

## **AFFIRMATION OF HUMANITY BASED ON POSITIVE EDUCATION IN MODESTY ACCORDING TO POPE JOHN PAUL II'S TEACHING**

### Abstract

This article focuses on the complex but unique sense of shame, which is closely associated with the issue of the dignity of the human person. Shame as well as human personality permeate one's whole being and are inseparably linked to the body. In contrast to original happiness that man experienced before the Fall, there is the historical experience of shame. The virtue of shame provokes fear for man's own "self" and risk making him an object for use. Since the experience of fear leads to lust which consequently affects the collapse of social communion, the absorption of shame by love is required. In fact, even after the experience of the First Sin, an inextricably intertwined human body and personality leave a room to the affirmation of man's personality. This very fact indicates to the duty of promoting the heart-led education, taking into account the integrity and dignity of human person as a subject as well as his intimacy and the body, especially mastery of shamelessness, feeling of decency and beauty of art as well as decent clothing. All of this is required to regain original happiness of the first man that springs from his self-knowledge and unity with other people.

Key words: *education, shame, John Paul II, love.*

### Introduction

The original and inexhaustible divine love, which was breathed into man as the breath of life, is the source of the fundamental values of the modern man's upbringing. The concept of shame<sup>1</sup> makes an important difference between the primordially and the historicity that we know.

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<sup>1</sup> Referring to the literature in the Croatian language used in this paper and the Croatian translation of the Bible published by *Kršćanska sadašnjost*, the words shame (*stid*) and disgrace (*sram*) are synonyms, as well as their derivatives. Thus, deeper linguistic analysis of these concepts is not provided. More about the meaning of *sram* and *stid* in

This concept clearly expresses what the original man had and the historical man lost. However, it is important to point out that the human personality is indivisible from the human body which is the ground for communication and unity of a man and a woman opening a way to an everlasting affirmation of the human personality. That is why contemporary man desperately needs shame, as a condition *sine qua non* for one's self-awareness and subjectivity, but also for a happy and fulfilled life and to construct social reality. Although, shame reveals and warns about the consequences of the First Sin which are a constant reminder of man's fall, at the same time, it is a positive form of self-defence for the person protecting his body and personality. Thus, the paper deals with the issue of shame taking into account this view. This understanding is in line with the documents of the Second Vatican Council, fruitful philosophical, ethical and anthropological researches of Karol Wojtyła, but also the follow-up of the Synods of Bishops on Evangelization (1974) and Catechesis (1977). Certainly, there was reference to John Paul II's catecheses on the General Audiences that were held on Wednesday from the beginning of his pontificate, and particularly from 5 September 1979 to 29 October 1980, entitled "*Male and female he created them*" and also his "*Letter to Families*" from 1994, on the occasion of the International Year of the Family.

Referring to these documents, the first part of this scientific work deals with the anthropological consequences of fallen man's feeling of shame. Shame is a boundary experience of original eternity and fallen historicity. It denotes a fundamental change of man's identity when "the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked" (Gen 3:7). It is important to point out that fallen, historical reality represents the history as we know, and refers to the state of fallen man, marked by sin and death.

The second and main part of the article focuses on the important virtues that should not be disregarded in the process of education of contemporary man. They are required for the perspective of positive education in modesty, and should be taken as the Good news for the renewal of culture. Though it continually warns about the consequences of sin, the positive aspect of shame as a remedy for man's inner tensions, for the disunity between man and God, the interpersonal disunity, conflict between man and the created world, and finally remedy for man's mortality. In this context, the shame paves the way to genuine love, to personal happiness and social interaction and is particularly important for decent clothing and art.

Finally, in the last part of the article we try to summarize the key issues of positive education in modesty.

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the Croatian language, in: G. Črpić, K. Novak, (*Be*)sramna kultura, Crkva u svijetu, 51 (2016) 3, p. 379-395.

