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## COLLOQUIA

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### **The hermeneutics of the person as an educational problem**

#### **Streszczenie**

#### HERMENEUTYKA OSOBY JAKO PROBLEM EDUKACYJNY

W prezentowanym podejściu do zagadnienia edukacji w centrum zostaje postawiona osoba z jej hermeneutycznym potencjałem. Osoba widziana hermeneutycznie to ukonstytuowany związek znaczeń, który poddawany jest nieustannej, twórczej analizie w celu zrozumienia jej swobodnego fenomenu w kontekście licznych dziedzin humanistyki. Jako *modus esse personale* wyznacza tropy interpretacji przeżywanej przez siebie rzeczywistości: procesów, w których uczestniczy, kontekstów i sytuacji, w które się angażuje, tego, co sobie uświadamia i próbuje zakomunikować innym. Osoba staje się świadkiem sensu samowychowania jako sztuki uczenia się życia w jego drobiazgowości. Prezentowane podejście jest hermeneutyką rozjaśniającą się w osobie – w procesie *osobienia* się (personalizacji) całego świata człowieka. Opozycyjnie do współczesnych epistemologicznych ideałów, podejście to wzywa do wyzwolenia się z nieprawdziwych obietnic naukowej obiektywności. Perspektywa jaką niesie, pozwala przewyciężyć ograniczające formy poznania, obsesyjnie sztywne i wyspecjalizowane, mało adekwatne w stosunku do różnorodnych sposobów istnienia indywidualnego i społecznego osoby.

**Słowa kluczowe:** edukacja, hermeneutyka, osoba ludzka, filozofia edukacji, relacja.

Paul Fairfield (2010: 1) writes: “What is decisive in education may well be the most elusive to reflection. We turn to the theory of education in order to clarify and gain critical perspective on the practice, but when the practical business of teaching and learning is not only complex but exceedingly so, clarity can be far seek, not least because the matter of which we are speaking is at once tangible and intangible.” In the presented approach, to which Fairfield’s suggestion leads us, it is certainly not about the *calculative* approximation to the

problem of education. The critical reflection is not the method, which can be used to achieve the certain educational aim, but it sets the phenomenon of education as such. Thus, it allows us to realize what is important and worth rethinking, what is concealed and demands the revelation as a way of new possibilities of understanding. The philosophical hermeneutics has implications for the theory and practice of education, yet the topic has often been ignored. No doubt that behind that intention is the form of thought, which comes from the recognition of the interpretative character of philosophical reflection on the phenomenon of education. It involves the critical awareness and desire to understand human existence and life circumstances. Therefore, the core of every education is to learn to *philosophize*; to philosophize in the context of the basic problem of human self-understanding.<sup>1</sup> This connection is clear and stems from the fact, that the reflection on education is not the outer element of the system of application (educational practice), but the integral part of the philosophical and humanistic thought.<sup>2</sup>

This proposal attempts to renew a dialogically-grounded humanism, an educational ideal that finds the beginnings of a compelling and novel defense in the philosophical hermeneutics. Gadamer presents a theoretical framework for articulating a case for education as such against those who would justify it on narrowly utilitarian grounds. He argues that we miss the phenomenon completely when we think of education [*Bildung*] as something we use for our own private (or even collective) purposes. Blacker (2003) considered: "Rather if the same categories even apply, it would be more correct to say that education uses us. Consequently, although we may be said to allow it to happen in certain ways, education as *Bildung* eludes us when we obtrude too severely on its proper sphere." Blacker notes that such an open-ended definition mirrors to a certain extent the Greek notion of *paideia*.<sup>3</sup> Education [*Bildung*] invigorates the mystical tradition, according to which the image of God, after the likeness of which man

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<sup>1</sup> Gadamer's thought: "Erziehung ist sich erziehen" (Gadamer 2001).

