

**KAROL WOJTYLA'S CONCEPTION OF LOVE AND RESPONSIBILITY  
AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE USE OF CONTRACEPTION**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this project work is the result of an original research conducted by Lucy Dery with student number 10090594 under the supervision of Dr. Caesar Atuire and Dr. Kwesi Richmond and that apart from other works, which are duly acknowledged, this work has neither in whole nor in part been submitted for a degree either in this university or elsewhere.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study probes the perspective of Wojtyla's sexual ethics regarding his views on love and responsibility and his synthesis on the ends of marriage and the morality of the use of contraception in marriage. "Love and Responsibility" is the title and the theme of his book on sexual ethics which reflects his own brand of moral philosophy. Karol Wojtyla argues against the use of contraceptives for married couples. His view is that contraceptive sexual intercourse is reductive, does not fully respect the dignity of the other and does not fully express human spousal love. This thesis investigates Karol Wojtyla's position and defends the possibility of exercising responsible human love whilst using contraceptives in the sexual life of married couples.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my Religious Congregation, Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus, (HHCJ) and in particular Ghana Province.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The issue this thesis seeks to address borders on the following questions: What is marriage? What is it for? Is it for begetting children, for money, love, for position, for companionship or some other? Whichever it is, does it reflect love and responsibility? What is contraceptive intercourse? Is the use of contraception morally acceptable? Is it really necessary? Who qualifies to use contraception? Are there any risks involved in its application? Given the variety of methods; does it matter the kind of contraceptive method? What method is workable, reliable or morally acceptable? Does the use of contraception reflect the concepts of love and responsibility? My viewpoint is not economic or sociological but ethical. And so these questions relate to sexual ethics.

This study probes the perspective of Karol Wojtyla's sexual ethics on love and responsibility and his synthesis on the ends of marriage and the morality of the use of contraception in marriage. "Love and Responsibility" is the title and the theme of his book on sexual ethics which reflects his own brand of moral philosophy. Wojtyla has written extensively on this theme in order to develop a theory of sexual morality that has a continuing relevance for current debate about contraception and marriage. His ethics is grounded on Thomistic Ethics. The philosophy of Karol Wojtyla was influenced also by Phenomenology and through his own use of phenomenology he also applies experience into his analysis of ethics. He holds that the most fundamental way of looking at sexuality is in the context of love and responsibility.<sup>1</sup> And so he builds his arguments around the issue of love and responsibility in sexual relationships

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<sup>1</sup>*Love and Responsibility, p. 17*

among married couples. He speaks solely in the context of married couples. He seems to redefine the nature of marriage more or less with regard to contraception and the issue of love and responsibility.

According to Wojtyla a marriage is valid if it fulfills three conditions: it must be monogamous, indissoluble and must be seen as an institution.<sup>2</sup> The principle of monogamy and the indissolubility of marriage make necessary the integration of love and for that matter responsibility. Without integration marriage is an enormous risk and has not been established as a genuine union of persons. He recognizes that marriage and family life is the primary road to happiness and fulfillment for most people.<sup>3</sup> He stresses that a man and woman who live as husband and wife within the framework of a valid marriage are joined in a union which only the death of one of them can dissolve. This is because according to him marriage is not only a spiritual but also a physical and terrestrial union of persons;<sup>4</sup> being human persons Wojtyla first describes the nature of the human person. The personal order is the only proper plane for all debate on matters of sexual morality.<sup>5</sup> He then presents and defends a primary ethical principle consistent with that nature which he calls “The personalistic norm.”<sup>6</sup> He demonstrates how one person can relate to another person in a sexual manner without using or mistreating that person as a mere object of pleasure.

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<sup>2</sup> His vision of marriage is between different sexes. He does not regard same sex marriage; so all the references that will be made in this study regarding sexual relations and marriage border on relationships between different sexes.

<sup>3</sup> Spinello A. Richard, 2014 p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 214

<sup>5</sup> He maintains the personal order is irreplaceable in this matter. Physiology and medicine can only supplement discussion at this level. They do not in themselves provide a complete foundation for the understanding of love and responsibility.

<sup>6</sup> The treatment of all matters in *Love and Responsibility* has throughout a personalistic character.

The importance of the institution of marriage lies in the fact that it provides a justification for the sexual relationship between couples. He believes that the distinctive character of love and responsibility which safeguard the institution of matrimony is preserved when the community of husband and wife expands to become a family;<sup>7</sup> and so the marital act must retain its intrinsic connection to the procreation of human life. That is also to say that, the procreative and unitive dimensions of the marital act must not be separated.

On the basis of the inseparability of the above mentioned goals of the marital acts he rejects contraception. Contraception he holds promotes intercourse without procreative responsibilities and so enables emancipation from the responsibilities associated with sexual activity. He advances in *Love and Responsibility* a personalistic argument against contraception that has become an issue in contemporary married life. Freedom and responsibility in this context are the concerns not only for Wojtyla or for philosophers; they are everybody's concern I suppose. And so, is it not possible to use contraception and still be responsible and loving married couples and parents? This thesis makes a contrary observation to Karol's theory as a moral solution to the problem of contraception use as follows: Nature has in fact seen to it that in no small measure the procreative and unitive dimensions of the human sexuality are separable. They are separated in cases of sterility or during a woman's periods of infertility. If human nature itself separates the unitive and procreative dimensions why can't we separate these intentions also in a contraceptive act? In the use of contraception are spouses not involved in

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<sup>7</sup>On the contrary for a variety of reasons this may not happen. There may be a couple who are so tied up in their selfish mutuality as to wish no children. Also, there may also be a marriage where one is barren and therefore can't have children or incapacitated by some other medical condition.

assisting nature in this regard? Should there be objection then employing some contraceptive device or technique?

Some of Wojtyla's reasons that undergird his opposition to contraception are summed up as follows;

1. It destroys the naturalness of the marital act. Hence it is imposed in defiance of nature;
2. The use of contraception is divergent to the transmission of life and it also destroys the mutual self-giving of the spouses;
3. The availability of contraception makes possible for sexual promiscuity and it also lessens the respect among spouses;
4. Contraception destroys what marriage is as well as that relationship which exists between the husband and wife; it also promotes marital infidelity and generally lowers moral behaviour in society. The availability of a wife for the sexual needs of the husband without procreation, will make the husband see the wife as a sexual object.
5. The availability of contraception is a tool for promiscuity and immoral sexual attitude which brings about a preoccupation with sex even among spouses;
6. The use of contraception is a catalyst to abortion such that when contraception fails seeking abortion becomes a viable alternative.

## **1.2 Historical Perspective of contraception**

The New Encyclopedia Britannica defines contraception as the deliberate prevention of conception or impregnation. Contraception is sometimes referred to as birth control or artificial birth control or family planning. Contraception is also generally referred to as the prevention of pregnancy by use of mechanical means or chemicals. Historically, people have used many

methods to control their fertility. Around the world a large number of plants and other substances and practices have been used to control fertility. The efficacy of many of the practices still needs to be determined. The use of these methods makes it evident that people believe in their ability and responsibility to regulate their fertility and have seen a benefit in doing so for quite some time.