## 1. Feeling of shame as a boundary experience (Gen 3:7)

The importance of original nakedness and lack of shame are even more evident if we take into account the state in which the historical man<sup>2</sup> found himself after the First sin breaking the primordial covenant with his Creator. This entirely new situation is witnessed by words: "Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths" (Gen 3:7). The experience of shame is the consequence of their deception and vain expectation to "become like God."<sup>3</sup> Contrary to it, a man becomes aware of the need to hide external and visible masculinity or femininity in his inner self. Due to this fact, we can talk about the shame of the body that is associated with sexual shame. It is obvious that it is a matter of fear or anxiety that occurs in the inner man, and all due to his nakedness. In addition to the shame of the body there is also the shame of experience. As such, shame encompasses other dimensions of man's intimacy such as thoughts, feelings, and intentions. This shame reflects the intention of hiding those reactions and experiences which reveal the body as an object for use<sup>4</sup>. Since the person is human being, in addition to his physical, outward appearance he also possesses inner capacity for true intimacy,<sup>5</sup> and when it comes to the experience of sexual shame, there is a radical change in man's experiencing, understanding, and thus behaviour. This is the ground for Pope's understanding of the experience of shame, i.e. the original lack of shame and the state of original innocence transforms

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<sup>2</sup> Original identity and human dignity in the works of John Paul II refer to original man created out of God's love and the historical man after the first sin.

<sup>3</sup> Such interpretation of shame refers to a subject that reveals the nakedness of his own 'self' and is in line with the definition taken from psychiatric manual of Kaplan, Sadock and Grebb: "Shame is a failure to achieve his own self-expectations." Quoted from: S. Tognacci, *Psychology of Shame: Major Psychological and Cultural Aspects*, Crkva u svijetu, 51 (2016) 3, p. 457. Quoted in references: H. Kaplan - B. Sadock - J. Grebb, *Psichiatria*, Manuale di scienze del comportamento e psichiatria clinica, Centro Scientifico Internazionale, Torino, 1995-97, p. 303.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. K. Wojtyła, (Love and Responsibility), *Ljubav i odgovornost*, Verbum, Split, 2009, p. 189. (We especially refer to the relevant chapter on *Metaphysics of Shame* (p. 174-195), furtherly cited by the title and page number.) This view of Pope John Paul II on the experience of shame is in line with the most relevant personalistic definitions of shame, on which Šimun Bilokapić commented: "However formulated and whatever they emphasize, all definitions clearly indicate to the protective function of shame referring to the whole person. Not only it protects sexual intimacy but also personal intimacy as well as the mystery and love of the person. According to personalistic thought, shame is a form of self-defense within the social sphere, protection of an individual and his values against a general public sphere, the protection of personal secrets against profanation and vulgarization, and at the same time, it includes the preservation and promotion of all mentioned aspects. Š. Bilokapić, *Značenje i funkcija stida iz perspektive moralne teologije*, Crkva u svijetu, 51 (2016) 3, p. 429-430.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 175.

to from the state of human sinfulness as a threshold or a boundary experience<sup>6</sup> of historical man. Crossing over this threshold, a man with God, enters into history, but as the historical man who sins against himself and others<sup>7</sup>, thus a return to the beginning, to the same boundary experience should be based on theological knowledge. This is necessary for man if he tends to obtain his original innocence, love, mercy and justice of God's children "within God's power", and the final celebration that had been already prepared for him in eternity, "in God".

### 1.1. Shame as specific human dimension

Although it occurs along with the first sin, it is important to point out that the discovery of shame is not novelty or something that the human eyes have overlooked so far. Conversely, shame brings a limitation in seeing with the eyes of the body. The original man was endowed by seeing through the mystery of creation<sup>8</sup> with the eyes of God. For him, such vision was a source of self-knowledge and original happiness. Instead of the first man's original innocence and happiness in observing another being as he is, the experience of the historical man of lust which according to the Yahwist narrative has "concupiscent" character brings the difficulty in identifying the meaning of his own body and breaking his spiritual and physical unity. Lust attacks human freedom and threatens to the destruction of his personal subjectivity. Therefore, the inherent feeling of shame is an everlasting and almost an urgent warning. All this brings unrest to the male-female relationships as well as to the relationships with other living beings (animalia), since the man ceased to be above the world of living creatures and became susceptible to instincts. In addition, shame urges man to hide these threatened values that allowed his opening to the other person, in his inner being<sup>9</sup>. However, the gift of these values represents the key for self-knowledge. So, man due to imbalance between the exterior and his own intimacy, falls into a vicious circle, i.e. conflict between aspiration towards personal subjectivity and self-giving aimed at his self-realization, and adversely aspiration towards "hiding" in his own inner being. In this way, his role in the world as the subject, sociability, mutual reciprocity between men and women and his relationship

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<sup>6</sup> (The Theology of the Body) *Teologija tijela*, 11/4; 19/3.