<sup>2</sup> Within the research on the methodological status of philosophy of education, there are divergent views on the dependence of pedagogy and philosophical reflection. The stance on this matter is taken by J. Wilson (2003: 280); he claims that philosophy of education does not derive its validation from the philosophical tradition.

<sup>3</sup> "Through hermeneutics, particularly Gadamer's use of Hegel's notion *Bildung*, Blacker implements a dialogic treatment of immortality that justifies his use of Socrates as the interlocutor between Truth and the Other. From his application of Gadamer, the author defines *Bildung* as development, culture, and education all rolled into one. Socrates becomes *Bildung* through dialectic" (Stoyanoff 1998).

was created, should be preserved and developed in one's soul. This education stems from the internal process of formation, and therefore is constantly continued and developed. In that sense, *Bildung* corresponds to the Greek word *physis* [nature] (Gadamer 2007: 36–37). Similarly, the Greek word *paideia* [παιδεία] derives the rules of human and social behavior from the divine principles of the universe, which was defined as “nature,” certainly in other than present notion. *Paideia* combined the cognitive aspect [*theoría*, gr. Θεωρία] with the practical approach, joined the habit of life with the good life. Formation of a Greek man according to the ideal of *paideia* was associated with the perfection of his beauty, goodness and virtue, including courage, prudence and ambitions for improvement (Jaeger 2002: 40–45). Formation is the education of oneself! To develop the main idea of the statement, Gadamer uses the word *in-dwelling* [*Einhausen*] in order to present education as an effort to build one's own home in the world. Education is inextricably linked with the process of learning how to develop a place. In that statement one cannot miss the question: who actually educates here? Therefore it is about the emphasizing of the fact that man *himself indwells in himself* [*Sich-Einhausen*]. In its deepest essence, education is the acquisition of skills of controlling something, which so far has been elusive in the sense of being at home [*Sich-Daheimfühlen*], in order to learn to reach own judgments and follow them. In fact, it is not an easy process. Gadamer (1989: 95) contributes to the discussion the tension between being inhabited and being homeless, between composure and dubious understanding. Education is the liberation from oneself towards new self, which is free from the narrowness of self-views and egocentricity. This process generally starts with the moment, when a person meets with a group of other people. Then the most relevant issue is “to be able to answer when you are asked, and also, to be able to ask questions by yourself and accept the answers” (Gadamer 2008: 264). As a complex process of self-understanding, it deals primarily with our experience of the world and extensive mentions of our location. Education is sharing the experience of being a human, of life, beliefs and knowledge. Hence the ultimate goal of education is to develop receptivity to life through the understanding of others, and thus to overcome indifference, ignorance, cynicism and obliviousness. To learn to be sensitive in order to see the past determinations, expectations and traces that are held in the concepts (Gadamer 1997: 17). In the educational context, perhaps the most clearly that common horizon of understanding people is shown, and at the same time, the social context, where we can discover the meaning of being a human through the learning of our needs and demands along with others. Therefore,

education inherently is “an exercise” of human solidarity, which contributes to integral human development. “Education is by its very nature an exercise in human solidarity by contributing to integral human development. The real goal of education is not to support false confidence in one’s own intellectual treasures toward optimally orchestrated self-reliance and independence, which hugely contributes to the social perception of a well-educated person as proud and arrogant. It is rather to help to discover the full spectrum of what it means to be a human being and how to “live a good life in just institutions” including all insecurities and weaknesses not by masking and covering them up but by humbling ourselves in the deepest sense of humility” (Wierciński 2010a). In the constant mutual dependence between thought and action we realize that the interpretation, understanding and application are one unifying process, which puts us between reproduction and change, between power and liberation, between trust and suspicion (Wierciński 2010b).

Thus understood education is not one of the procedures that can be overcome and verified in an objective way. First of all, it requires courage to something with the unclear result. It means that on the one hand, it is directed to the comprehensive development of every student, and on the other, all real difficulties which appear in that way matter, without excluding (their) failures. Education becomes a passion for discovering new opportunities and horizons that lie dormant in man understood as a person. If a man has to educate, the specifically human abilities should be strongly emphasized.

