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New Challenges for the Catholic Vision of the Vocation of Women and Men

Abstract

At the turn of the 21st century, the ethical boundaries have been demolished in a dramatic way, especially in reference to the broadly understood human sexuality. An intensively promoted materialist anthropology connected to the reductive vision of human sexuality and sexual life, has created the foundation for anew ideology. Gender theory finds itself well in the postmodernist context, where multi-dimensional determinist conditioning, relativism and temporality of all human intellectual property are highlighted. The Traditional categories as femininity, masculinity, and heterosexuality were rejected and treated as mere archaic stereotypes. According to gender ideologists, in order to prevent discrimination one has to finally start the deconstruction of a patriarchal regime and replace it with anew, egocentric and hedonistic culture. The author of this article presents new challenges for the Catholic vision of the vocation of women and men highlighting the deconstruction of the biological sex, a new anthropology and the far-going transformations in the consciousness, social, cultural and political activity on an international scale.

Keywords

Ideology, sexuality, Catholicism, vocation, woman, man

1. Introduction

“But the utopia of the *neutral* removes both the human dignity of the sexually different constitution, and the personal quality of the generative transmission of life.”¹ These are the words in which Pope Francis unequivocally separates himself from the assumptions behind gender ideology and clearly points to the danger that gender ideology entails for human beings, not only as seen from the perspective of Catholic religion. By means of denying the biological sex, the truth about mankind, namely that woman and man are predestined to form “the communion of persons” and exist as “one flesh” becomes falsified.² The fragment of John Paul II’s *The Letter to Families* mentioned here is the synthesis of the vision of man as an entity marked by one’s biological sex and functions in accordance with both nature and Catholic anthropology.³ Even though female and male roles have been defined in slightly different ways over the centuries and in various cultures, ideas and concepts related to biological sex constituted a significant factor in the organization of numerous societies.⁴

At the turn of the 21st century, the boundaries concerning what can be regarded as the norm have been re-established due to the removal of any restrictions, often in the name of subjectively and egoistically viewed freedom and reason.⁵ This assertion is the most evident and, at the same time, the most

¹ Francis, *Against technocratic materialism*, 5 X 2017, Address to participants of the plenary session of the Pontifical Academy for Life «*Pro Vita*», No. 3. <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2017/10/05/171005d.html> (30.01.2019).

² Letter to Families 8.

³ Cf. A. Titkow, *Tożsamość społeczna*, in: *Encyklopedia gender. Płeć w kulturze*, (eds.) M. Rudaś – Grodzka, K. Nadana – Sokołowska, A. Mroziak, K. Szczuka, K. Czeczot, B. Smoleń, A. Nasiłowska, E. Serafin, A. Wróbel, Wydawnictwo Czarna Owca, Warszawa 2014, p. 542.

⁴ Cf. J. Guzowski, *Deklaracja Kongregacji Nauki Wiary Persona Humana w kontekście idei gender*, in: *Idea gender jako wyzwanie dla teologii*, (eds.) A. Jucewicz, M. Machnik, Wyd. Hosianum, Olsztyn 2009, pp. 117–126; J. Stala, E. Osewska, *Anders erziehen in Polen. Der Erziehungs- und Bildungsbegriff im Kontext eines sich ständig verändernden Europas des XXI. Jahrhunderts*, Tarnów 2009; *The Contemporary Family: Local and European Perspectives*, eds. E. Osewska, J. Stala, Kraków 2015; J. Stala, *Der gesellschaftlich-kulturelle Kontext der aktuellen Gefährdungen für die religiöse Erziehung und Bildung in der Familie*, „The Person and the Challenges” 3 (2013) nr 1, pp. 251–266; E. Osewska, *Erwartungen an die katholische Schule in einem postmodernen Zeitalter*, „The Person and the Challenges” 1 (2011) nr 2, pp. 95–108.