<sup>7</sup> Analyzing the phenomenon of shame on the basis of socio-political contract Stipe Buzar claims: "Shame is morally appropriate only when it is associated with guilt, i.e. feeling of shame is appropriate only when an individual is blameworthy. The shame is in fact presented as an emotion, but also as the individual's attitude towards environment, other people, 'self', etc. *Broken Contract. An Ethical Inquiry into Shame*, Crkva u svijetu, 51 (2016) 3, p. 492.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 13/1.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 28/2-6.

with the world as well as with the Creator is violated. All of these difficulties and dangers that burden man and humanity should be in the focus of each individual's education and upbringing.

### 1.2. Fear for the subject's own "self"

The experience of shame encroaches on the original man-woman relationship and unity as well as the existential communion with the Creator. The misuse of freedom has resulted in the tragic tension and confrontation: man against God, the flesh against the spirit, instincts against reason and will. This determines the "time and space" of shame.<sup>10</sup> However, the shattered relationships are rooted in a lack of self-mastery. In fact, due to his self-determination gifted by the Creator, the man is the only subject in the created world. Pope John Paul II claims that "person has authority over the self (*sui iuris*)," and that "no one else, except God the Creator, has the right of ownership. The man has a property in his own person and has the power of self-determination, so no one can distort the integrity of the man. No one can violate man's possession of self, except he willingly opt for giving himself out of love. This *objective inalienability (incommunicability)* (*alteri incommunicabilitas*), as well as the *inviolability of the man is clearly expressed through the experience of sexual shame*. The experience of shame is a natural echo of who the man is<sup>11</sup>. And, he is the subject and his body, made in the image of God, reveals sacramentality of creation: male and female as a visible sign.

The man's personality and his role of the subject are closely associated with his body. Therefore, the awareness of a possible misuse of the body that would reduce the other to an object, results in shame relative to the other sex and hiding their visible masculinity or femininity. In this regard, John Paul II furtherly argues that: "In shame, the human being experiences fear with regard to his 'second self, (e.g. woman before man) and this is substantially fear for his own 'self'. Feeling shame, the human being almost instinctively manifests the need of affirmation and acceptance of this "self," according to his true value. He experiences shame in his inner self and externally before the "other."<sup>12</sup> The man's discovery of "nakedness"(Gen 3:9-10), leads to the awareness that he is deprived of the participation in the gift of God and His love by which he could nourish his active subjectivity and avoid any experience of depersonalization. So, the loss of the supernatural and preternatural endowments leads to the loss of natural gifts that are inherent to the humanity as the image of God, but also as the source of sociability.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Š. Bilokapić, *Značenje i funkcija stida*, p. 432.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 178.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 12/1.

### 1.3. Lust as the collapse of the original social communion

Original knowledge that the man's body is the sign of the image of God distinguished him from all other living beings and was the guarantee of his ruling over the material world as well as maintaining its balance. The man is the only being created for his own sake and for the eternity "in God" so that all other living beings are subjected to him and that can serve him in time. From the experience of fear for his own 'self' and his identity flows regret for original unity, but also difficulty in achieving it in the new historical conditions. It is obvious that the shame is deeply rooted in the dimension of man's solitude and his own 'self', but also in the mutual personal relationship of man and woman. Consequently, shame penetrates the social-world system, and John Paul II rightly defines it as "cosmic shame".<sup>13</sup> Finally, since the self-consciousness of his own personality springs from the discovery of other being like him, so shame is social embarrassment which requires someone else before whom a man wants to hide and cover his body.

It is an indisputable fact that shame occurs in human hearts along with the lust of the flesh. Since the body is a source of the original happiness of man's unity as male and female, shame radically affects their mutual relationship. It makes man and woman to hide their nakedness from each other, i.e. their sexual differences. In this way, it is an obstacle to their mutual self-giving, mutual donation and acceptance. The new situation burdens simplicity and purity of their relationship. Such burdened sexuality became an obstacle and a source of mutual confrontation instead of being a call for the full subjectivity of man and woman in their interpersonal communion. Moreover, it distorted the completion of the image of God in man as *communio personarum* – the communion that man and woman were to constitute, becoming "one flesh".<sup>14</sup> Thus, shame deprives man and humanity of participation in the original creative love, making the collapse of original communion.<sup>15</sup> St. John defines this radical change as the three forms of lust: lust of the flesh, of the eyes and the pride of life (1Jn 2:16), which threaten the original acceptance of the human body in his personal truth, and therefore the original sacramental nature of man as the image of God.<sup>16</sup> The collapse of his own "self" creates tension at the social level.