My approach to education determines the hermeneutics of the person. In its basic structure interpretation fits in philosophical hermeneutics profile of education. The hermeneutics of the person is not a subdiscipline in the scope of human science. It does not stem from a defined and privileged point in human thought or conception. It originates in the experience of the person as *someone* who wants to be revealed and understood in him or her – for oneself and others. A person possesses such a distinct manner of being that it is impossible to find any suitable analogy for them in reality.<sup>4</sup> The experience of personal existence

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<sup>4</sup> The phenomenon of the person is characterized by R. Guardini (1964): “*Person* does not denote any kind of make-up, e.g. bodily condition, spiritual power, mental energy, endowment, educational attainment, etc. It is not something which can be expressed in terms of make-up or psychological content: it is the manner in which all these things subsist. Person is at once something obvious and yet logically incomprehensible. It is person that imparts the essential character to all that goes to make up a man, not merely by inhering in this or that individual, but by belonging to the *ego* in such a way that it makes the latter belong to itself” (see also: Scheler 1966: 382).

seems to be an undying desire, inscribed in the essence of a man, to seek its own fulfillment. This desire appears in the space permeated by sense. I do not limit the general and initial characteristics of a personal experience (in the perspective of Cartesian and post-Cartesian traditions) to the realm of subjectivity, awareness, self-awareness or personal *self*, but hermeneutically – the *way of being* in the world, determined by the structure of the person. Person is the first and basic phenomenon of human life, which is examined and analyzed here. Its interpretive potential allows for a critical analysis of all these places and situations in which a person wishes to speak. Hermeneutics is, hence, its statement which is the revealing of a being. Person “harmonizes” with hermeneutics as the result of the awareness that, thanks to it, will be able to understand better its own essence and sense of being in the abundance of interpretations. Consequently, it is possible to extract *the hermeneutic sense of the person*. For this reason, the hermeneutics of the person, at virtually every level of its reflection, is *the hermeneutics of relations*. Therefore, it constitutes an invitation for the conversation and common fulfillment of the sense.

In the center of that reflection is a person (not as a theoretical model of the process of thoughts arrangement) as *actually existing* and *functioning reality* that is revealed by the experience. It is the primary phenomenon that cannot be permanently defined as it belongs to the nature of a man as a person, to its core as a being (Skarga 1997: 167). E. Stein (1980: 10) writes: “In my not-source experiencing, I feel like being led by the source [experiencing], which actually is not being lived by me, but is present, makes itself felt in my not-source [experiencing].” Person realizes or rather senses than knows certainly with clear and explicit cognition, which could be expressed through the concepts and judgments that one is destined to become oneself.

In the experience of the person is the constituted connection of the most important meanings and values that in the further phase are being analyzed and explained; it is due to the thought deep-rooted in the source union of the person with Being and Truth (Pareyson 1966). The part of the structure of the person is the ability to “shorten” the distance between subject and object dimensions, between *logos* and *ethos*, between theory and *praxis* as a method to find a balance between them.<sup>5</sup> That distance is also reduced on the line: subject-community. Person is a corporal and spiritual being that lives in history (*Wirkungsgeschichte*),

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<sup>5</sup> Personalistic perspective let us exceed, on the one hand, the quantitative approach of experts and on the other, an abstract thought of ideas without broader context (see: Godoń 2012: 11–13).