And so when we try to imagine what contraceptive methods were used in that enormously long period before there were written records, we have to rely almost entirely upon the observation of primitive societies in existence then. For instance, it is believed that certain groups of Australian aborigines interfered with the uterus by tilting it within the abdomen slightly forward from the cervix, but in some cases the uterus is tilted backward. Occasionally this uterine retroversion, as it is called is so severe that pregnancy is prevented. In some parts of the world attempts were made to induce this backward tilting artificially and it is even claimed that the uterus can be correctly oriented again when another child is wanted.<sup>8</sup>

There are also those who depend on magic and superstition: the folklore of many different countries contain suggestions for ornaments to be worn by a woman to prevent conception. It is said that the finger of a dead fetus or the anus of a hare would prevent a woman from becoming pregnant if she hung it around her neck. The foot of a female weasel was said to have the same effect, as was the heart of a salamander worn around the knee. It was also believed that if a woman drank the water in which a blacksmith had quenched his red-hot irons then she would not conceive.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Clive Wood, 1969 p.55

<sup>9</sup> Clive Wood, 1969 p.56

A number of herbs were believed to have the same effect when taken as infusions: thyme, parsley and lavender, rue and aloes, willow leaves were all thought to prevent conception, as indeed were such substances as iron rust, iron slag, potter's clay and the kidney of a mule.<sup>10</sup> It is also believed that throwing apples or nails into a river, turning the flour mill backwards at midnight or if a woman sits on a number of human fingers then she will not conceive for that number of years.<sup>11</sup> These have all been used as methods of making a woman sterile.

Clearly from the above, magic has played a great part in efforts to control fertility. We can therefore suppose that many of our ancestors' attempts at birth control must also have depended upon magical practices. But there were other methods which involved very little knowledge of reproduction, and which are very widespread today. Coitus interruptus<sup>12</sup> for example, is practiced almost universally,<sup>13</sup> and it is very likely that it has been used since prehistoric times. It is evident from this discussion above that, the desire to control family size was present in earlier generations; as evidenced by the use of magic, superstition, coitus interruptus, douching, delayed marriage, or abstinence.<sup>14</sup>

### **1.2.1 The story today for the use of contraception**

The above is the length to which people have been known to go to achieve birth control. The recognition of the world population explosion in the 1950s led to more research into reproductive phenomena. The contraceptive drugs and devices which are available today are a

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<sup>10</sup> Ferguson J. and Upsdell M., 1999 p.1.

<sup>11</sup> Clive Wood, 1969 p.55.

<sup>12</sup> This is also known as the withdrawal method

<sup>13</sup> This is an old story in the bible where Onan spilt his seed on the ground every time he slept with his dead brother's wife to avoid providing a child for his brother as custom required. Gen. 38 p.8-19

<sup>14</sup> Harper Michael J. K., 1983 p.1

result of that research. These include barrier and vaginal chemical methods, intrauterine contraceptive devices, hormonal methods and surgical methods. Contraception is said to be one of the greatest inventions in modern medicine. In the 1960's, the contraceptive pill became available and that was really when the revolution in contraception began. In Africa and particularly in Ghana, publicity on contraceptives is rife. One sees bill boards and posters advertising contraceptives at vantage points. Over the radio and television, frantic efforts are made to promote the use of it.

These contraceptive methods work along three main lines, (either through direct physical methods or through hormonal alterations). In the first case, they prevent fertilization through impeding the encounter of spermatozoa with the ovum. This can be achieved through physical barriers such as the female and male condoms; the other way in the first case is the chemical stimulation of the environment within the uterus to impede the travel of the sperm into the fallopian tubes where fertilization usually occurs. The second line of contraception is achieved through hormonal stimulation to prevent ovulation. The third broad line is where the contraceptives act in order to prevent any fertilized egg from being able to implant itself in the womb. Family planning, until recently a very sensitive subject in Sub-Saharan Africa, is now being increasingly discussed as a necessary ingredient of socioeconomic development.

### **1.2.2 The arguments in favour for the use of contraception:**

1. It is essential for procreative liberty; both the man and woman can have more relaxed sexual relations when they are confident that intercourse will not lead to an unwanted or ill-timed pregnancy. They can postpone having their first child or subsequent children to complete their education or vocational training. The freedom can make a significant difference in the economic future of the entire family;

2. It symbolizes the empowerment of women and promotes gender equality and the autonomy of women;
3. It enables world population to be controlled, protect the environment and reduce poverty;
4. It prevents the diffusion of sexually transmitted diseases as in the case of the condom;
5. It is a means of relieving economic distress in overly large families; family planning will lead to job security or a sound economic base and the couple can provide the kind of education and home environment that it elects for its children;
6. Contraceptives would contribute to an enormous decrease in the number of unwanted pregnancies and make marriages better and enjoyable. The number of unplanned pregnancies resulting in abortions can be reduced.

### **1.2.3 Review of related studies**

Contraception is a theme that quite often leads to debate among those who see it as a blessing especially in the age of population growth and HIV/AIDS and those who consider it as damaging to the responsible use of human sexuality. When it comes to offering moral judgments regarding contraception, the widespread view is that “everybody is doing it, so it can’t be that bad”. In this context, it is hardly surprising that authors such as Karol Wojtyła who have written against contraception, have received a fair amount of criticism. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Wojtyła’s position is only a continuation of a series of eminent voices that have voiced concerns over the centuries about practices similar to modern contraception. Among these are, Augustine of Hippo and Aquinas Thomas. Even though these authors were mainly theologians, their arguments against contraception rooted in that philosophical tradition which upholds natural law as a source of morality. For instance, Aquinas believed that the conjugal act must be

intended for procreation and the preservation of the human species<sup>15</sup>. Augustine on the other hand after converting to Christianity concluded that sex for any purpose other than reproduction was a sin; he viewed all forms of birth control as attempts to have sexual pleasure without bearing children. He held that sexual intercourse of a married couple was permissible only when it was employed for the human generation. In other words, Augustine of Hippo was of the view that procreation was the end of marriage. He says, “If it is not to generate children that the woman was given to the man as a helpmate, in what could she be a help to him?”<sup>16</sup> Aristotle who lived before these theologians on the contrary upheld the fact that, human beings live together not only for the sake of reproduction but also for the various purposes of life; from the start the functions are divided, and those of man and woman are different; so, they help each other by throwing their peculiar gifts into the common stock. It is for these reasons that both utility and pleasure seem to be found in this kind of friendship.<sup>17</sup>

Ascombe Elizabeth,<sup>18</sup> arguing along the same line with Wojtyla holds that, the use of artificial contraceptives legitimizes and allows invalid marriages that are based purely on pleasure. According to her, contraception by a married couple is worse than adultery and that it is contrary to the idea of marriage itself.

Sigmund Freud who was clearly not a friend of religion, initially was an advocate of contraception, but at a lecture in later years, he came to the realization that the abandonment of the reproductive function of married life is the common feature of all perversions. According to

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<sup>15</sup>*Summa Theologica* II. II. 153 p.2

<sup>16</sup> Augustine, *The City of God*, 14.22

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, bk. VIII, Ch. 12, 1162a 16.