### 1.4. An obscured nuptial meaning of the body and the issue of mortality

In regard to the nuptial meaning of the human body, it primarily means the original self-mastery and ability to express pure love through

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 12/1; 27/1; 27/4.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 29/2-3.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 29/4.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 27/2-3.

mutual self-giving and acceptance. In fact, through this interpersonal communion man becomes a gift fulfilling the deep meaning of his being and his existence. The experience of shame radically changes human moral conscience, and instead of being the source of human happiness it becomes an unrelenting judge. A lack of happiness is associated with the lack of freedom, and consequently, the imbalance in the reciprocal self-giving and acceptance “for the other’s sake”. Moreover, it depersonalizes man, making him an “object for myself”, “an object of attraction and lust” and “of misappropriation of other being” and as such is reduced to the level of the other living beings (*animalia*).<sup>17</sup> In a nutshell, he becomes an object, and a radiant shine of the purity of heart, its original innocence and the perfect ethos of the gift are obscured by the veil of shame. Instead of mutual self-giving in freedom, lust and appropriation of other person dominate, as the first pages of the Bible clearly express God’s saying of the woman, “your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you” (Gen 3:16). The original communion of persons is subjected to concupiscence and threatened by lustful appropriation and possession through mutual unity. Manifested as coercion *sui generis* of the body, concupiscence limits and reduces person’s self-mastery. It also obscures the original beauty of masculinity and femininity as an expression of the spirit.<sup>18</sup> The person is manifested in the original human body, but concupiscence destroys its richness and dignity.

It is to point out that a man, through genuine or fake approach to his body, either stands upright or falls. Thus, in this fact we look for the turning point. As mentioned earlier, mutual self-giving through masculinity and femininity is a fulfilment of human freedom.<sup>19</sup> True freedom is inextricably associated with the inviolability of a subject and a person as well as with the fundamental and essential truths about the man as the image of God. This very inner truth is inscribed in the depths of the human heart as a *communio personarum*, though struggling hard for the balance in giving and receiving of human love. This original relationship of man and woman will remain a permanent ground for confirmation of subjective authenticity and the reciprocity of donation.<sup>20</sup> Since shame comes as the second experience of ‘self, after the discovery of concupiscence it can be viewed positively, as a mechanism which protects from the consequences of lust and helps to uphold the balance of the original innocence. Therefore, it is important to note that the nuptial meaning of the human body is not completely distorted and suffocated by lust, but that it is threatened by incapacity of a mutual self-gift and fulfilment.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 17/3; 32/1.5.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 30/5; 31/3; 32/6.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. E. Vesely, *Ivan Pavao II. za novu kulturu života*, *Obnovljeni život*, 51 (1996) 3, p. 264.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 19/2; 33/4.

However, this very nuptial meaning the body is still the connecting point with man's primordial.

Through the revelation of the mystery of shame, original biblical cycle of knowledge-generation, which is closely associated with the nuptial meaning of the human body, was subjected to the law of suffering and death. The original life that the man received from his Creator becomes a historical, which means that it is bounded with conception, birth and death.<sup>21</sup> Despite his disappointment and inevitable perspective of death, his original life as well as the nuptial meaning of his body, remain the area of confirming his own personal subjectivity and mission by which, the original fullness of the image of God in him as the subject and the person is revealed, opening the perspective of eternity, too. Finally, it is to highlight the positive dimension of shame which opens the door of immortality.

## 2. The heart-led education in modesty

The man becomes aware of a certain value only when it is lost. As long as it is inherent it is thought of as something usual. Once it is lost, man becomes aware of its existential and driving forces. The same happened with the original love, which was manifested through the original gifts as the participation in the divine life. The gifts that the Creator gives to his beloved creature as well as mutual pre-existential self-giving of men and women build the identity of the person but, at the same time, they are focused on fulfilling their mission in the world. Therefore, person's upbringing requires return to the original love which aims at detecting the values of the person capable of self-giving. All this leads to the affirmation of the person, a mature personality, competence for the mission, which is again a call for the participation in love. The Sixth Synod of Bishops on the Family, which was held from 25 September to 26 October 1980 in Rome, dealt with these issues. The Synod emphasized four general tasks for the family as the nucleus of life and mission: forming a community of persons; serving life; participating in the development of society; sharing in the life and mission of the Church. John Paul II refers to it and explains the family role in the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, and later, in the *Letter to Families* in 1994.<sup>22</sup> Taking into account the essential elements of Christian education and the values that it transfers, this letter is rightly called the "rule for a happy Christian family life."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Teologija tijela*, 22/7.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Ivan Pavao II., *Pobudnica Familiaris consortio* (22. 11. 1981.), KS, Zagreb, <sup>2</sup>1997, 17 (hereinafter: FC).