specific community and at the same time determines the directions of self-realization, self-involvement and certain self-attitude towards the world. Certainly, it has no adherence on the part of any quantitative point of view or procedure that can be “applied.” It is about reflective and sapiential (*phronesis*) horizon, where the personal sense of human as its basic *modus* of being is revealed. This phenomenon determines the power and uniqueness of the presented approach that is not alternative to other anthropological models. Person as a unity of elements and diverse factors that are often opposed to each other (unity/multiplicity, soul/body, freedom/necessity, and transcendence/immanence) comprises the postulate of such educational impact, which will fully correspond to the truth about its ontic structure. It binds together all possible levels and spheres of human existence, thus in the light of such “integrity” it allows to see and interpret every single element. It indicates the necessity of a balance between the various spheres (physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, social) of every human life. As opposition to the modern epistemological ideals, this proposal urges to the liberation from the false promises of the scientific objectivity. The hermeneutic approach to the person requires a holistic conceptualization. The experience of the person cannot be detached from the cognitive acts and reduce to the intellectual, empirical, mental or sensory factor. As the necessity of its understanding progresses, it reveals that none of the mentioned above factors cannot be recommended. The fundamental simplicity of the experience, where everything exists in the *form of belonging to each other* and is related to the sole center, begins to dominate the complexity of the experience. It means, that the complexity of the experience, which is basically set in the personal being converts into the one whole. Then, there arises the tendency that all these factors interact with each other, benefit from each other, while forming the personal experience in its complexity. One can see here the procedure – the model of the divine logic of reciprocity that “can be symbolically described as a movement toward the condensation of meaning, which, in turn, calls for the decondensation in order to grasp the multiplicity of the possible perspectives just to be recapitulated again in a form of a condensed singular interpretation” (Wierciński 2011). Somehow responsorially, person begins to expose the unlimited power of the (personal) sense projecting in relations to different, even dissimilar cognitive distinctions. Therefore, for the common good one needs to keep searching for the way of the creative intersection of that tension. It becomes possible within *that* division of the sense, which comes from the person. Power and scope of its effect may influence many branches of modern humanities: philosophy, theology, psychology,

pedagogy, ethics etc. Personalistic paradigm relates to those scientific disciplines that cooperate or should cooperate with each other. They comprise (or should comprise!) the ways of reading life and disclosure of the sense of truth.

By recalling the experience as the witness of the *truth of the person*, we do not have in mind some temporary or occasional act, but long-term cognitive phenomenon, as something appropriate to being a person. At the same time, the inspiration includes the model of education as self-discovery and self-inquiry (“journey” to oneself).

Here we mean the broadest meaning of experience, which will include all the possible aspects presenting the way of personal existence. The hermeneutics of the person is a critical reflection on the *revealing* of reality. It needs to take on a task of deciphering various stories about personal existence in its fragmentary nature. This is a kind of experience whose object is the “whole” world lived through by the person and demanding understanding. Therefore, the being possesses, as its structure, the understanding which is the basic way of being as the person – the original, ontological nature of human life. This understanding is realized as experience in the hermeneutic, *effective-historical*, consciousness, which has the structure of experience. At the same time, the person’s experience is realized on the basis of such linguisticity. Linguisticity of the person “crystallizes” the experience of its being in the world (the understanding of itself and the world); it authenticates it, and also enables its conveyance and communication; therefore, it constitutes the foundation for its intersubjectivity and vouches for its veracity. The time told is the time lived through, which reveals the identity of a person.

The hermeneutic approach to the person shows the scale of advantage of the move to the sphere of the other that wants to communicate something important for the better way of self-understanding.

The person is the fruit of such a dialogue, being a unique reality, both finite and infinite, constituting its own nature, which can transcend precisely as a person. It allows for a simultaneous origin of the mutual mediation of both poles in accordance with the principle that *being-in-itself* and *being-for-others* condition one another. By calling for negotiating the distance between unity and multitude, identity and diversity as the reflection and participation, emphasizes the hermeneutic nature of the person as a unique space in which a *dialogos* takes place. Its characteristic feature is the creation, in freedom and love, of a space for the other by realizing the peculiar value of the other’s existence, thanks to which it forms itself.

