llano, *Metafísica tras el final de la metafísica* (Madrid: Cristiandad, 2006), 54.

[12] Han, *La sociedad del cansancio*, 49–57.

[13] Jacques Maritain, *Fronteras de la poesía*, transl. Juan Arquímedes González (Buenos Aires: La espiga de Oro, 1945), 45.

[14] Hildebrand, *Ética*, 27.

[15] Ibidem, 23.

In this line we discover that in order to emerge from anonymity and construct a philosophy of the person there is a whole world of inter-subjective relations that "we realise" are necessary for the growth of the person and that their truth goes beyond a mere mathematical functioning. Excellence in this area of the person cannot be programmed because the uniqueness of each person is evident to begin with. That every inter-subjective link or relationship leaves an impression on me and/or has a certain call to remain is also something that is given to us as self-evident. "No man is an island" was the title of a poem by John Donne in which he expressed that man is not independent of the rest.[16] The digitalisation of inter-subjective relations, to the extent that pedagogical techniques such as flipped classrooms or contact applications have been developed around it, does not mean that people are no longer affected and constituted in part by others, but that they are constituted in a "different way," perhaps less human or incompletely. It is a fact that adolescents informed by social networks increasingly have problems with peer relationships and develop diseases and addictions that are caused by online abuse.

The most immediate, direct and real access we have to the person is that of the heart. The human being is a being who feels the values of things and people. The affective sphere plays an important role in grasping reality. Hildebrand distinguishes between "seeing" and "feeling" value in the intuitive grasp of value as a gradual distinction depending on the depth of intuition. It is different how the young man progresses towards charity because he "sees" value from how the saint progresses who "feels" value. The virtues have, therefore, a direct relationship with what it is to "feel the value."[17]

The person is thus presented to us not as an enlightened citizen, a potential consumer or a stream of consciousness subject to the influence of a certain ideology. The person is presented to us as a complex element and microcosm that does not function like a puzzle that always puts its pieces together in the same way. The anthropological totalitarianisms of Freudian, Nietzschean and Marxist

[16] John Donne, *Meditaciones en tiempos de crisis*, transl. Ascensión Cuesta (Barcelona: Ariel, 2012), 85.

[17] Dietrich von Hildebrand, *El corazón: un análisis de la afectividad humana y divina*, transl. Juan Manuel Burgos (Madrid: Palabra, 2009), 33.

suspicion, indebted to a rationalism that wants to explain everything, reduce personal reality to an easily predictable cog.[18]

RESEARCH AND RESULTS
Anthropology from the Person

Since this is the philosophical method that will allow us to approach personal reality, we must ask ourselves about the conception of the human in the last decades of philosophy. The death of man promulgated by Foucault has a clearly inhuman and pessimistic origin. Sartre's man as a useless passion, Camus' Sisyphus, Freud's neurotic, for whom we all are in a certain way neurotic, Nietzsche's superman and the subman and rebel man of the different versions of Marxism have left the scorched earth ready for the birth of the transhuman man, devoid of personality and who, therefore, cannot be called a person.[19] The digital ghost, the user profile, the politically and legally accepted suicide, the worker with clear symptoms of burnout, the man-thing cannot be called a person because he cannot hear beyond the echoes of the various connections his being himself. The world is a non-world, a scene of availability for consumption and exploitation and not something unavailable, as H. Rosa has underlined.[20] In view of this rather harrowing panorama with certain tinges of anthropological apocalypse, what possibilities do we have to speak of the person with credibility? Where can we find the basis for grounding the human in the notion of personhood? Following Hildebrand's philosophical method, we can venture to think of the person as a "world unto itself."[21]

With Hildebrand, we have to resort to Aristotle's classical distinction between substance and accident within the real world. Hildebrand regards the human person as substance, which according to its constitutive characteristic is that which exists and subsists in itself and by itself. Secondly, there are the

[18] Herbert Marcuse, *El hombre unidimensional: ensayo sobre la ideología de la sociedad industrial avanzada*, transl. Antonio Elorza (Barcelona: Ariel, 1972).