<sup>23</sup> J. Frkin, *Pismo obiteljima pape Ivana Pavla II.*, *Obnovljeni život*, 49 (1994) 6, p. 591.



Furtherly, whether this civilization will be defined as the civilization of love or death depends on the heart-led education in love i.e. education for a truly dignified human life in communion and collaboration.<sup>24</sup> This form of education aims at the flourishing and affirmation of individual's full spiritual potential. It also allows man to accomplish his own humanity i.e. his perfect righteousness and holiness which springs from truth and love.<sup>25</sup> Referring to the importance of man's identity, his 'being' rather than 'having', John Paul II, sums up the role of this form of education in the idea of priority of persons over things, ethics over techniques, spirit over matter, and finally mercy over justice.<sup>26</sup> In this context, referring to the man's origin, the perspective of education in modesty can be found in fostering positive attitudes due to which we can look at ourselves, our loved ones, the society and the world through God's eyes. Thus, the theology of the body promotes education in modesty as its important factor and as the good news for cultural renewal.<sup>27</sup> Hence, this form of education offers the ground for the original happiness of man.

Therefore, education in modesty should be perceived as a cure for man's inner conflict by which he can effectively harmonize his desires, aspirations and reality. In this sense, shame spontaneously safeguards of his own personality, his self-giving and self-esteem. Also, such education is the cure for discord between God and man, since man is existentially dependent on the gift and giving gift to his Creator. Only through reviving this very testimony of gift-giving man, as the bearer of the image of God, can live truly. Furthermore, the affirmation of shame presents the cure for the interpersonal and social conflicts, since it allows an individual to safeguard his/her own intimacy, but also his/her self-giving to someone who will properly evaluate and revive it through the mutual self-giving and receiving. It is important to emphasize that shame is the cure for the disunity between man and all of creation. Today, ecology as a scientific discipline focuses on this issue, giving considerable attention to it. Finally, since shame is the threshold one should cross in order to understand the human origins, it is also the cure for man's mortality. This cure leads to immortality "in God" i.e. the immortality of love. For this reason, shame is inseparable from love that absorbs and distinguishes it existentially and positively.

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Ivan Pavao II., *Pismo obiteljima* (Letter to families), IKA, Zagreb, 1994, 13. An analysis of the civilization of love, life and truth and the civilization of death, hate and lies in the thought of Pope John Paul II, is thoroughly elaborated by J. Stala, *Punina postojanja osobe – civilizacije ljubavi u kontekstu postmoderne*, Crkva u svijetu, 50 (2015) 3, p. 469-477.

<sup>25</sup> J. Stala, *Punina postojanja osobe*, p. 474.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Ivan Pavao II., Enciklika *Redemptor hominis* (4. 3. 1979.), KS, Zagreb, 1997, 16. *Idem*, Enciklika *Evangelium vitae* (25. 3. 1995.), KS, Zagreb, 1995, 98; FC, 8.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. M. Healy, *Muškarci i žene su iz Edena*, p. 37.

## 2.1. Education for the absorption of shame by mature love

We have already pointed out that the shame reactions lead to the protection of the value of the person. The spontaneous need to hide the sexual values inherent in the person is the natural way to the discovery of the value and dignity of the person as such. Therefore, the moment of love is fundamentally constitutive of this effort. Certainly, shame is not an end in itself, but it aims to bring the person into the loving communion of persons through their mutual donation.<sup>28</sup> In this context, we refer to the absorption of shame by love, i.e. the absorption through love and final uniting in it. In such unity of the communion of persons, man and woman are not ashamed of their mutual experience of the values of the human body. If shame is “absorbed” by love it does not mean that it is eliminated or destroyed, on the contrary, shame paves the way to love, and reinforces it. In case of disharmony, a person is in danger of descending or being pushed into the position of an object for sexual use which is contrary to the very nature of the person. It is a kind of active and passive natural form of self-defence for the person against his/her degradation. At the same time, it is the path to personal happiness, since the true love means that the sexual values are subordinated to the value of the person. Thus, love and reducing ‘self’ (actively) or the other person (passively) to a mere object are mutually exclusive.<sup>29</sup> It does not mean that the emotion of love itself gives one the right to physical intimacy. On the contrary, love as an emotional experience even if it is reciprocated, it is not identical with a mature love completed by commitment of the will which implies mutual choice and donation. It is based on a deep affirmation of the persons’ values aiming to their everlasting union in marriage and is clearly oriented towards their parenthood, i.e. maternity and paternity. This mature love completed by commitment of the will is the most valuable good of the person.<sup>30</sup> In this context, John Paul II points out that upbringing and the knowledge of the bodily aspect are required. “Accordingly, every effort must be made to render such knowledge accessible to all married people and also to young adults before marriage, through clear, timely and serious instruction and education given by married couples, doctors and experts. Knowledge must then lead to education in self-control: hence the absolute necessity for the virtue of chastity and for permanent education in it. In the Christian view, chastity by no means signifies rejection of human sexuality or lack of esteem for it: rather it signifies spiritual energy capable of defending love from the perils of selfishness and aggressive-