<sup>18</sup> Ascombe Elizabeth, 1975 p.65

him sexual activity is described as perverse, if it has given up the aim of reproduction and pursues the attainment of pleasure as an aim independent of reproduction.<sup>19</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther who were not philosophers but great religious leaders also contributed to this debate. In his *Autobiography* Mahatma Gandhi makes the following observation about resorting to contraception and failing to procreate: “In my view to say that the sexual act is an instinctive activity, like sleep, or the appeasement of hunger, is the height of ignorance. The existence of the world depends upon the reproductive act, and since the world is God’s domain, and a reflection of his power, this act must be subject to controls, the purpose of which is the continuation of life on earth. The man who understands this will strive at all costs to master his senses and not resort to birth control.” Similarly Martin Luther’s perspective on the issue is that the purpose of marriage is not for pleasure and ease but for procreation and education of children and the support of a family<sup>20</sup>.

According to Daniel Defoe,<sup>21</sup> sex in marriage must be a total self- giving of the spouses, and so fertility must not be intentionally thwarted, when this happens from that giving, a valuable aspect of the union is lost. A spouse may see his wife as an object of sexual pleasure and for that matter, she must always be there for his sexual needs.

All these arguments above except Aristotle, speak along the same line with Karol Wojtyla that marriage is not pleasure seeking but that procreation is the principal end of marriage and must be preserved as such. Even though the procreative good needs to be preserved in

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<sup>19</sup> Introductory Lectures in Psychoanalysis, W. W. Norton and Company, 1966

<sup>20</sup> Christian History, Issue 39, p. 24

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Defoe, 1999 p.4

marriage, there is a necessity to control fertility and Wojtyla agrees to this. How could Wojtyla agree to that view? That is where the controversy begins. And so, how can married couples achieve the goal to procreate and still be responsible?

In this vein, Llewellyn Derek,<sup>22</sup> argues that contraception represents a responsible use of human freedom in the interest of personal relationship or the community. Llewellyn holds that, contraception can assist both the relational and the procreative ends of marriage by promoting marital harmony and enabling parents to space their children.<sup>23</sup>

Elizabeth A. Daugherty asserts that the marital act is not just for procreation; she holds that it is more proper to control or suppress the function of conception than it is to control or suppress the function of the sexual act which is meant to be permanent.<sup>24</sup>

Clyde V. Pax argues that contraception especially the pill from the perspective of those who argue for it, did not seem to be contrary to nature in the sense that other modern means of birth control were. According to him the pill is quite natural and simply allows human reason and freedom to shape nature as it had been doing with other forms of technology or medicine and not as harmful as Karol Wojtyla saw it.<sup>25</sup>

Also, in disagreement with Wojtyla, Furlony Cahill<sup>26</sup> refers to Wojtyla's views and position on contraception as fatal inconsistencies. According to Furlony, Wojtyla's teaching

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<sup>22</sup> Llewellyn Derek, 1980 p.15.

<sup>24</sup> McCabe Herbert, 1965 pp. 294-299.

<sup>25</sup> Clyde V. Pax, The Birth Control Debate, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24457546>  
Accessed: 09-07-2018

<sup>26</sup> Furlony Cahill 1966 pp.466-474.

stems from a serious though understandable ignorance of the nature of women and of human sexuality.

This last group of opinions is certainly a set of contrary views on Wojtyla's stance against contraception and that procreation is not the sole end of marriage. People marry for variety of motives. The idea of begetting children may be secondary, perhaps only tolerated rather than desired in the minds of many marrying couples. What about childless marriages where one couple may be barren/impotent, what will be their procreation story? Nature sets the end but does not guarantee that it will be attained in every case. Critics of contraception usually associate it with irresponsibility, immorality, even in married life. But is it possible for a married couple to use contraception and still be responsible and loving spouses?

#### **1.2.4 Problem Statement**

Karol Wojtyla thinks that contraception precludes love and responsibility. Therefore, he argues against the use of contraceptives for married couples. His view is that contraceptive sexual intercourse is reductive, does not fully respect the dignity of the other and does not fully express human spousal love. This thesis investigates Karol Wojtyla's position and defends the possibility of exercising responsible human love whilst using contraceptives in the sexual life of married couples.

#### **1.2.5 Scope of Study**

This thesis discusses the use of contraception in general and the moral implications of its use. This will also include post-coital contraception even though this type of contraception is distinct in nature. My view point is ethical not economic or other. I am situating it in *Love and Responsibility* (i.e. contraception and its situation in love). *Love and Responsibility* will be the

philosophical platform which will be subjected to a critical analysis to establish whether or not it is philosophically grounded.

### **1.2.6 Objectives of Study**

I expect to be able to do the following at the end of my research:

- Look into the moral implication of contraception and whether contraception is coherent with human sexuality as expounded in the philosophy of Karol Wojtyla;
- Explore how this will enrich the debate on contraception and inform policy on how contraception is carried out in Ghana;
- Create awareness about the moral issues surrounding some of the methods of contraception that will enable users to make informed decisions;
- Explore the possibility whereby married couples can employ the use of contraception and still be responsible and loving parents and spouses.

### **1.2.7 Methodology**

The methodology of this research will be both analytical and empirical, because it will at some point involve empirical data of the types of contraceptives. It will centrally involve drawing some inferences from *Love and Responsibility* and Wojtyla's views on human person and sexuality.

### **1.2.8 Chapterization**

The thesis shall be divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter one introduces the subject matter of the thesis: Karol Wojtyla's Conception of Love and Responsibility and its application to contraception by giving a background study, introducing the problems discovered during this study, the aims of my thesis and the methodology that will be adopted in this thesis. Chapter two looks at the human person. An understanding of who the human person is in Wojtyla will aid the understanding of what his moral theory is all about. Thus, this chapter shall feature the person, her mode of existence, functioning and powers.

Chapter three features the theme "love and desire" according to Wojtyla. He holds that love is always a mutual relationship between persons. Love is a complex reality, complicated by the fact that people mean different things when they use the word love; nevertheless, Wojtyla sets out to give an extensive account of love's mysterious character. Wojtyla is primarily concerned with love between two persons of different sexes in the married life. He undertakes a tripartite analysis to disentangle the multitude of meanings of the word "love". It will also feature other debates on love and desire: the views of Jean-Paul Sartre<sup>27</sup> Simone de Beauvoir<sup>28</sup> and Irigaray Luce.<sup>29</sup>

Chapter four deals with contraception and moral responsibility in the context of marriage; is it in line that our reproductive capacity is turned off in the interest of family planning or personal development? Human beings have evolved to a point where we can separate the sexual act from its reproductive dimensions by recurring to various methods of contraception. In our world today, there is the further development of drawing distinctions between simple

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<sup>27</sup> Sartre 1984

<sup>28</sup> Simone De Beauvoir 1989.