Let us try to expand the understanding of the person as the structure of a symbol understood as a “unity of sense” and “semantic distance.” The structure of the personal symbol as “unity of sense” and “semantic distance” defines the relationship between *the finite* and *the infinite*, as well as between nature and person. This is the way of recovering of a person along with its positivity. It is about human vision, which eliminates the negative character of *finitude* (*Endlichkeit*) that involves his experience of the world. Instead of the rational relations of opposition or absence of it in the relations between the finitude and the infinite, in the personal space (human existence and freedom) both realities are mutually incommensurable [*incommensurabili*].<sup>6</sup> There is no measure of difference or distance between them. Any type of relations with the infinite is impossible; thanks to its irrelative nature, the essence of those relations as a pure gift reveals. The finitude of being is so advanced that constantly forces to reflect and affirms the being a person, pushes it towards the infinity. That suggestion aimed to clear the finite-infinite relations, goes in the direction of the principle of development of existence and transcendence inseparability. In this light, a man not really *has*, but rather *is* the relations that are “ontological relations.” Every being remains in the relations with a man so far as a man is that relations with being, inside of which being opens up to a man. Person that is a *place* of presence and revelation of being is some kind of “access to the secret of being” (Tillich 1994: 16). The whole existence is intentionally present in the person; it is a unique realization of a being in entirety. Contingency and deficiency of the person is not *negativity* or lack that entails the complement of it by *positivity* of the infinity. *Being* in itself as a whole, the person is ecstatically opened to the whole of everything which is not that (Crosby 1996). In this existential openness it experiences itself as a gift (“receiving being”). It visits it as a creative power of distancing of reality, including itself. In order to present the moment of *comprehension* of a text, Ricoeur (2011: 60) uses such concepts as *imagination*, *imaginative variations*, *transforming* to express the openness of new possibilities of the subject. All these expressions attempt to draw the basic phenomenon that new being is formed initially in the *imagination*; “(...) the ability to give out and be seized by new opportunities precedes the power of decision and choice.” The distancing of imagination allows at a distance to comprehend and accept each other as a gift.

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<sup>6</sup> Pareyson (1950: 74) writes: “On the one hand, Barth suspends time in eternity and eliminates the finitude at infinity, on the other hand, Heidegger cancels eternity in temporality and separates the finitude from the infinity, while Jaspers harmonizes the opposite terms of historicity as the presence of transcendence.”



The attempt of dialectical reading of the personal phenomenon, in the context of the finitude and the infinite relations, should be considered at the level of *situation* and *freedom*. It is a personalistic comprehension of Heidegger's theory of *thrownness* (*Geworfenheit*) and *project* (*Entwurf*). It is a significant element that clears the process of education. It depends on the person whether the situation as the relations with being becomes only a historical moment (limitation, condemnation for pure arbitrariness). *Thrownness* outlines what can be chosen; it is an appeal, proposal and suggestion regarding human freedom. Man becomes truly free when he undertakes that appeal and thus rediscovers the source being via own situation. Freedom, like the situation, is the relations with others. It is an initiative and consent for the gift (Pareyson 1966: 176). The necessity associated with the ability of having the freedom and making a choice is a sign of its gratuitousness. Thus it refers to what it inspires, supports, directs and intensifies. It depends on the person whether through its own stance on that starting point will experience freedom as imposed and devoid of orientation, or as full self-plenitude and independent responsibility. The understanding of the person is constituted in the horizon of involvement and commitment. The understanding of the person is associated with an existential struggle with the conflict which arises from the tension between the finitude and the infinite, as complementary dimensions of its identity. Ricoeur speaks of "the tragedy of action," as a place that transcends the current experience and the spectacularity of the event. That tragic wisdom as the fruit of that struggle is a semantic enrichment of my "understanding of the world," which I cannot shift ("use") to the other situations.<sup>7</sup> Here the situational judgment is required, directed with the practical wisdom (*phronesis*). It should also be noted that the intrinsic disproportion between the finite and the infinite dimension of the life reveals the fragility of the person; it is also the source of its tendency to degradation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ricoeur (2003: 402) states: "The self-cognition occurs at the cost of hard science, acquired during the long journey through those constant conflicts whose universality is inseparable from their absolute intransgressible disposition."