⁵ Cf. I. Kozak, *Wyzwania kryzysów dla rodziny*, in: *Miłość jest nam dana i zadana. Komentarz do posynodalnej adhortacji „Amoris Laetitia” papieża Franciszka*, (ed.) G. Chojnacki, US, Szczecin 2017, p. 154.

dramatic way has to be referred to a group of issues related to human sexuality, broadly understood. Pushing the boundaries mentioned above and the subsequent removal of restrictions, multileveled relativism, and the refiguring of human freedom leave an imprint on a deeply-rooted but very intimate sphere of every human's life.

There is no denying that these days an ideology, which seems to synthesize in itself all the possible dangers of re-establishing boundaries is gender. It does not have much in common with the original feminism, which struggled for the restoration of women's rightful position in the social life. In the first place, gender theory seems to strive to free humankind from religion and its impact on the various spheres of social and political life. In the name of rejecting God, it rejects the sexual polarization of men and women intended by the Creator.⁶ Gender ideology followers believe that no sooner that a person, women in particular, become free of God, that he or she is able to express themselves and fulfill their needs freely.

2. Postmodern challenges for the Catholic vision of woman and man

Contemporary humans, including Catholics, exist within the dynamically changing social reality and have little impact on those ongoing transformations. Almost everything that surrounds us is influenced by the ideology of change and novelty to which all is often inherently forced to submit.⁷ The multi spectral diversity which permeates all aspects of human life, both on the individual and societal level, implies the dissolution of old values and their replacement with new ones, adequate for pluralist societies, which are visibly deprived of universal connotations.⁸ The phenomenon of tolerance to otherness or approbation of alternative lifestyles and polymorphic sexuality becomes desirable and even typical.

⁶ Cf. G. Kuby, *Globalna rewolucja seksualna*, trans., D. Jankowska, J. Serafin, Kraków 2013, p. 82.

⁷ Cf. L. Dyczewski, *Dzisiejsza ideologia a rodzina*, in: *Rodzina dobro uniwersalne. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana księdzu prof. W. Majkowskiemu*, (ed.) U. Bejma, Warszawa 2015, p. 50.

⁸ Cf. F. Adamski, *Pluralizm wartości a wychowanie*, in: *Obudzić (nie)odkryty potencjał małżeństwa i rodziny*, pp. 65–66.

Regardless of one's religious belonging or lack of, moral permissiveness in the Polish society, in particular within the sphere of the so-called "marital morality" is on the rise.⁹ Moreover, the tendency for not acknowledging religion as a significant point of reference in the life of individuals and the whole society seems to be growing. It is often visible especially when confronting values which are viewed as important from the religious perspective but are rejected by contemporary ideologies. Along with the disappearance of religious thinking, the reluctance of modern people towards negating sin becomes revealed. Acknowledging the concept of sin has its influence on customs, practices, and culture and even Christians find it difficult to recognize the objective good and often are not remorseful for their weaknesses.¹⁰ What used to be considered evil has gradually come to be perceived as just one of the lifestyles.¹¹ By leaning towards situational morality and rejecting heteronomy based on codes and objective truths, we are invited to think that the creator of one's moral life should be a particular individual, without the need to follow any objective criteria or "moral certainties." It seems that both the concept of moral "otherness" understood in many different ways and the existence of a peculiar market of values and moral norms have to be recognized.

Intensively promoted materialist anthropology connected also to the reductive vision of human sexuality and sexual life, can lay the foundation for the revolution in such an important and delicate sphere.¹² Sexual relationships are nowadays taking the form of a short-term cravings to which one succumbs. Since a long-term relationship is a rather unsecure investment, one can get satisfaction from the so-called "pocket relationships," which are characterized by an easy finale and can be compared to taking out a handkerchief from one's pocket.¹³ For that matter, it is difficult to omit the aura of mockery surrounding

⁹ Cf. W. Świątkiewicz, *O kryteriach wartościowania moralnego*, in: *Młodzież Warszawy – pokolenie pontyfikatu Jana Pawła II*, (eds.) W. Zdaniec, S.H. Zaręba, Warszawa 2005, pp. 97–99.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Mariański, *Dylematy moralne młodzieży polskiej*, in: *Wartości i postawy młodzieży polskiej*, vol. 1, (ed.) D. Walczak-Duraj, Łódź 2009, pp. 11–16.