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. D. Runje, *Stid i Post 2:25-3:21*, Crkva u svijetu, 51 (2016) 3, p. 401; *Metafizika stida*, p. 180.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 182-183.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 187.

ness, and able to advance it towards its full realization.”<sup>31</sup> It is obvious that the absorption of shame by love leads to the original good of man and to seeing of his personal subjectivity with eyes of God, from which flows man’s awareness and happiness. Having this in mind, it is obvious that education in modesty, which encompasses a complex bodily aspect and personality, should be given considerable attention.

## 2.2. Education for mastering shamelessness

Having defined the concept of shame as a healthy reaction within the person directed towards a loving communion of persons, it is also necessary to define its antonym, the concept of shamelessness which is closely associated with it. We distinguish between “physical” and “emotional” shamelessness. Shamelessness denotes a lack of personal, sexual and emotional intimacy.<sup>32</sup> Pope John Paul II defines shamelessness as: “any mode of being or behaviour on the part of a particular person in which the values of sex as such are given such prominence that they obscure the essential value of the person. Consequently, it leads to reducing person to the status of an object for use and joy [...], not as a person-affirming love. “Emotional” shamelessness consists in the rejection of that healthy tendency to be ashamed of reactions and feelings which make another person merely an object of use because of the sexual values belonging to him or her.”<sup>33</sup> Taking into consideration the important fact that shame paves the way to love, shamelessness is just the opposite, since it does not pave the way to a mutual love, but only and exclusively to the enjoyment. All this depersonalizes person, harms his/her dignity and reduces him/her to an object for use. The human body itself is not shameless as well as the reaction of its sensibility. However, the trivialization of its bodily, sexual and emotional aspects consciously, freely and deliberately leads to shamelessness. Taking all into consideration, the issue of shamelessness and the values associated with it should be regarded thoroughly due to their functionality. The basic principle of preserving the dignity of the person and of his/her good always takes precedence over any other functionality, because the man is called to be a subject, not an object.

Sexuality and the expression of nuptial meaning of the body and loving in a bodily way aim not only to childbirth, but also include child-rearing and fostering of his/her human and religious dimensions. Moral education contributes to the divine life and spiritual maturity of man. Based on biblical and theological sources, the vocation of parenthood is clearly and definitely confirmed as being: far from any banality and the sexual degra-

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. FC, 33.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Š. Bilokapić, *Značenje i funkcija stida*, p. 440.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 189-190.

dation aiming to fulfil one's own "benefit" and selfish "enjoyment".<sup>34</sup> Right this presents a threat for modern civilization dominated by favouritism, trivialized intimacy and stimulated voyeurism, while the human personality and the body are exposed and "used" for media spectacle. Agenda for success consists of the primary goals of human life, such as enjoyment and hedonism as well as the need be known and famous. The education for civilized life and love aims to completely opposite goals. Since it safeguards one's own intimacy and that of the other person, it can be called education for mastering shamelessness. Of course, it includes the functional shame impulses which allow proper evaluation and safeguarding of person's intimacy in the sphere of love and sexuality.

### 2.3. Education for decent clothing

As already stated, shame is at the root of interpersonal communication. It upheld a perfect relationship until the man recognized and revealed his nakedness. People become so vulnerable that even a gaze can hurt. In the context of education in modesty and for the sake of preserving the integrity of the person, it is necessary to address the problem of inappropriate clothing. We should bear in mind that the human body, the interpersonal communication and unity have ever made a room for the affirmation of human personality. Clothing is therefore an attempt to reach the inviolability based on the biblical truth: "they were naked and unashamed." In order to establish a genuine balance between the physical nakedness and the communication, according to the Bible, the man made the "apron of fig leaves" (Gen 3:7) as his first cloth, and God made the "coats of skins" and clothed the naked man (Gen 3:21). It is the protection from external danger, the social protection mechanism against the violation of each person's individual dignity and sexual intimacy. Covering his entire body, the "coats of skins" became a part of human identity. It is a visible sign of the divine intervention which improves human dignity dressed in God's cloth.<sup>35</sup> Such divine intervention allows man the existential communication and the interpersonal communion on the path towards the realization of his own original dignity. Therefore, the purpose of clothing is to raise awareness of dignity of one's own inner being, and necessarily the other's respect of it.