<sup>29</sup> Irigaray Luce 1993.

contraceptive methods and those that have the potential of causing early abortions in users. This chapter will feature the contraceptive-abortifacients drawing the moral distinctions between them and ordinary contraceptives. Chapter five will be the conclusion of all the deliberations. It will feature reasons that aim to defend the possibility of exercising responsible human love whilst using contraceptives in the sexual life of married couples.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A VISION OF THE HUMAN PERSON

#### 2.1 Introduction

The African Philosopher, Kwame Gyekye<sup>30</sup> asserts that a moral conception of personhood is held in African ethics, the conception that there are certain basic moral norms and ideals to which the conduct of the individual human being, if he is to be considered a person, ought to conform. Hud Hudson<sup>31</sup> observes that, human persons are material objects, whose interests should be taken into account when one is trying to decide what to do from a moral point of view. And so the question of what the human person is must logically precede any discussion of morality. It stands to reason that we cannot determine what is good for the human person unless we come to terms with his nature and how that nature is fulfilled. For this reason, an understanding of the human person in Karol Wojtyla will aid the understanding of what his theory of morality is. Wojtyla follows the Scholastic principle of “*agere sequitur esse*” meaning action follows being. Hence a moral analysis is consequent to an understanding of being. Accordingly, the objective of this chapter is to investigate the human person and her nature in Karol Wojtyla in order to understand the philosophical underpinnings of his position on contraception; Wojtyla belongs to the philosophical schools that seek to ground morality on ontological foundation.

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<sup>30</sup> Gyekye 2013 p. 237.

<sup>31</sup> Hud Hudson 2001, p. 40.

## 2.2 The human person

What is the world made of? Depending on whom you ask you will get very different responses to that. To the biologist, the world is composed of living organisms, to a chemist, the world is made of molecules formed from atoms. The physicist will probably start by talking about atoms, and then proceed to talk about protons, neutrons and electrons that make up an atom.<sup>32</sup> Many philosophers have varying views as to what the world is composed of.

Wojtyla's Karol makes his contribution to this issue. Wojtyla in his synthesis on the human person observed that "The world in which we live is composed of many objects".<sup>33</sup> According to him an object is "related to a subject. A subject is also an entity which acts in a certain way. Every subject also exists as an object. As an object a person is 'somebody' and this sets him/her apart from every other entity in the visible world. He holds that the term 'person' has been coined to signify that there is something more to the object man, a particular richness and perfection in the manner of his being. The reason for this is that human beings have the ability to reason. Wojtyla concurs to Boethius's famous definition of a person as simply an individual substance of a rational nature. This he says differentiates a person from the world of objective entities and determines the distinctive character of a person"<sup>34</sup>.

In other words, the person has a rational nature and as such has a nature or capacity to reason; this according to him makes the person a unique subject among other entities in the universe. John Locke<sup>35</sup> describes a person as a thinking intelligent being that has reason and reflection; this also grounds the conclusions drawn by Wojtyla that only a human being is

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.classe.cornell.edu/public/lab-infor/research.html>

<sup>33</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p.21

<sup>34</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, pp. 21-22

<sup>35</sup> Locke 1836 p. 39

capable of thinking and making choices. Wojtyla also recognizes that human cognition and desire acquire a spiritual character and therefore assist in the formation of a genuine interior life. That it is because of his inner being or interior life that man is a person. The person's contact with the objective world is not merely natural (physical) or sensual, but that a human person as a distinctly defined subject establishes contact with all other entities precisely through the inner self.<sup>36</sup> He observes that, by this a trait characteristic of the person becomes apparent: a human being does not only intercept messages which reaches him or her from the outside world and reacts to them but also in his or her whole relationship with this world, he or she strives to assert himself or herself, his or her 'I'.<sup>37</sup>

Wojtyla asserts that the human person has the power of self-determination based on reflection which is manifested in the fact that human beings act from choice. This he calls free will. The human person also has another distinctive attribute and that is the person is incommunicable.<sup>38</sup> He indicates that man is not only the subject but can also be the object of an action. In Wojtyla's terminology, persons are subjects or moral agents and they can be moral patients when they are the object of another person's action.

## **2.3 What is morality?**

### **2.3.1 Some general views**

According to Wojtyla that which is most characteristic of a person, that in which a person is most fully and properly realized is morality. This makes necessary an examination of what morality is all about. In other words, we need to understand what morality is since Karol Wojtyla

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<sup>36</sup>*Love and Responsibility, p. 23*

<sup>37</sup>*Love and Responsibility, p. 23*

<sup>38</sup>*Love and Responsibility, p. 24*

and other philosophers believe that the human person is a moral agent. We shall look at some general views and zoom into the perspective of Wojtyla. Austin Fagothey<sup>39</sup> defines morality as the rightness and wrongness of human acts. He holds that there is subjective and objective morality; this is according to whether it overlooks the personal peculiarities of the doer or takes them into consideration. He holds that the theory of Moral Positivism asserts that all morality is conventional. These conventions which Rousseau also mentioned in the State of Nature, are actions that are good or bad because some authority has commanded or has forbidden them. Three sources are suggested: the state may enact laws; human custom may also have the force of the law and also by divine decree. Fagothey disagrees with the notion that all morality is conventional. According to him there is another morality known as natural morality. These are those acts that are good or bad of their very nature and no human law, custom or divine decree can make them otherwise.

Also, according to African thought,<sup>40</sup> morality is understood as a set of social rules, principles, norms that guide or are intended to guide the conduct of the people in a society, and beliefs about right and wrong conduct as well as good or bad character. David Hume<sup>41</sup> in the second and third books of his *Treatise of Human Nature* observed that morality can be reduced to a distinctive sense that allows us to distinguish virtue from vice according to the particular pleasure that accompanies the former and the pain associated with the later. This paved the way for the rise of Utilitarianism.

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<sup>39</sup> Fagothey 1959 p.112.

<sup>40</sup> Gyekye 2013 p. 206.

<sup>41</sup> Hume 1968 p. 399.

Nevertheless, Thomas Hobbes and Jean Jacques Rousseau maintain that before human beings organized themselves into a political community there was no right and wrong. And once civil society was formed, it commanded and forbade some actions for the common good and this was the beginning of right and wrong. Even though Hobbes and Rousseau differ greatly in their views on the state of nature, they both deny any natural law or morality. They both insist on the validity of morality once the state had been established. Hobbes in his *Leviathan*<sup>42</sup> states: "During the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war as is of every man against every man... To this war of every man against every man, this is also consequent: that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place. Where there is no common power there is no law; where no law, no justice."

Rousseau states in his *Social Contract*<sup>43</sup> that; "man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains. Many a one believes himself the master of others, and yet he is a greater slave than they... the social order is a sacred right which serves as a foundation for all others. This right however does not come from nature. It is therefore based on conventions" (laws made by the state). It is admitted that the state can pass laws on different matters and make them binding in conscience. Nevertheless, there are some acts the state cannot command and others the state cannot forbid. No state could survive that commanded murder, theft, perjury and so on; or that forbade honesty, truthfulness, loyalty and so on. Such actions were good or bad before there was any state. They are not good or bad simply because the laws of the state command or forbid

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<sup>42</sup> *Leviathan* Ch. XIII

<sup>43</sup> *Social Contract* bk. I. Ch. I

them, but the state is obliged to command or forbid them because they are good or bad in themselves.