¹¹ Cf. W. Kędzior, *Wychowanie katolickie we współczesnej rodzinie polskiej*, „Pedagogika Katolicka” 7 (2010), p. 130.

¹² Cf. K. Meissner, *Wiara i pleć*, Poznań 2003, p. 16.

¹³ Cf. Z. Bauman, *Razem osobno*, Kraków 2003, p. 14.

the premarital chastity and marital fidelity.¹⁴ In the so-called “love” one also finds sufficient reason for the decision to begin their sexual life.¹⁵

Active sexual life assured, by means of effective contraception methods, the ubiquity of open relationships, where sexual intimacy is regarded as normal and fairly less rigorous, ideals of female sexual chastity are taking on a new level.¹⁶ Due to contraception, radical feminism in particular has been granted with a powerful technical instrument, without which the gender revolution would not have had, in fact, any bigger chances of becoming successful.¹⁷ It is often entirely omitted that contraception separates the unity between love and procreation which lies at the heart of marriage and every marital act. One cannot neglect the relationship between the contraceptive stance and pro-abortion stance, while abortion entails nothing less than killing parental love.¹⁸

The sexualisation of the modern life is strongly correlated with the fact that postmodern society functions predominately as a community of consumers.¹⁹ In such a society looking for otherness and novelty, striving to seize the day, in particular within the realms of one's sexual life, play an important role.²⁰ The modern consumer, however, is an entity seeking for even stronger and more diversified pleasures which are thus difficult to cater for.²¹ Media- and marketing-stimulated consumerism, which strongly influences the sphere of human instincts subtly jeopardizes mankind's morality and spirituality.²² By subordinating

¹⁴ Cf. P. Kryczka, *Czy kryzys rodziny?*, in: *Polska rodzina na progu Trzeciego Tysiąclecia*, (ed.) R. Ryszka, Lublin 2000, pp. 73–83.

¹⁵ Cf. J. Mariański, *Religia i Kościół w społeczeństwie pluralistycznym*, Lublin 1993, pp. 205–206.

¹⁶ Cf. K. Slany, *Alternatywne formy życia małżeńsko-rodzinnego w ponowoczesnym świecie*, Kraków 2004, pp. 97–106.

¹⁷ Cf. H. Hoser, *Ideologia gender a prawda o człowieku*, in: *Dyktatura gender*, wybór i opracowanie L. Sosnowski, Kraków 2014, p. 23.

¹⁸ Cf. M. Dziewiecki, *Ona, on, miłość*, Kraków 2006, pp. 167–174.

¹⁹ Cf. M. Miczyńska-Kowalska, *Konsumpcyjny charakter rodziny*, in: *Małżeństwo i rodzina w ponowoczesności. Szanse – zagrożenia – patologie*, (eds.) W. Muszyński, E. Sikora, Toruń 2008, p. 141.

²⁰ Cf. Z. Melosik, *Kryzys męskości w kulturze współczesnej*, Kraków 2006, pp. 16–17.

²¹ Cf. J.G. Ritzer, *Magiczny świat konsumpcji*, trans. L. Stawowy, Warszawa 2004, p. 8.

²² Cf. T. Szlendak, *Supermarketyzacja. Religia i obyczaje seksualne młodzieży w kulturze konsumpcyjnej*, Wrocław 2004, p. 23.

to one's corporeality, the human becomes unable to form mature relations both with God and the surrounding people.