[19] Byung-Chul Han, *En el enjambre*, transl. Raúl Gabás (Barcelona: Herder, 2014), 33.

[20] Hartmut Rosa, *Lo indisponible*, transl. Alexis Gros (Barcelona: Herder, 2020), 42.

[21] Rogelio Rovira, *Los tres centros espirituales de la persona: introducción a la filosofía de Dietrich von Hildebrand* (Madrid: Fundación Emmanuel Mounier, 2006), 23–24.

accidents of the person such as height, colour, weight and experiences or acts. All these accidents are but in substance, which is the proper thing of accidents, so that the person as substance is the properly real being.

Doesn't that sound a bit old-fashioned? Certainly, substance in Hildebrand has echoes of the most modern existential hermeneutics. Persons are substances "as fully meaningful translucent being, that the difference between person and non-person is the most profound there is in the realm of being in general, with the exception of the difference between infinite being and finite being."[22] Note that the person is the only finite being that can actively consummate the gesture of being, it is a being "possessing" itself. The only being that is not only causally related to other entities, but that "possesses" other entities cognitively from top to bottom, so to speak, and thus takes part in all other entities in a completely new intentional way.[23]

The substantial being of the person refers to the intimacy that the person possesses. This sphere is respected and understood nowadays to such an extent that the privacy of internet users is guarded by law with great zeal and responsibility. The individual is therefore far removed from being considered as a mere part of a whole, since his or her privacy is ultimately incommunicable. Hildebrand states: "The human being fully participates in that general dignity of personal substances, by virtue of which he represents the supreme form of the substantial, since in them the character of the individual and of the *world for oneself* find their supreme and prototypical expression."[24]

In Han's so-called *transparency society*, the fact of privacy is highlighted by the need for a supposed surveillance of the rights to anonymity and privacy. But, due to the lack of reflection on the value of the person, this supposed intimacy ends up referring to a transparency in which nothing is singular, and everything has a price. Google and social networks are not spaces of freedom but Bentham's great panopticon, where the watchman can observe all the prisoners in secret. The transparent customer is the new inhabitant of this digital panopticon, where there is no community but accumulations of egos incapable of common, political action, of a we. Consumers no longer constitute an outside those questions the

[22] Ibidem, 29–31.

[23] Dietrich von Hildebrand, "Individuum und Gemeinschaft," *Der christiliche Standestaat* 1934, no. 50, in: Rogelio, *Los tres centros*, 79.

[24] Rovira, *Los tres centros*, 80.

systemic interior. Surveillance is not carried out as an attack on freedom. Rather, each one voluntarily surrenders himself, undressing and exposing himself, to the panoptic gaze. The inhabitant of the digital panopticon is both victim and actor.[25]

It is curious to highlight the contradictions between a digital regime and the yearnings of the human. While society is transparent, there are still attempts to guarantee a necessary disconnection so that the person can live in intimacy and selfhood. In Spain there is a Royal Decree Law (28/2020) that regulates the right to digital disconnection of workers and guarantees workers' rest, although, in general, few people are aware of it and exercise it.

Transcendence, both cognitive, volitional, and affective, is inherent to human subsistence. For Hildebrand, as for Marcel or Buber, what is characteristic of the human being as a person is that he or she is related to other human beings and to God.[26] Man grows in being to the extent that his relationships grow in intensity and truth. this is how our personality becomes more authentic. How is this possible in the positive society of exposure and evidence, of acceleration and information, of control and porn in the sense used by B. C. Han?[27] According to Hildebrand, through the notion of value and importance.

Personality Building: the Concept of Value and the Category of Importance

The human being is called to grow as a human being discovers within himself the purpose of developing his personality. There are two components to this development. The first is a gift of our nature which is the knowing, willing, and loving faculties of the mind, will and heart.[28] The second is the organic connection with the world of truth and values, their perception and response to them.[29]

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[25] Byung-Chul Han, *La sociedad de la transparencia*, transl. Raúl Gabás (Barcelona: Herder, 2013).