<sup>8</sup> The looseness of the person "makes the concept ethically questionable, as being presumption, self-deceit, the breaking up of the community. It depreciates the person because of its powerlessness since its actual being and ability appear to be in constant contradiction to its claims, so much so that the supposed person becomes actually comical; (...). It becomes bored with its definitiveness, the ennui of always having to be itself (...). It seeks to forget itself, casts itself into transience and mutability, into the stream of continuous coming into being and passing away" (Guardini 1965: 120).

Any knowledge about oneself is not independent of the knowledge about the world; it does not mean the absolute independence from the natural processes. The hermeneutics of the finitude and the infinite leads to comprehension of the relations between *nature* and *person*. This is one of those moments where the phenomenon of pure relativity as a way of understanding the person comes to light. The hermeneutics of the relations between person and nature is a very original and creative way to show the *enhypostasis naturae* principle. The characteristic feature of this approach is that the person evaluates its own behavior, more specifically – not only is aware that exists in nature (*phisis*), but wants to learn and understand it. A person is “entangled” (in the nature of things and its own nature), but can and wants to get out of this entanglement and put it into perspective. Such an understanding of the person is not based on the essentialist but existential (*ex-sistere*) approach.<sup>9</sup> It not only exists, but exceeds itself, in order to return to itself. In the process of moving beyond itself, it starts to possess itself. Being misrecognized, it becomes itself and returns to itself. To say in other words: being misrecognized is the way of being at self. The space of possibilities opens to it in the direction of self-realization. It shall be the way of self-understanding via *the other* and to show the conditions for mutual dialogue and interaction. Similarly, the integration between the person and nature can not mean the equation or fusion into one, but it should be a challenge and an opportunity that the person, due to its nature, can fully express itself, and the nature could slowly regain its fullness, while being *in-personal* nature. Person is not the theoretical superstructure or “part of the nature” of a man, but the reality in which human nature with all its elements, aspects and dimensions reveals its fullness of expression and meaning. In fact, in *enhypostasis naturae* we discover the educational path. To be a person means: to have the basis in oneself. Only a person gradually discovers in itself *something* that is undeniable. “The person as such does not come from physical or biological facts but stands on its own. Only as a consequence of this independence can it take upon itself the responsibility for things and for the species” (Guardini 1965: 125). Just because “the person has a significance which transcends the importance of its being. In a certain sense, its significance is absolute. As this person, not as the bearer

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<sup>9</sup> The word *ex-sistere* indicates the origin due to something, to get out of something, this *whence* of the particular being of oneself. The word *sistere* indicates that it has its being in itself, determines the manner of being (*modus essendi*). The person *exists* in itself and for itself, and the prefix [ex] indicates the initial relationship that it has established. Thus the word *ex-sistentia* means only that: *considering the other being in oneself*.

of certain qualities and talents, it is unique. As such it has an irreplaceable dignity and responsibility (Guardini 1965: 141). In that perspective, not a single dimension of human nature (psychological, spiritual or physical) through its basic reference to the highest value that is a person, can claim the right of superiority over another dimension. None of these dimensions can be identified with the person. All of these make up the human nature that should be personalized in order to fully disclose its advantages and opportunities for development. This principle protects the nature against its reduction to the material world, physiology, biology and genetics. Nature may rather find the direction of its own tendency towards its fullness.