3. Gender ideology as a contestation of Christianity

Undoubtedly, gender theory fits well in the broad and diverse movement of post-modernism, where multi-dimensional determinist conditioning, relativism, dependence on culture and temporality of all artworks of human intellectual property are highlighted. Such categories as femininity, masculinity, and heterosexuality have become rejected and treated as mere archaic stereotypes enabling discrimination. According to gender ideologists, in order to prevent discrimination one has to finally start the deconstruction of the patriarchal regime and replace it with an egoistic and hedonistic culture. Their aim is to provoke far-going transformations in the consciousness, social activism and political activity on an international scale, building the foundation of the new "axiology," where sexuality does not entail any moral connotations or even does not exist.²³ Gender ideology, which find its main enemy in the Christian culture and morality, quite explicitly calls for the battle against Christianity and religion as such. This theory may be seen as a consequence of atheist thought as it is the atheists who are its fore-fathers, creators, and exponents.²⁴

It seems difficult not to notice that gender ideology very visibly moves into both mass and high culture, including literature, cinema and theatre. In the aforementioned ways of artistic expression, the place for almost every sexual minority becomes ensured. The main characters in many films and theatrical plays, including those widely acknowledged for their artistic value, are people

²³ Cf. M. Środa, *Czy etyka ma płęć?*, „Etyka” 45 (2012), p. 7.

²⁴ It is visible also in Poland, where the most active genderists such as Jan Hartmann or Magdalena Środa are at the same time explicit atheists. The Catholic Church is, in this convention, bluntly described as “our occupants *bis*” and its documents treating of gender as the unbelievable in a democracy and purely ideological harassment. Even the so-called Christian feminists, openly call for a revision of dogmas and moral norms formulated by the Catholic Church. By considering it as impossible to reform, they wish to build, in its place, their own “Church of women”. Cf. D. Oko, *Gender jako dzieło rozumu ateistycznego. Dekonstrukcja dekonstrukcjonistów*, in: *Gender – spojrzenie krytyczne*, (eds.) J. Jagiełło, D. Oko, Kielce 2016, pp. 157–159; M. Duda, *Dogmat płci. Polska wojna z gender*, Gdańsk 2016, p. 411; A. Zwoliński, *Feminizm – świat rodzaju żeńskiego*, Kraków 1997, pp. 32–40.

experiencing evident problems with their sexual identity.²⁵ According with the assumptions of gender ideologists and thanks to the use of the latest manipulation technologies, the content of many popular series, television shows, and exhibitions is filled with such characters and images that would transform the social awareness and drift it towards the acceptance of gender ideology.²⁶

There is an attempt for gender ideology to be introduced on various levels of social life, predominately through a legislation of different kind. Numerous documents are being created, which are only seemingly designed to protect the security, safety, and wellbeing of its citizens but which include, in fact, multiple destructive elements being at odds with the doctrine of the Church. An evident example here is the *Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*, which despite being devoted to a valid issue promotes the so-called “non-stereotypical gender roles” and deeply interferes with the educational system as it imposes an obligation to educate about and promote, among others, homosexuality and transsexualism.²⁷ Instead of encouraging preventative actions in these spheres, an ideological viewpoint is being imposed that the only cause of violence is one’s gender. One should not be “suspected” of violence or any abuse just because he or she is a man or a woman.²⁸

More or less cleverly, gender ideology intends also to hide the fact that it aims at promoting sexual education by means of dwelling on children’s sexual awareness from an early age. It seems obvious that such an approach leads to addictions in the sexual sphere and numerous forms of enslavement later in life. It is also worth remembering that sexual enslavement is often combined with a multiple other addictions such as alcoholism, drug abuse, and gambling. Also, we shall not omit mentioning the harm that one can inflict on themselves and other people, mostly in the dramatic form of pedophilia, rape, and sexual assault.²⁹

²⁵ Cf. K. Feusette, *Oswajanie nicości. Brednie genderowej propagandy*, in: *Dyktatura gender*, wybór i opracowanie L. Sosnowski, Kraków 2014, p. 55.

²⁶ Cf. *List...*, p. 70.

²⁷ Cf. *List...*, p. 69.