When it comes to clothing, shamelessness contributes to deliberate obscuring of the most important value of the person viewed through sexual values, which provokes a reaction as if that person is a mere object

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. I. Fuček, *Prenositi ili priječiti život? Pitanje "naravne" ili "umjetne" kontracepcije*, (Comment, *Familiaris consortio*, 28-35), *Obnovljeni život*, 40 (1985) 1, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. D. Runje, *Stid i Post 2:25-3:21*, p. 405; p. 409-410. Source cited in the footnote: Cf. C. Tomić, *Prapovijest spasenja. Knjiga postanka glava 1-11*, p. 138-139.

for use and an instrument of physical enjoyment, instead of being the subject of love.<sup>36</sup> Referring to it, Pope John Paul II said: "Man is not so perfect being that a look at the other person's body, especially a person of the other sex, just provokes his selfless affection and simple loving."<sup>37</sup> It is important to emphasize that the nakedness itself does not correspond to shamelessness which springs from a negative function of nakedness aimed to depersonalisation of man, the lust revival and possessing the other as an object; shame points to it clearly.<sup>38</sup> Although contemporary fashion is a complex issue, wearing skimpy clothes on a beach or during liturgical celebrations in the Church is not analogous, but today's approach to it is rather problematic. However, neither the entire clothing of the body determines one's morality, nor the reduced coverage indicates to a lack of shame. Without taking into account the context, it is unacceptable and wrong to equate one's skimpy outfit with shamelessness or a fully clothed person with the sense of shame. On the contrary, shame and shamelessness are not determined or defined by one's own nakedness or covering up of the body, but by the way the naked or dressed body is presented, offered or exposed to the attention and look of other people. Shame or shamelessness are determined by the fact whether the naked or dressed body primarily reveal the value of the person, or obscure it emphasizing the body only as an object and its attributes, abstracting from its being the image of God.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the principle of functionality is inseparable from personal dignity, self-respect and prudence.

It is important to emphasize that the educational process should aim at fostering responsibility for safeguarding of the values of the human body through appropriate clothing, far from any uncontrolled exposure to the views of others, but also from a provocative or veiled coverage. An observer should feel personal responsibility for looking at the other with respect avoiding any share in the other person's nakedness; otherwise it is regarded as violence, sin and degradation of the person, except in the context of nuptial meaning of the body. That is why education for decent clothing is an important, positive aspect of education in modesty.

#### 2.4. Education in chastity in art

The principle of functionality does not only refer to education for decent clothing but can be applied on the other forms of artistic expression, especially in sculpture, painting, literature and film. Functionality itself quali-

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 192.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 192.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 193.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Š. Bilokapić, *Značenje i funkcija stida*, p. 440; p. 451. Source cited in the footnote: Cf. G. Zuanazzi, *Temi e simboli dell'eros*, p. 126.

fies shame and warns about the degradation of person. It provokes unrest associated with concupiscence, discerning it positively from shamelessness and aiming to its full affirmation in love. This means that the principle of functionality applied to education in art should finally lead to the affirmation of the person, preventing person's reduction to the status of an object for use. Karol Wojtyła claims: "Art has a right and a duty, for the sake of realism, to reproduce the human body, and the love of man and woman, as they are in reality, to speak the whole truth about them. The human body is an authentic part of the truth about man, just as its sensual and sexual aspects are an authentic part of the truth about human love. But it would be wrong to let this part obscure the whole."<sup>40</sup> Due to a possible abuse of the human body, shame creates precise limits and threshold that should not be exceeded. On the other hand, if we discuss about the artistic expression through the enjoyment of seeing or listening, shame is again the regulator of ethics, which consists of three elements: the body, the viewer, the dialectic of seeing and being seen. In the context of consumerist and propaganda models of modern mass media, this dialectic of seeing is often distorted and harmful. Being the object of the other person's view degrades harms and damages an essential part of our being. In contrast, the positive impact of the experience of shame based on art can encourage the man to question his attitudes and his remorse can restore damaged relationships.<sup>41</sup> Any form of the artistic expression should be based on this principle. Since pornography reduces body to the object of sexual pleasure, it negates any feeling of shame, and thus a true integrity of the whole man. Disregard of the mystery of the human person and the person's body leads to the collapse of human civilization. That is why education in chastity in art should take into account fine nuances and functionalities. When the artistic expression has an explicit function to emphasize sex as the only intrinsic value of the person and to identify it with love, then it is obvious that this is a distorted reality that depersonalizes man. It makes him a mere object for the other, far from his original happiness, the original ethos and the most precious good. Approach to art based on shamelessness is contradictory to its definition as an aesthetic quality of what is beautiful and the communication between both artists and the world, and people with each other. Thus education in chastity in art as well as its reception are the central to positive education in modesty.