[26] Martin Buber, *Yo y tú*, transl. Carlos Díaz (Madrid: Caparrós, 1993); Gabriel Marcel, *Ser y Tener*, transl. Ana María Sánchez (Madrid: Caparrós, 1996).

[27] Byung-Chul Han, *La agonía del eros*, transl. Raúl Gabás (Barcelona: Herder, 2013), 67.

[28] José J. Marcos, *Afectividad y vida moral cristiana según Dietrich von Hildebrand. Un estudio sobre el papel que desempeña la afectividad en la edificación de una autentica personalidad moral cristiana* (Roma: EDUSC, 2007), 122–124.

[29] Hildebrand, *Ética*, 83.

As far as the notion of value is concerned, it should be emphasised that the construction of the human personality is something constitutive of being a person and this has to do with perceiving values and responding to them since man is ordered to the world of values. For Hildebrand the concept of value is what is important in itself. It is not an invented concept or a product of culture. He explains in his *Ethics* that it is a concept that we presuppose for absolutely everything because it is self-evident. That is why values demand an adequate response. "This demand is addressed to us in a sovereign, non-abusive way. It speaks to us from above, at a respectful distance, with the force of objectivity."[30] For Hildebrand, this call that demands a response on the part of values is in a certain sense the basis of the dignity of the person. Morally good action will therefore consist in responding to moral values in an appropriate way. However, beyond morality, the perception of values shows a redoubt of spirituality in man and, therefore, an apex of singularity, uniqueness and personality that cannot be reduced and from which an ethics and a metaphysics of the person can be understood.

To further specify the essence of value, Hildebrand turns to the category of "importance." He examines what is important for the person from different points of view. Hildebrand speaks of three levels of importance: the importance of the subjectively satisfying, the importance of the good for the person, and what is important in itself, which is what he calls value.[31]

He says that different categories of importance can motivate our will and our affective responses. The objects, actions, and things we perceive can contain a point of importance that move us in some direction. He gives the example that we are rarely indifferent to a compliment we receive, but we are indifferent to being told two and two is four. Praise stands out by presenting itself with the character of a *bonum*, it presents itself as a pleasant good. This praise is subjectively important, because a spectator of the event does not perceive this pleasant *bonum*. But if on the other hand we witness an act of generosity as an act of forgiveness, an act that does not leave one indifferent like watching someone hit a ball, that act shines as something valuable. That generous act is intrinsically important. That is to say, value possesses its importance regardless of whether it

[30] Ibidem, 69.

[31] Ibidem, 42.

pleases me subjectively. On the other hand, value, that which is important in itself, demands a response from us that involves, in a way, a going out of ourselves, a certain "commitment." Of course, it depends on the kind of value. But its being calls for a response by which we will be bound to that value in some way. The subjectively satisfying calls or attracts, but we know perfectly well that a response is not necessary. It does not acquire a binding character to anything that is important in itself. One could say that it does not invite a relationship, a bond. All this translates into the surrender of the person. For the one who responds enthusiastically to a contemplated heroic act, in some way binds himself to that value in a personal way.[32] The response to that value has a character of dedication to the value that shines with its own light. On the other hand, interest in something subjectively satisfying reveals more of a turning in on oneself than a surrender. In this respect, the well-known and admired case of the young Spaniard Ignacio Echevarría comes to mind. In 2017, faced with a jihadist attack in London, he put aside the possibility of fleeing to defend, at the cost of his life, by skateboarding (he was av great skateboarder) the pedestrians who were being stabbed. The experience of value and good in the consumer society is sometimes illuminated by heroes of the human.