²⁸ *Oświadczenie Rady KEP ds. Apostolstwa Świeckich ws. Konwencji Rady Europy o przeciwdziałaniu przemocy wobec kobiet i przemocy domowej (CAHVIO)*, 7 X 2014, <http://episkopat.pl/oswiadczenie-rady-kep-ds-apostolstwa-swieckich-ws-konwencji-rady-europy-o-przeciwdzialaniu-przemocy-wobec-kobiet-i-przemocy-domowej-cahvio/> (29.01.2019).

²⁹ Cf. *List...*, pp. 70–72.

All these leave no room for doubt that we cannot be indifferent in the contact with this ideology. In an explicit or implicit way, it attacks the very core of the Catholic vision of human life, about both the man and the woman. Furthermore, it does so by referring to such important postulates as bringing back women's dignity or combating violence, but the arguments used in the discussion cannot be accepted from the Catholic viewpoint.

4. The negation of biological sex

The intention of deconstructing the biological sex can be regarded as one of the crucial milestones for the humankind at the turn of the 21st century. One is not able to clearly define the implications stemming from this deconstructive revolution, however, there is no denying that it strongly polarizes the contemporary public opinion, broadly understood, as well as scientists of different fields.³⁰

While searching for various manifestations of contemporary discrimination against women, including both the real and the imagined ones, the most dangerous source of intolerance is its ascribing to the opposite sex. Thus, the last chord in the revolution of women fighting for their rights is embracing the gender theory, which, by means of nullifying any differences between the male and female element, will allow for women's victory in their centuries-old fight.³¹ In order to ensure this victory, the politics of gender equality is introduced on almost any occasion but the assumption is that as long as the clear distinction between sexes exists, women will experience discrimination.³² The preferred myth about femininity and masculinity as separate and strongly distinctive sexes, maintained by the men interested in the ongoing existence of inequalities must fall down along with the patriarchal system.³³ The cultural understanding of the sex, supported by gender ideologists, is thus presented as a particularly visible mode of resistance and the war against gender inequalities.³⁴ Consequently, the

³⁰ Cf. K. Krasuska, *Gender (płeć)*, in: *Encyklopedia gender. Płeć w kulturze...*, p. 155.

³¹ Cf. G. Mari, *Gender i wyzwanie edukacyjne...*, p. 277.

³² Cf. A. Wróblewska, *Polityka gendermainstreaming w Unii Europejskiej*, in: *Płeć. Między ciałem, umysłem i społeczeństwem*, (ed.) K. Palus, Poznań 2011, pp. 19–21.

³³ Cf. M. Wyrostkiewicz, *Główne idee i status filozofii gender*, in: *Idea gender jako wyzwanie dla teologii*, Olsztyn 2009, p. 65.

³⁴ Cf. I. Mroczkowski, *Nauki o rodzinie wobec wyzwań współczesnej antropologii*, in: *Nauki o rodzinie w służbie rodziny...*, p. 31.

paradigm of the sex is perceived as an act of drastic sexual domination by the men and reproductive enslavement of the women.³⁵ The biology scientists see here, in the first place, a factor that would imply almost *a priori* the passive role of the women. In particular, the events related to procreation have long been acknowledged as immutable elements of a woman's life and inseparably linked with her biology. Hence, it is the biology that burdens women with the ability of conception and maternity, which results in significantly worse social, economic, and political situation of women.³⁶ It has been assumed that the patriarchal society attempted to convince itself that cultural constructs are linked with the biological sex of a person. Over the centuries, the society ensured gender roles by ascribing them to biology just to maintain the subordination of women and men's activity. As the gender supporters claim, by rejecting those archaic beliefs, women are allowed to explore their destiny beyond the passive gender roles. Also, men are no longer destined to be active.³⁷ According to gender theorists, there is no strong motivation behind the distinction between men and women and the biological sex does not belong to one's gender identity. As a result of these claims, such terms as femininity and masculinity have become only abstract constructs, having no foundation in any universally understood human nature. One's gender, similar to the social orientation of a person, becomes a mere question of consensus and a social construct of sorts. Sex is no longer determined by any biological or mental factors but by a specified culture.³⁸ There is no room for essentialism of any kind as "one is a man in the group of men, a women in the group of women, and a man and a woman emerge as a result of their mirror reflection when they have mutual contact."³⁹ From this perspective, our sexual identity is our imagined fantasy rather than anything else. It can almost be entirely modifiable and developed freely in the process of education and upbringing.