This is extremely important in the field of education, which as the process concerns human in all its existential conditions and references. One cannot miss the fact that the human experience deals with two concepts: *spirituality* and *personality* (Davey 2002: 88). The spirituality as the modus of the reflective being is not sustainable in opposition to the physical world, but on the way of exploration and efforts in order to maintain the increased tension and contradictions “between” corporeality and our mental and spiritual involvement. Soul is something *that occurs in the motion* that always starts when a man experiences psychological pain of contradiction. One should pay particular attention to the notion of *personality*. Self-understanding doesn’t emerge from the hidden order of things (Cartesian claim of absolute transparency of “self”), but from the involvement to the processes of unexpected meeting and exchange (Williams 2000: 240). It means that the process of cognition of the personality does not occur in the way of discovering of self-identity but in dynamic movements and changes: personality is always contained in the *question*, subjected to criticism and thought. This process is characterized by the *default* confirmation, when there appears a difference “between” desire and reality. The interiority of the self then is not extracted from the obscurity of being but found or rather created as a result of our dialogical involvement. That interiority does not develop through escape, but by *deepening* of the conflict, which determines it (Davis 1989: 105). Being is characterized by personality, *being is always issued*; its existence becomes problematic (Davey 2002: 89). Hence, person can brighten things which are considered to be ordinary in human life, which lost its meaning or fell into oblivion. Education becomes a willingness to confront with everything that concerns mind and body and the whole personality. In the broadest sense of the word that is the human soul capacity to *focus* the attention. Forming of the gift of attention is the true meaning of education. All activities, trials,

exercises, help to form the attention, which will become the substance of prayer. In thinking, where it reached the concentration, the participant of the game takes into consideration other subjects and is able to communicate with them (Griffiths 1999: 151–152). One can't overlook the fact that deep intention of getting the gift of attention should go far beyond the direct purposes of education (Weil 1991: 48–50). It's about that kind of attention, which is not focused only on what is interim (specific), but can direct its sight towards something that is distant and set the direction of human life.

From the previous analysis there emerges a very important suggestion, which goes about the priority of personal being over *being* (ontological issue). To be more specific, it is an ontology complemented with the hermeneutics of *self*. It is not based on the certainty, but on the self-testimony. In this respect, extremely suggestive is von Balthasar's (1983: 59) remark regarding the difference between the historical existence of human (*Dasein, esse*) and the essence (*Sosein, essentia*), which is the measure of its humanity; in that light human existence never fully accomplishes its nature but constantly strives for it as a measure of its humanity. As an exact being thrown into the world, in existence, man starts to reflect upon himself; feels called to make a choice of existence stretched to that measure of his humanity. About the identity ultimately decides the way of *pronounce*, which is "affirmation – authentication and entrusting and trust – that it exists in the image of oneself" (Ricoeur 2011: 503). Of course, even in case that our understanding will be relevantly developed, still it will be always incomplete. This choice is confirmed by the necessity of mutual relations and connection between people. It becomes accomplished *being* in action. This means that the question of the human essence can be put in the process of its dramatic existence.<sup>10</sup> An attempt to identify the person by its external reference is not possible, but by self-determination in the process of the *game*, in which one participates while taking part in the action of drama.

Person is realized when surpasses oneself towards the other and then develops and improves. As *being-for-itself* realizes that it can be that so far as *being-for the second*. It is able to see more clearly that its own personal world cannot be reduced to what is "mine." The experience of others and the whole world leads to self-identification. At the same time, it experiences self-liberation in the direction of the new "I" that is free from egocentrism. This intuition is

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<sup>10</sup> Based on the identification of "being" and "relationship," J. Zizioulas (1997: 80) claims that being is inconceivable outside of life, and therefore the ontological nature of truth lies in the idea of life.

perfectly conveyed by a Trinitarian concept of *perichōresis*, which means the mutual permeation and mutual gift of the Divine Persons.<sup>11</sup> It leads to the understanding of the person as a trialogic being, that is, determined by the triple polarity: “I”–“you”–“we” (“they”).

This approach leads to recognition of “the other,” which is not a threat or the reason for our distrust and division. Otherness of the other reminds of the will of self-learning which realizes jointly *with* others. It occurs through involvement of the whole person, especially when he meets and experiences the other along with his convictions. One of the most characteristic features of the relationship between persons is openness to the risk of misunderstandings that situate the relationship in the horizon between knowledge and strangeness. The desire for the good life can grow only in the horizon of freedom as the dialogical *placement* of the other person’s freedom. It is a horizon where we learn sensitivity to others in the humble act of attempt to understand them. Being open to discourse means the acceptance of the new experiences, from which we can learn of ourselves. The dialogue transforms lives of the participants in a permanent state of self-control and renewal. It consists in the attraction of mutuality as the recognition and acceptance of self-worth through the value of the *other* person.