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Metafizika stida*, p. 194.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. S. Tognacci, *Psihologija srana: glavni psihologijski i kulturološki vidovi*, p. 474-476. Source cited in the footnote: U. Galimberti, *Le garzantine. Psicologia*, Garzanti, Milano, 1999, p. 873.

### **Instead of a conclusion: the main points of education in modesty**

Getting knowledge of shame is important for raising a man with healthy personality that positively affects the functioning and balance of the whole society. Therefore, referring to the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* and *Directory of Family Pastoral Activity by the Church in Croatia*, Veronika Reljac summarized the nature, structure and objectives of the educational process in several main points which are the following:

- introducing the interpersonal dynamics;
- an in-depth awareness of the concept of sexuality, based on Christian anthropology;
- the basics in the psychological aspects of marriage and parenthood;
- identifying cultural trends that impact sexuality, love, marriage and family;
- building critical reading skills and developing media literacy.”<sup>42</sup>

The interpersonal dynamics is associated with the healthy personality facing no fear for the loss of one’s own “self” as the subject in society. An in-depth awareness of the concept of sexuality encompasses the theology of the body and the nuptial meaning of the body. The psychological aspects of marriage and parenthood are related to education for the absorption of shame by mature love, which leads to the fullness of good for the person and society. Cultural trends and media literacy are associated with the issue of shamelessness, clothing and art. It is to conclude that shame is the key component of each of these points. Certainly, it refers to shame as the boundary experience and unavoidable threshold that separates the man’s present historical state from his original state, but at the same time, it leaves room for education and accomplishment of the future life and immortality the man has ever been destined for.

Finally, the goal of any education, and so education in modesty is to prevent degradation of the person and building of a more humane society which again relies on an individual. Today, the affirmation of shame and its limit-setting are required due to their constant disregard and violation, which inevitably lead to lust, and thus reducing the person to an object for use. On the other hand, a positive experience of shame leads to the affirmation of humanity and its joyful moment of knowledge. It refers to a man who respects his own dignity and the dignity of other person not allowing a reduction of his own “self” nor the other “I” to a mere object for use, i.e. reductive objectification of the human body to an instrument of enjoyment. Hence, his profound ethics, morality, virtue and strength spring from it. Shame pervades his inner relationship (intrinsic shame),

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<sup>42</sup> V. Reljac, *Modaliteti obiteljskog pastoralna*, Riječki teološki časopis, 17 (2009) 2, p. 467.

the relationships with others and the world (relational shame).<sup>43</sup> Therefore, shame is at the root of civilization<sup>44</sup> and education in modesty aims to building a civilization of truth, life and love. This civilization is witnessed by the original lack of shame and fear of the first man and woman who could stand in front of each other naked and unashamed. This original truth and balance reveal life based on mutual friendship, avoiding any self-idealization that would disrupt such relationship, but also the relationship with God. It points to mutual trustworthiness that leaves no room for fear of disappointment and appropriation of the other person, for contempt or humiliation of the other or any threat to the human dignity and integrity. Finally, it shows total openness, without hiding anything.<sup>45</sup> After the Fall, a man can be educated in such openness only through positive education in modesty, i.e. education that paves the way for human affirmation and happiness, taking into account all the above-mentioned aspects of the value and the moral relevance of shame. Bearing in mind that happiness and affirmation have social connotations it is obvious that education in modesty is at the heart of the civilization of love being imperative in all times. Therefore, positive education in modesty today is a complex task which should be definitely based on the principle of human dignity and decency.

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Š. Bilokapić, *Značenje i funkcija stida*, p. 426-427.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. G. Črpić, K. Novak, *(Be)sramna kultura*, p. 389.

<sup>45</sup> Analyzing the meaning of shame in the biblical examples that indicate not to the lack of shame but to its occurrence, Domagoj Runje concludes that the feeling and experience of shame ultimately pave the way to building of the positive good. Cf. D. Runje, *Stid i post 2:25-3:21*, p. 401.