Rejecting the biological sex has its serious and multileveled consequences, for women in particular, as it is the women whose identity becomes re-evaluated to the largest extent. While in the case of men, one can mention the so-called

³⁵ Cf. P. Mazurkiewicz, *Genealogia osoby, czyli skąd się biorą dzieci?*, in: *Dylematy dotyczące ludzkiej płodności*, red. M. Ryś, Warszawa 2015, p. 84.

³⁶ Cf. B. Wojciszke, *Kobiety i mężczyźni: odmiennie spojrzenia na różnicę*, trans. S. Pikiel, E. Wojtych, Gdańsk 2004, p. 329.

³⁷ Cf. R. P. Tong, *Mysł feministyczna...*, pp. 68–69.

³⁸ Cf. A. Zwoliński, *Kobieta. Silna płęć...*, pp. 266–267.

³⁹ Cf. F. La Cecla, *Szorstkim być. Antropologia mężczyzny...*, p. 14.

“crisis of masculinity” after the decline of the patriarchal world, women are the ones who attempt to negate their femininity almost entirely, including its biological sense.

At the core of gender theory there lies the anti-metaphysical view of the mankind. Man does not have his nature, understood as a stable rule of his ontological existence. Due to such a perception, the person has no possibility to become himself or herself in their ontological potential. People are only a product of a given society, or even a culture developed within its realms.

5. The consequences of rejecting the complementarity of man and woman

The attempt to negate the bodily conditioning of femininity within gender ideology is not merely a theoretical elaboration but rather provides the starting point for the rejection of traditionally formed feminine roles in society. Although suffragettes had explained that women’s right to vote would not jeopardize the rights of the men, and mothers and wives would not be stopped from performing their “feminine roles,” this issue started to be perceived entirely differently as early as in the 70s. As A. Graff suggestively captures, feminists back then were simultaneously filled with resentment, hope, and euphoria as the strong and significant sense of cultural breakthrough that would vanquish the traditional gender roles had been permeating both the social and political climate.⁴⁰ This state of intensified emotions stemmed from the assumption that the breakthrough could have taken place due to the fact that the patriarchal system promoting traditional gender roles and acting as their guardian came to an end. Within this widely accepted and dominating patriarchal culture we were being convinced that women and men play distinctive social roles and it is conditioned by their biological sex. The main destiny of this weaker, feminine sex is merely to perform all the domestic tasks and chores and find satisfaction in the role of a mother and a housewife.

Such strictly defined social roles that devalued the position of women and were maintained for centuries are, according to gender theorists, nothing less than certain masks that society puts on its members depending on their

⁴⁰ Cf. A. Graff, *Świat bez kobiet...*, p. 11.

biological sex.⁴¹ Hence, men are often associated with the feeling of desire or urge, while women with maternity, emotional engagement, and seeking for a sense of comfort in the strong arms of a man. It is believed that various characteristics ascribed to sexes can often lead to establishing certain universal ideals in a specific cultural and civilizational setting of given times. However, one cannot imply here any invariant or eidetic characteristic.⁴² This is the reason why every époque and each culture formulates its own ideals of femininity and masculinity and implies what roles are performed by women and men in society. Since it is the gendered roles that link femininity with specific predispositions and given tasks such as custody, maternity, and household chores, in the new, modern and so distinct culture these roles have to evolve as well.⁴³ In this context, it is difficult to omit the contestation that most men are able to master such “feminine” skills as taking care of the household or expressing empathy. This situation does not necessarily have to lead towards the negation of femininity and masculinity and towards the exclusion of their concurrent distinctiveness and complementarity.