In the distinction between the important in itself and the subjectively important, it becomes clear how the first value calls man to grow by means of a going out of himself by linking or relating to that objective radiance of the transcendent which is value. In contrast, the subjectively important does not have this capacity to link itself to the person. Hildebrand states that: "The emotion we experience when witnessing a noble moral action or capturing the beauty of a starry sky essentially presupposes the awareness that the importance of the object is in no way dependent on the delight it may cause in us."[33]

In order to realise an ethics of values that is rooted in the conception of the person that we have so far presented, it is necessary to know that Hildebrand distinguishes between ontological values (will, intelligence) and qualitative values (moral, intellectual, and aesthetic). We will focus on the moral qualitative values as they are the ones that interest us. Ontological values are immanent to the person whereas moral value becomes real in the person through a free attitude of

[32] Max Scheler, *Etica: Nuevo Ensayo de fundamentación de un personalismo ético I*, transl. Hilario Rodríguez Sanz (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1941), 151–156.

[33] Hildebrand, *Ética*, 53.

the person.[34] Therefore, moral values transcend the being who carries them. With moral values one can speak of a "relationship" between them and the subject, but not with ontological values, since they are immanent to the being. This "relationship" is with the eternal, with the transcendent.

Within the qualitative values, there are morally relevant and non-morally relevant values. We perceive in some values that the response to them carries moral value, something that, for example, does not necessarily occur in aesthetic values. Therefore, we perceive in a morally relevant value the value and its moral relevance and then the moral value of the response to that value.[35] It is a twofold response, the one to the value and the one to the moral relevance. Morally relevant values are those in which one simultaneously perceives the value itself and its moral relevance, and then, by virtue and from it, the moral value of the response to it. Thus, in responding to a morally relevant value, we do so both—if we respond appropriately—to the value and to its moral relevance.[36]

For an elaboration of an ethics of the person it is interesting to consider the response to moral value. This response is demanded by value, a cry from the eternal that cries out for our attachment to it. It is the way of constructing the personality by linking our existence, our being to the goodness of the transcendent manifested in moral values. Hildebrand states: "We yield ourselves to what is important in itself, we allow ourselves to be governed by them, we surrender ourselves to their logos."[37] In the same way that one surrenders to the logos of a moral value and builds a path of relationship, one can respond inadequately to moral values and deconstruct, so to speak, a true path. It is in this attitude that moral evil resides. Hildebrand surpasses Scheler in his explanation of morally evil action since the latter explained it as the choice of a lower value to the detriment of a higher one. Hildebrand states:

> The person who responds truly or adequately to value, on the other hand, gives himself to it, goes out of himself, out of his own interests; he transcends himself. In responding to value, the person transcends the immanence of teleology and the immanence of egocentrism. In surrendering to value, we allow ourselves to be

[34] Ibidem, 44.

[35] Ibidem, 132–135 and 137.

[36] Ibidem, 138–141.

[37] Ibidem, 138–141.

> penetrated by it, we unite with it, we participate in it in a new and superior way to that which occurs in the knowledge of value, and also to that which occurs in being affected by it. In this transcendence the person shows a unique and essential capacity. It is the actualisation of a superior mode of freedom, spirituality, and intentionality. Moreover, it is precisely this capacity for transcendence, together with that which occurs in the cognitive sphere, that is the most essential and profound aspect of the person.[38]

The relation of man to "value," to which Hildebrand gives so much weight, brings out this image of the construction of a personality on the basis of a response to values that somehow engages in a commitment to them. The human being, as he responds to these values, is linked to them and, therefore, in this linkage they shape him. They make him grow as a person, insofar as he establishes a relationship with them.

Dialectic of the Broken Heart

Now, if the person is capable of perceiving value and discovering himself as a world for himself and, therefore, of escaping from the dynamics of consumption, self-exploration, and performance to establish a relationship with what is fully human in surrender and contemplation[39], why in fact does this not happen? Why does the dissolution of postmodernity impregnate the public and private, personal, and social spheres with disvalues such as intolerance, utilitarianism, or lack of critical thinking? Interesting facts in this regard are that 1 in 6 Christians are persecuted today, that wedding rings are rented in Vegas and that 7% of Americans think that chocolate milkshakes come from brown cows.