### **2.3.2 What is morality to Wojtyla Karol?**

According to Wojtyla, the theory of morality focuses on the moral values given to us in experience as good and evil. At the same time, however, the theory of morality somehow presupposes everything within the framework of ethics. The vital and existential questions about moral good and evil that give rise to the proper structure of ethics must constantly somehow run across the field of experience upon which we base our theory of morality. Morality is essentially something dynamic and existential.

In connection with the experience of morality and in strict dependence on this experience, there arises the question of moral good and bad. The question occurs on two levels: on the first level it can be formulated in two ways: what is morally good and what is morally evil in human actions? This question directly gives rise to a second-level question; since human actions have the property of being morally good or evil, why do they have this property?<sup>44</sup> According to Wojtyla, these are the questions sought by the human intellect with regard to morality as an experiential reality. Hence these questions also determine the ultimate structure and proper character of ethics. Wojtyla holds that these questions are pre-scientific; everyone can ask them; they are ultimately connected with the experience of morality and simultaneously point to that which is of ultimate concern in the understanding. Wojtyla points out that when we ask: “what makes human actions morally good or evil?” he believes it is in their relation to norms. When we

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<sup>44</sup> *Love and Responsibility* p.130

ask the further question why? We are then inquiring into the ethical foundations of norms upon which the moral good or evil of human actions rests, or we are inquiring into their rightness.

Wojtyla maintains that morality reveals a further dependence, a dependence on a norm, if not where else could that split into good and evil within moral value come from? Thus, to apprehend dynamic good and evil as mutually opposing moral values requires insight into the dynamism of ethical norms that is connected with the dynamism of human actions. This trait has an essential meaning for the theory of morality. Wojtyla holds that the theory of morality focuses on the moral values given to us in experience as good or evil. The term moral value basically corresponds to an experience, for it emphasizes the axiological dimension of morality, which is the most obvious feature of morality. According to Wojtyla there can be no doubt that through moral value human actions and the people who make use of them display a distinctive quality: they are virtuous or sinful, just, cruel, brave, steadfast and so on.

He acknowledges that moral good and evil are more complex than the term 'moral value' is able to convey. This complexity arises from their relation to a principle of morality, a norm, and from their relation to action and the person who performs this action. Both of these relations are elements of the theory of morality. He holds that anthropology, the theory of the person, arises through an analysis of morality. At the same time a theory of morality presupposes anthropology; a proper theory of the dynamism of the person; a correct view of activity, of the action of the person.<sup>45</sup> According to him when we say that moral good and evil are subjectified in the human being and human actions, we express to some degree the content of the experience of morality. He affirms that only an interpretation that is able to grasp the subject of morality, (the

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<sup>45</sup> *Love and Responsibility* p.141.

human being and human activity) in the aspect of being and becoming is able to formulate an adequate theory of morality. And only such an interpretation allows us to grasp the proper meaning of moral value.

He defines moral value in the generic sense as that through which the human being becomes and is good and moral evil as that through which the human being becomes and is evil.<sup>46</sup> To say this, according to him, is in a sense to reduce moral value to humanity. He insists that the human being as a human being is good or evil solely through moral value. These values, he explains so obviously determine the kind of human being he or she is, because the very humanity of the human being is the only key to understanding these values and the only possible way of explaining them. So moral values are explained through the human being as a human being, and at the same time the human being as a human being is explained through moral values. Humanity is in some sense presupposed in them, and at the same time, they bring humanity most clearly into view. This is why moral value or morality cannot be interpreted without the human being and the human being as a human being cannot be interpreted without morality. And so morality is a key to understanding the human being. That which is denoted by “human being as a human being” is included in the concept of a person. Moral good is that through which the human being as a person is good and moral evil is that through which the human being as a person is evil.<sup>47</sup> (The human being as a person is simultaneously a member of society. Wojtyla holds that the concept of person is neither opposed to this membership nor places the human being beyond it). It is clear from this analysis that in the theory of morality we cannot give up the notion that

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<sup>46</sup> Love and Responsibility 2016 p.145.

<sup>47</sup> That is being a good or a bad person. Such a formulation could be regarded as a fundamental tenet of personalism in ethics.

moral value is an end in that people not only want goods but also want to be good. According to Wojtyla to want or not to want to be good, therein lies the elementary core of morality.

The theory of morality lies at the root of ethics. It is a theory of human beings as persons who are good or bad beings, each within his or her own personal essence. At the same time, it is a theory of human beings as persons who experience their own moral value; who experience that they themselves become and are as persons good or evil. These are the two aspects of the theory of morality and they seem to be inseparable. If human actions are to be judged whether morally good or morally evil, then there must be something by which actions could be measured as good or evil; this is referred to as the norm or standard of morality. The standard or norm does not only judge the morality of the action; it likewise gives the reasons why a particular action is morally good or morally evil. The personalistic norm is Wojtyla's standard of morality.

#### **2.4 The Personalistic Norm**

At every step of our lives acts occur which have as their object other human beings. The key question here is what should be the guiding moral principle when our actions are directed at other people? Wojtyla believes that we can adopt one or two basic moral attitudes: 'love or use'. That is, we can choose to use another person as we commonly use other things around us, as instruments or tools. Wojtyla explains that the word 'to use' denotes a certain objective form of action. 'To use' means to employ some object of action as a means to an end. The end is always that with a view to which we are acting. The end also implies the existence of means so that in the nature of things the means are subordinated to the end and at the same time subordinated to some extent to the agent. The means serves both the end and the subject. According to Wojtyla it is beyond doubt that the relationship between a human being, a person and various things or

beings is of this kind. We shall now consider the principles to which a human being's actions must conform when their object is another human person.

Wojtyla observes that human persons, in their various activities make use of the whole created universe, take advantage of all its resources for ends which they set for themselves. Such an attitude according to Wojtyla towards inanimate nature does not in principle arouse doubt. A problem arises, according to him, when we seek to apply this attitude in our relations with other persons. So, the question is: is it permissible to regard a person as a means to an end and to use a person in that capacity? This embodies a very important ethical problem according to Wojtyla. This is the basis of what Wojtyla calls the 'personalistic norm' which is the foundation on which his moral theory is built. The problem the above question raises is a far-reaching one, with implications for a number of aspects of human life and human relations. For example, Wojtyla asks: does not an employer use a worker for ends which he himself has chosen? Does not an officer use the soldiers under his command to attain certain military ends planned and known only to him? Is it not the case that parents who alone know the ends, for which they are rearing their children, regard them in a sense as a means to ends of their own? This same problem looms over the relationship between man and woman.<sup>48</sup> Wojtyla remarks that inherent in these relationships is a serious danger of being treated as mere instrument.<sup>49</sup> In all of these relationships when they are both united by an attitude based on something like love deriving from the joint pursuit of a common good they are conditioned by the common attitude of people towards the same good, which they choose as their aim, and to which they subordinate

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<sup>48</sup>This particular relationship will be looked at in detail in later chapters.

<sup>49</sup>Various defective systems of organizing labour give evidence of this.

themselves. The common good forms a bond among people under which they will be united by an attitude of cooperation that is more akin to love than to using.