It is impossible to overlook the fact that gender ideology has serious consequences not only on the individual but also the societal level. In the first place it is obvious, and even directly formulated, that the idea behind the existence of traditional marriage becomes negated. Since such categories as “male” and “female” are only cultural constructs having little to do with sexual reality of a person, society no longer has to be built around the marriage formed between the man and the woman. In this context, it may be said that one’s sexual desire can be drifted in any possible direction. It is dependent only on the free, unhampered urges of persons, as it is difficult to call them women and men. As a consequence, all possible forms of marriages and families are being born (if one still intends to use such terms in this peculiar context).⁴⁴ Consequently, models of life by homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals, and heterosexuals become equivalent.⁴⁵ By choosing a fast pace, changeability, superficiality, and

⁴¹ Cf. A. Buczkowski, *Spoleczne tworzenie ciała...*, p. 33.

⁴² Cf. J. Melonowska, *Osobna: kobieta a personalizizm Karola Wojtyły – Jana Pawła II...*, p. 119.

⁴³ Cf. K. Dunin, *To wszystko razem*, in: *Drogi feminizmu. Od kapitalizmu państwowego do neoliberalnego kryzysu*, (ed.) N. Fraser, trans. A. Weseli, Warszawa 2014, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Cf. K. Korobczenko, *Ideologia gender a „osobowórcza” funkcja ciała i płci...*, p. 88.

⁴⁵ Cf. A. Zwoliński, *Kobieta. Silna płęć...*, p. 266.

temporality, gender in an obvious manner questions the sense of stability, invariability, and fidelity of a typical sacramental marriage. Moreover, the integrally understood marital love as the source of the greatest happiness between the woman and the man becomes questioned as well.⁴⁶

6. Conclusion

Deprived of a stable gender identity a person loses the sense of his/her existence, is incapable of discovering and fulfilling the tasks ascribed to him/her on the way to their personal, family, and social development. To even a larger extent, this contestation is related to interpreting and fulfilling the sublime but difficult truth about the vocation of woman and man in the view of Catholic Church.⁴⁷ The danger behind gender ideology stems predominantly from its deeply destructive character not only towards the individuals and their interpersonal relations but also towards the social life itself. By undermining all the already established norms pertaining to femininity and masculinity, the ideology hinders formulating stronger bonds between men and women.⁴⁸ As it was noted by Pope Francis, gender ideology denies the distinctiveness and the natural complementarity of the sexes. It shows a society without sexual distinctive features and mocks the anthropological foundation of the family. This ideology introduces educational projects and legislative guidelines promoting personal identity and emotional relationships as separate from biological differences between men and women.⁴⁹ Gender ideology does not hide its unambiguous contestation of the Catholic Church's teachings, in particular in the field of addressing humankind and their personal relations. The element, which from the perspective of gender becomes fundamental, along with the rejection of biology, is the negation of the sexual complementarity of women and men preferred by the Catholic personalism.

⁴⁶ Cf. E. Illouz, *Dlaczego miłość rani. Studium z socjologii*, Warsaw 2016, pp. 12–13.

⁴⁷ Cf. *List...*, p. 69; J. Stala, *Der Mensch als Person: Die bestimmende Grundlage für Johannes Paul II. in seinem Bild von der Familie*, „The Person and the Challenges” 2 (2012) nr 2, pp. 41–59; J. Stala, *Familienkatechese in Polen um die Jahrhundertwende. Probleme und Herausforderungen*, Tarnów 2008; *Strengthening Families*, eds. J. Stala, J. Garmaz, Kraków 2016; *Focus on Family and Education*, ed. E. Osewska, Split 2016; *Strong Families – Strong Societies*, ed. E. Osewska, Krakow 2019.

⁴⁸ Cf. J. Augustyn, *Ideologia gender*, in: *Sztuka relacji międzyludzkich...*, p. 565.

⁴⁹ Cf. AL 56.

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