In Hildebrand's thinking, a person's longing starts from the heart as the centre of volition, intellection and feeling in the sense explained above.[40] But the society of the 21st century is a society with a wounded, if not broken heart and

[38] Ibidem, 194.

[39] Byung-Chul Han, *La salvación de lo bello*, transl. Alberto Ciria (Barcelona: Herder, 2018), 77.

[40] Hildebrand, *El Corazón*, 56.

therefore many are unable or illiterate to grasp and realize value.[41] Unique to Hildebrand is the claim for the intentional and meaningful character of affective responses, equating them with theoretical and volitional ones. In the philosophical tradition, the intentional character of the heart has often been denied and confused with the passions and appetites and, therefore, with the irrational part of man, but this is not the case. Affective responses follow intentional experiences that Hildebrand calls "the affected self" and play a fundamental role in morality. These responses differ from purely volitional ones mainly in three ways.[42] The object of this response is usually real. To rejoice in something that already is. In these responses there is an affective fullness that is not present in volition.

This sensitivity from which this response springs has been interfered with by phenomena such as the Freudian unconscious, the lack of memory that installs dataism and the shift in man from action to typing. The heart of the person is a wounded heart, a prey to the dialectic of rupture that can either bring about a beginning of openness or total closure. For Hildebrand, the heart can be educated to have a greater capacity to grasp, although the being affected always has a certain character of gift.[43] Subsequently, the responses that emerge from the heart can be sanctioned or disallowed so that they can be integrated and perform the function of a motor that leads us in the right direction.

It has become clear that for Hildebrand there are three spiritual centres in the person: intellect, will and heart, which are destined to co-operate with each other and to fertilise each other. The failure to give the heart a status analogous to the intellect and the will is due to the fact that "affectivity is reductively identified with affective experiences of a lower type."[44] This is a mistake. Already Aristotle, without paying any attention to the affective sphere of man, affirmed that happiness is the supreme good that gives reason for all other goods. It is evident that happiness has its place in the affective sphere since it is felt; a happiness that is merely thought or willed is not true happiness. While the understanding and the will reveal that man performs acts, the affectivity reveals that man lives

[41] Byung-Chul Han, *Muerte y alteridad*, transl. Alberto Ciria (Barcelona: Herder, 2019), 45.

[42] Hildebrand, *Ética*, 190–210.

[43] Hildebrand, *El Corazón*, 56.

[44] Ibidem, 36.

something. The heart is the power of man that reveals the path man chooses. The role of philosophy in this sense would be that of a certain fundamental cardiology of the human, that of the pedagogue who teaches and shows the awakening, the health and the functioning of the heart.

CONCLUSIONS
Dimensions of the Destiny of the Human

According to Hildebrand's thinking, we can conclude that it is just as important to expose the person to fertile winds so that he or she can discover values as it is to be able to respond in a second moment, thus marking the direction of the person. We mean that the person conceived as a world for himself and a sentient heart that longs for value is the master of his freedom. Certainly, there are activities such as the satisfaction of certain impulses, which can be initiated by purely animal spontaneity without presupposing any intervention of our reason or will. In these cases, only a voluntary submission to the impulse or cooperation with our animal spontaneity is necessary. But, of course, our will can also, in the same way, command or reject these activities. It even has the task of controlling and regulating the satisfaction of these impulses. Normally, man guides them with his will and does not allow himself to be ruled exclusively by animal spontaneity. Education expressly aims at this control, which still does not occur in young children. I am the master of my actions; therefore, I can build myself with them. My actions lead me in one direction or another. That is why one must have an exercised will. Only the one who has an exercised will is free because he can be master of himself, and only the one who is master of himself can give himself to something. The Zarathustra academies that took place throughout Europe at the beginning of the 20th century are well known. Inspired by Dionysian values, they sought to educate young people in the freedom of impulses without any hindrance. None of these academies lasted more than five years, with high suicide rates. Freedom is built, educated, and recognised from the heart and in the face of values. Education and the exercise of the will are necessary to be able to choose the good in itself and to be able to respond properly to the value that speaks to us. To be able to respond to the higher good that is, at times, above my personal good.