One may ask what if, as in the case of children, it is the parent who actually imposes his idea of ‘common good’ on the child? Would that still not be using the child as an end? Wojtyla would say that, the fact that the father or mother acted out of love for the child that safeguards using the child as a means to an end. And also, the fact that the child will strive towards that good and will grow up to the full knowledge of that common good precludes using him/her as a means to an end.

Wojtyla argues that a person must not be used merely as a means to an end by another person. This is precluded by the very nature of personhood, by what any person is<sup>50</sup>. As he argued earlier, a person is a thinking subject, and capable of taking decisions: these notably are the attributes we find in the inner self of a person. This being so every person is by nature capable of determining his/her aims. The immorality of using others according to Wojtyla is further shown by the fact that even the Creator of the universe respects our moral independence. The Creator by giving man/woman an intelligent and free nature, has thereby ordained that each of them alone will decide for themselves the ends of their activity and not be the blind tool of someone else. Wojtyla asserts that if the Creator intends to direct man/woman towards certain goals, he allows them to know these goals so that they may make them their own and strive towards them independently. Therefore, a person unlike all other objects of action, which are not persons, may not be an instrument of action is then an inherent component of the natural moral law.

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<sup>50</sup>*Love and Responsibility, p. 27*

Wojtyla holds strongly that when we reject this capability of free choice or self-governance in someone else and treat a person merely as a means to advance our own selfish ends, we violate that person in her “very essence” This according to many philosophers, following Emmanuel Kant, is unethical because the essence of personhood lies in the fact that the person is an end in herself/himself and should not be used as a means to an end. Accordingly, Wojtyla argues this position from the Kantian and Thomistic tradition. The personalistic norm was first presented by the German Philosopher Immanuel Kant as a second version of his Categorical Imperative which he also called the Formula of Humanity, “Act so that you treat humanity whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only”.<sup>51</sup>

For Kant, the principle is a supreme limiting condition on the way we behave toward others because it protects the dignity of the person. The same thing could be said for Wojtyla, who re-stated this Principle as follows: “Whenever a person is the object of your activity, remember that you may not treat that person as only the means to an end, as an instrument, but must allow for the fact that he/she, too, has, or at least should have, distinct personal ends.”<sup>52</sup> Even actions that seem to bring about good results cannot be undertaken if they involve the degrading use of another person as a mere instrument. This violates a person’s freedom and moral independence. The alternative is to treat people with love and dignity as they deserve as persons.

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<sup>51</sup>*Love and Responsibility*, p. 27

<sup>52</sup>*Love and Responsibility*, p. 27,

This principle is the pivot around which Wojtyla’s moral philosophy is built.

## 2. 4.1 Critical analysis of Wojtyla's views on personalism and contraception

Of particular importance to Wojtyla is the knowledge of the human person. But what is the truth about the human person? He says the human person cannot be used as someone's instrument, merely as a means for the other to attain his own ends. The person lives according to his own reason and freedom, from his interior. For a person to be utilized by another for ends with which he may not agree constitutes an alienation of self, because his self-possession is a condition of his capacity to act, to be an agent as Wojtyla describes. What happens if it is the person's will to be used, even though it is not for any common good? What if he/she also stands to gain by that act in some way? Furthermore, Wojtyla says that, the only appropriate attitude toward the person is 'love' not 'use'. If love demands truth and if it is necessary to treat the person according to the truth, then what is truth? How can we know the truth concerning the person? I used to know a young musician from a very humble background. The father was an alcoholic and the mother was a psychiatry patient. Even though this musician is dead his music lives on. How could this young man from an 'unknown family' and without the advantages enjoyed by his contemporaries come to such an achievement? Some other persons also have all the privileges yet they fail in life. How can we know the truth about the person? How can we know the truth about the people/persons we meet and those we live with?

He also asserts that, even God himself cannot and does not use the human person. How do we know that? Do we know for sure that God exists? If he doesn't exist, then his assertion does not hold. Will it be using someone as a means to an end, to help others in distress or when I am in distress can I ask another for help to meet my ends? Or can one walk away when one's enemy/friend who is in distress? Since the object and subject in this case may not be bonded by any common good or love since that should be the condition under which such a situation is

acceptable and precludes using as prescribed above? If two individuals consent to use each other, will this consent count as a common good? In that case, is it counted as love or using? Is the person even though she lives in a society a self-sufficient individual who does not depend on his/her relationships with others for the realization of her/his ends? Nobody is an isolated individual.<sup>53</sup> In Africa the spirit of collectivism is much ingrained in the minds of the people; such that in terms of functioning and flourishing in a human society, the individual is not self-sufficient, her capacities, talents and dispositions would seem not adequate for the realization of her potentials and basic needs and ends. Human beings have needs and goals that cannot be fulfilled except through cooperation with other human beings with whom they may not have a common good; would that be using them as a means to an end, according to Wojtyla?

What is more, Wojtyla's opposition to contraception stems from his believe that contraception is unnatural and does not respect the human person; that the application to contraception de-humanizes the human person who deserves nothing but love. Contraception facilitates the human person to be used as a tool in the sexual sphere. Contraceptive methods he asserts, expedite the couple's use and misuse of each other rendering them unable to fully appreciate the gift of their sexuality. According to him, erotic experiences, then, favour love in so far as they do not negate the value of the person and for that matter nature. He maintains that, contraceptive act promotes intercourse without procreative responsibilities and so enables emancipation from the responsibilities of sexual behaviour. He holds that, easy access to contraception leads to sexual promiscuity and a lessening of mutual respect among couples and distorts the meaning of marriage and the relationship between husband and wife.

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<sup>53</sup> As it is always said, no man or woman is an island

Is every user of contraception susceptible to these observations?<sup>54</sup> If there are careless drivers on the road as a result of which we have fatal accidents sometimes, does not mean that every driver is careless. It also does not mean that people cannot drive carefully and responsibly. Carelessness cannot therefore be used to characterize every driver, that would be a hasty conclusion and does not give the true picture of the situation at hand. Consequently, the abuse of a thing does not take away its legitimate use, in this case contraception. He also says contraception is unnatural; I wonder how anything unnatural can happen in the world of nature at all. Is there some point in the universe where nature ceases and the unnatural begins?

Consequently, is it not possible to use contraception and still be responsible and loving married couples and parents? Despite the ‘misuse’ or the labels about the use of contraception, I believe it is still possible that well-meaning couples can employ the use of contraception responsibly. I believe it is possible; referring to Wojtyla’s own words on love, he asserts that for love to attain its full personal value and truly to unite a man and a woman it must be firmly based on the affirmation of the value of the person. Love develops on the basis of the totally committed and fully responsible attitude of a person to a person. And so, only the correct concentration of particular sensual and emotional elements around the value of the person entitles us to speak of an integrated love. If their love (spouses) is thus integrated, this thesis believes, couples can use contraception responsibly in light of the above.