Education as learning of selves and others (the dialectic of questions and answers) allows us to understand the “case” that demands understanding. Hermeneutic relations between the understanding of “things” (*die Sache*) and the understanding of own “I” serves as an indication in presenting of the person in its function of triparity (*triadicness*) (Greshake 1997). Between “I” and “you” appears the third element “we,” through which and in which only “I” and “you” may refer to one another and to itself in the fullness of liberty and acknowledgement. Hence, “I”–“you” is not earlier than “we.” This constellation is the space for the realization of the person – as something donated to “the other” and accepting for itself, where the “between” one and the other movement is something that is there transcended as well as referred to one another. In this constellation there are opened new opportunities for the constitution of the person. Not every *personal problem* can be solved in the argument and counter plea; something that is superior can or even should appear to the interlocutors. Everything that *happens* between them can be recognized most likely from the perspective of *the third*

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<sup>11</sup> *Perichōresis* is a cyclic movement, reciprocity, exchange, permeation and openness of people. Prefix *perí* indicates the move “around” while *chōresis* is associated with space, place, proceeding forward. This term, therefore, defines the mutual openness, thinking which penetrates awareness of others, the ability to learn, give and receive.

("viewer").<sup>12</sup> It must be remembered that the intermediary role of *the third* does not just refer to the presence accompanying our ("I"–"you") conversation, but it allows us to create a "new world" (Skarga 2009: 15) when bilateral mediation "I" for "you" fails or when "my world" and even "our world" tightens, gets poorer and eventually becomes extremely isolated. In the explicit approach to *the third* the new world is born, which really is bigger and grander than ever we both could think. That something *third* which appears in them and between them tends to something that transcends the everyday reality of the actor and the audience. From the point of view of education, it is significant that on the both sides of the game there appears hope to see in art more than in ever encountered and recognized dailiness. Limitations of both sides are opened up to the unlimited horizon, which provides the insight into the nature and sense, which cannot be comprehended from the immanent course of the game only. Although participants of the game still move in that horizon, at the same time they transcend it.

Thus, art promises and certifies what should be brought out from the human existence. In the context of the dimension achieved by their destiny, the reflection on the mystery of existence (injustice, suffering, pain, death, joy, compassion) does not become just a "specific case" of the general law, but something important for the "here and now." In this free count for *the third* as the horizon containing the unity and multiplicity, there begins the development of the internal nature of the person's freedom mediation by the other and community. Obtaining the horizon means that we learn to look beyond the proximity and excessive proximity – not in order to abstract from it, but to see it better on the background of a greater whole and in the right proportions (Gadamer 2007: 418–419). The understanding subject exceeds the horizon, which seemed to be the only necessary and sufficient *living space* that from now on, to see and interpret everything in a new, enlarged perspective.

The hermeneutics of the person sets new interpretative and applicational trails, which are found in the very nature of the person. The hermeneutics of the person is a "method in action," in activities, in the act that leads to the very truth of the person. A person begins to exhibit unlimited power of projecting the (personal) sense in relation to various, disparate at times, cognitive distinctions. Thus, a creative way of overcoming this tension ought to be ceaselessly sought.

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<sup>12</sup> "The decision that matures in silence, act without words leads further than any talking, creates an endpoint, reveals the invisible beginning, brings out the roots of all the seemingly rooted in trees and bud them again in a new place" (Balthasar 2005: 33).

Perhaps it can be achieved in the sphere of the same range of sense that is given by the person.

The presented approach aspires to be considered as the hermeneutics of education, which is shown in the process of the *personification* of human experience, situations and processes in which person is involved.

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