Hildebrand states that "the indirect influence we exert on our affective responses is to prepare the soil in our soul where the right responses can spontaneously sprout and not the wrong ones."[45] The intelligence and the will work in pursuit of my soul so that the right responses can sprout, but there are other factors as well. It is obvious that we have a natural „endowment" and that we cannot give it to ourselves. That is beyond our reach. "A person's free attitudes to different experiences are shaped by the way he or she assimilates them."[46] We have control over these elements with our freedom, although we often do not use it, but let ourselves be carried away by our spontaneous reactions, or by what the social norm dictates that we should do. Beyond the power to sanction or disallow, freedom sometimes has a power of "decisive intervention." "Of this kind was the kiss that Saint Francis of Assisi gave to a leper; a gesture where he not only overcame disgust, but also broke the chain that bound him to a certain set of goods."[47]

There is an immense range of situations in which to make use of freedom, in order to indirectly give life to spiritual feelings and not to let non-spiritual feelings grow. It is necessary to emphasise the intentionality of this movement of freedom by sanctioning, otherwise we could be falling into habit. Where one does not respond to a value and does not seek to foster a true attitude, one may be falling into acting out of habit, where one acts either out of laziness or fear, but not with the intention of responding to the value.[48]

The person as a world for oneself opens the heart to listen to the call of value in order to understand the essence of being a person by discovering what is important in oneself.

The task of philosophy would be to encourage the heart of the person and to constantly rediscover its value and the disruptive elements that prevent it from being so. We would not be far from Nietzsche's philosophising with a hammer. Only that, instead of destroying, we would use it to shape.

[45] Ibidem, 55.

[46] Hildebrand, *Ética*, 397.

[47] Ibidem, 333.

[48] Dietrich von Hildebrand, *La esencia del amor*, transl. Juan Cruz Cruz, José Luis del Brco (Pamplona: Eunsa, 1998), 388–389.

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Streszczenie

Wartość i znaczenie. Na rzecz etyki i metafizyki osoby

W celu wypracowania antropologii osoby, w artykule odwołuję się do analizy ludzkiej osoby, pojęcia wartości i znaczenia przeprowadzonej przez Dietricha von Hildebranda. Na podstawie metody fenomenologicznej i realizmu filozoficznego Hildebrand chce odnowić Arystotelesowskie pojęcie osoby, by wyrazić jej wyjątkowość oraz możliwość ujęcia wartości i potraktować to jako drogę do rozwiązania obecnego kryzysu wartości i człowieczeństwa, jak to ujmują tacy filozofowie, jak Byung Chul Han czy Günther Anders.

Słowa kluczowe: Dietrich von Hildebrand, wartość, znaczenie, osoba, osobowość

Zusammenfassung

Wert und Bedeutung. Zugunsten der Ethik und Metaphysik der Person

Um die Anthropologie der Person zu entwickeln, beziehe ich mich in dem Artikel auf die von Dietrich von Hildebrand durchgeführte Analyse der menschlichen Person sowie auf seinen Begriff von Wert und Bedeutung. Auf der Grundlage phänomenologischer Methode und des philosophischen Realismus will Hildebrand den aristotelischen Begriff der Person erneuern, um seine Einzigartigkeit und die Möglichkeit, Werte zu erfassen, auszudrücken und ihn als einen Weg zur Lösung der gegenwärtigen Werte- und Menschheitskrise zu betrachten, wie es solche Philosophen wie Byung Chul Han und Günther Anders auffassen.

Schlüsselwörter: Dietrich von Hildebrand, Wert, Bedeutung, Person, Persönlichkeit

Ins Deutsche übersetzt von Anna Pastuszka

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