I also believe that couples can use contraception responsibly if they adopt a chaste attitude. It is often said that, ‘only the chaste man and the chaste woman are capable of true love;

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<sup>54</sup> Freedom and responsibility is the issue at stake here, but I believe that committed couples can use contraception responsibly.

for chastity frees their association including their marital intercourse from that tendency to use a person which is incompatible with loving kindness' and so to be chaste means to have a transparent attitude to a person; an interior transparency without which love is not itself. The essence of chastity consists in the quickness to affirm the value of the person in every situation as Wojtyla himself affirms about love. This requires a special interior spiritual effort and self-control. For, by moderating the feelings and actions connected with the sexual values we serve the values of the person and love. This can curtail the contraceptive mentality of sexual adventure. It is a choice to get married and the fact that a choice is made is a great importance in making judgments of responsibility. Vis-à-vis the use of contraception. On the other hand, Wojtyla believes that the origin and use of contraception stems from a utilitarian view of life as is described below.

#### **2.4.2 The Personalistic Norm and Utilitarianism**

Wojtyla's apprehension about using other people extends into a sharp critique of Utilitarianism. This popular philosophy is identified with the British philosophers, Jeremy Bentham<sup>55</sup> and John Stuart Mills.<sup>56</sup> These two thinkers, however represent two different forms of Utilitarianism; the difference reduces more to a matter of emphasis in the case of Bentham on quantity of happiness for the greatest number of people; Mills however emphasizes on the quality of happiness. Also, whereas Bentham thought that units of pleasure and pain can be calculated arithmetically and that ethics can be made into an exact science, Mills recognized that pleasures differ in quality, that there are higher and lower pleasures. According to Bentham and other philosophers who hold the same opinion, the highest moral imperative is to maximize

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<sup>55</sup> Bentham 1748-1832

<sup>56</sup> Mills 1806-1873

happiness by bringing about the overall balance of pleasure over pain through our moral choices. Bentham equated happiness with pleasure and did not appear to differentiate higher pleasures from lower ones like Mills. So, the utilitarian supposes that the person is endowed with the property of practical reason so that he/she can direct their activities to maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain and discomfort for the greatest number of people. This is the utilitarian's basic principle of morality. This becomes the focal point of Wojtyla's attention; he worries about the impact of this principle on the human person. (Wojtyla reverts frequently to this critique because he believes it is characteristic of modern man's mentality and his attitude to life).

He sees two problems with the utilitarian ethic; that it is based on a subjective notion of the good. And that it leads to selfish egoism. How our lives are from within is a subjective and passive experience. In a relationship a woman may find certain things quite pleasurable while the man does not. Pleasure may take many perverse forms, such as sadistic or masochistic pleasure as Jean-Paul Sartre asserted.<sup>57</sup> The pursuit of pleasure for its own sake therefore is not a fulfilling activity that leads to real happiness. Wojtyla holds that, "Undertaking to act for the sake of pleasure itself as the exclusive or highest end naturally clashes with the proper structure of human acts."<sup>58</sup> According to Wojtyla, the only escape from the inevitable encroachment of egoism that accompanies utilitarian reasoning is to find an objective good that unites persons. Love is the permanent unification of persons, but that unification cannot depend on the fleeting sensation of pleasure. In all of this Wojtyla sees the use of contraception in the light of the utilitarian reasoning or principle. He holds that the utilitarian moral principle and the use of

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<sup>57</sup> *Being and Nothingness* 1984.

<sup>58</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p.20

contraception violates or militates against the personalistic norm as described previously in this chapter.

### **2.4.3 The implications of the personalistic norm for sexual relations?**

According to Wojtyla, “nature’s procreative purpose is best served in a monogamous marriage in which spouses are faithful to each other, and that if sexual union is truly to satisfy the requirements of its own finality and of human dignity, love must be safeguarded by the stability that marriage gives.”<sup>59</sup> He notes that sometimes a person loves another purely from sexual desire, in that case he says it is not love. Far from there being any concern for the happiness of the loved one, the lover in order to satisfy his desire and quieten his appetite may even plunge the loved one into the depths of misery. Sexual love regards a loved person as an object of appetite: as soon as that appetite has been satisfied, the person is cast aside as one casts away a lemon which has been sucked dry. Wojtyla asserts that “sexual love can be combined with concern for the other’s well-being and so carry with it the characteristics of love, but taken by itself and for itself, it is nothing more than appetite”<sup>60</sup>.

He holds that sexual appetite by itself is a degradation of human nature, in that it makes a person an object of appetite for someone else and when this happens all motives of moral relationship cease to function; hence the person becomes a thing and can be treated and used as such by everyone. Wojtyla notes that, most of the time, when a man desires a woman it is not for who she is as a person or a human being, but because she is a woman, her sex is the object of his

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<sup>59</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 20

<sup>60</sup> *Love Responsibility*, p. 216

desires. Wojtyla holds that whenever this happens human nature is thus subordinated and thereby sacrificed.

According to Wojtyla “If one devotes one’s person to another, one devotes not only sex but the whole person. If then one yields one’s person, body and soul for good and ill and in every respect, so that the other has complete right over it, and if the other person does similarly in holy matrimony, according to Wojtyla, I win myself back, I have given myself up as a property of another, but in turn I take that other as my property and so win myself back again in winning the person whose property I have become”<sup>61</sup> He says in this way the two persons become a unity of will. Thus sexuality leads to a union of human beings and in that union alone its exercise is appropriate. This assertion of being the property of another has a lot of implications in practice. The question arises whether any person can give himself/herself to another person. This seems to contradict Wojtyla’s own views expressed in this chapter under the definition of a human person; that by her very nature the human person is incommunicable, not transferable; that the person is its own master and it cannot give itself away.

#### **2.4.4 Anticipated Objection and Response**

It may be argued that two people can mutually agree to “use” each other by giving each other pleasure thereby harmonizing their interests.

#### **Response**

If two individuals mutually agree to satisfy their sexual desires but their object is not human nature but sex, each of them dishonours the human nature of the other. Despite this

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<sup>61</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 217

harmony of temporary union of emotions, egoism persists in such relationships. The only difference is that the man and the woman's egoisms will match each other and converge for their mutual advantage. But the moment these interests fail to coincide, the harmony dissipates. In this type of relationship everything depends on what 'I get from the other person'. This egoistic sentiment erodes true interpersonal communion which is based on a selfless, permanent and exclusive commitment to the other person. Wojtyla will argue that there is no love because the "objective good which constitutes love is missing,"<sup>62</sup> this relationship sinks to the level of being used as a tool or instrument for the other. They make humanity an instrument for the satisfaction of their lust and inclinations, and dishonours it by placing it on a level with animal nature.

#### **2.4.5 Conclusion:**

It is apparent from the discussion that the personalistic norm stands in contrast to Utilitarian reasoning; and to move from one to the other is to make entry into a different world altogether. Nevertheless, both are a guide to the problem of human conduct. Both positions are uncompromising; Utilitarianism insists that the moral worth of actions be found in their ability to maximize happiness by bringing about the overall balance of pleasure over pain; whereas the Personalistic norm is equally insistent that the human person must not be used merely as a means to an end for another person.

I wish to make some further observations about Utilitarianism as a principle of moral conduct: pleasure arises from attaining the object of our desires, or what we feel when our desires are satisfied, or in some measure gratified. Nevertheless, pleasure is more specially

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<sup>62</sup>*Love and Responsibility*, p. 23.

regarded as the object of less abstract and reflective desires as bodily pleasure and the like. Pleasure in this sense is sought for itself, not as a means to an end.

If pleasure be the highest object of human action, nothing can be absolutely right; by acting thus they contradict their own nature or act unnaturally and immorally. If pleasure be the object of human action, we must reject duty as a guide of human actions. Bentham's Utilitarianism asks us to do the impossible, namely to anticipate endless chains of consequences from our actions. It is a computation of pleasures. Is it really possible to measure and compare the intensity of different pleasures in different people? Or even the same pleasure in the same person? Even though we may be able to foresee some of the consequences of our actions, who can really foresee all of them?

## CHAPTER THREE

### LOVE AND DESIRE

#### 3.1 Introduction

Since the 1960s when the sexual revolution began sweeping across the world, absolute sexual freedom and unlimited autonomy had become a surrogate for acceptable sexual behavior. Sexual revolutionaries mounted a frontal attack on traditional morality. They presented themselves as promoters of pleasure and freedom, working to liberate the world from the bondage of sexual restraint. Their activism led to the removal of legal restrictions on sexual behavior, pornography and a shift in social norms. The appeal of doctrines such as “free love” or “love without responsibility” was the order of the day. Young men and women were taught that casual sex was morally permissible and even a liberating experience that satisfies the longings of one’s inner self. This liberating experience was made possible by introduction of the birth control pill.<sup>63</sup> The once clear distinction between love and lust, or between sexual fulfillment and indulgence, seemed obscured. According to Wojtyla, the consequence of this moral transformation is cohabitation, casual sex and divorce that have destabilized marriage and family life.

*Love and Responsibility* was published in 1960 by Wojtyla Karol in response to this sexual revolution and the use of birth control to explain what true love is. He presents an analysis of why the sexual revolution is fundamentally anti-person and how sexual morality based on the truth about the human person is the path to true love. This chapter elucidates Wojtyla’s personalistic philosophy of why love relationships should end in marriage, and that marriage can

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<sup>63</sup> Spinello A. Richard, 2014, pp. 10-12

only be understood in terms of an unconditional sharing and total union at the bodily level that creates an intimate community centered on children.

This view stands contrary to the views of many other thinkers. Wojtyla's view presumes that reproductive and sexual experience is necessary for human fulfillment. Callahan Sidney,<sup>64</sup> from a feminist's perspective holds that, no woman has to marry or give birth and raise children to be complete, nor does she stay home and function as an earth mother. That female sexuality does need to be deeply respected as a unique potential and trust. She asserts that women have to insist upon a different, woman-centered approach to sex and reproduction. New feminist efforts to rethink the meaning of sexuality, femininity and reproduction are all the more vital as new techniques for artificial reproduction; whether it is positive or negative, this interpretation may begin as local storms of controversy, a threshold where society may emerge to full knowledge and action. I also wish to assert that, men and women do not need to marry to be whole persons, but if they do engage in sexual functioning, they are to be chaste, faithful, responsible and loving. Bertrand Russell,<sup>65</sup> one of the twentieth century most renown philosophers, argues for a liberalization of sexual morality. Russell finds traditional restrictions on sexual behavior to be part superstition and part response to social and biological conditions that no longer hold. Like John Stuart Mills, he pursues the path of asking "what moral rules are most likely to promote human happiness?" He advocates the acceptance of premarital sexual relationships, stressing that the pursued of pleasure is good.

The young Karol Wojtyla was also highly influenced by the culture and the situation in Poland between 1930-1950, just before the sexual revolution; where under Nazism and communism, there was no respect for human life and dignity and immorality was the order of the

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<sup>64</sup> Callahan 1986

<sup>65</sup> Russell 1936

day. The horrific acts of genocide in Poland during the World War II and the extreme oppression of post-World War II communism profoundly influenced and shaped Wojtyla's world view on morality.

### **3.2 General views on love**

Furthermore, what does Wojtyla think of love? Love according to Wojtyla is always a mutual relationship between persons. He holds that love is a complex reality, complicated by the fact that people mean different things when they use the word 'love'; nevertheless, Wojtyla sets out to give an extensive account of love's mysterious character, this I shall delve into in detail after the present analysis.

'What is true love?' generates a host of answers. In any case, is love possible? Over the centuries, the phenomenon of love has inspired and occupied philosophers as well as students and researchers. The term love has become one of the most frequently used and misused of words; a word to which we attach quite different meanings. It is a constant and vibrant theme in songs, films and novels. Why is love so important to us and yet fails us so often? We expect a lot from the sexual passion we call love, but often end up disappointed. Yet we keep getting married thinking that we are going to be the ones that will beat the system. If we fail, we change our partner and try again, we end our love life as we began it; confused, afraid and disappointed as we were hopeful. The relation between love and marriage is of particular interest in the history of love. Are love, desire and marriage always linked essentially as horse and carriage? This is what Wojtyla stands for, for him they are closely knit. Nevertheless, Jean-Paul Sartre is a paradigm of love/marriage being impossible. Instead of love being complete as in the traditional fusion model of love, Sartre views lovers as an ongoing circle where both individuals trade their dominance and submission to each other. His response to this tradition is that love cannot work for the

concept of individuals coming into a mutual entity, for him love is impossible. For Simone de Beauvoir, love and marriage are possible if both partners are equal. Irigaray Luce opposes the idea that if women want to be taken seriously they should be considered equal with men. On her account, love is possible, fusion is not possible, the traditional model in which two become one in matrimony is debunked.

Emerging from this analysis is the realization that love is somewhat a subjective experience and as a response to Wojtyla, love resists easy generalization or specification. But we need to know that, Wojtyla's target in his analysis of love, is primarily concerned with love between two persons who differ with respect to sex in the married life. He undertakes a tripartite analysis to disentangle the multitude of meanings which cling to the word 'love'. He looks at love under metaphysical analysis, psychological and ethical considerations. By metaphysical analysis he means a general characterization of love's fundamental elements: attraction or fondness, desire, goodwill, betrothed love, sympathy and reciprocity. The psychological analysis explains how the love between a man and a woman often has its origins within the body senses. Love according to Wojtyla also possesses a personal character or ethical dimension. Thus his ethical analysis of love brings to light why personal fulfillment does not only lie in sexual satisfaction, but in an intimate relationship that entails mutual affirmation, commitment and belonging. Wojtyla believes that this tripartite account of the bond between a man and a woman is indispensable for thorough understanding of love.

### **3.3 The tripartite account of love: Love according to Wojtyla:**

#### **3.3.1 The metaphysical reality of love**

According to Wojtyla the general analysis of love has a primarily metaphysical character, although we have to refer continually to its psychological and ethical aspects. These various

aspects of love interpenetrate, so that we cannot examine any one of them without mentioning the others sometimes. The first element in the general analysis of love is **attraction**. Wojtyla asserts that at the base of attraction is a sense impression but this is not decisive in itself. The emotions are present at the birth of love because they favour the development of a mutual attraction between man and woman. Wojtyla holds that man's emotions are in general not oriented towards intellectual knowledge but towards experience in a broader sense. Wojtyla is of the view that this natural tendency expresses itself in an emotional-affective reaction to a good. Emotional-affective reactions to the good obviously contribute greatly to the development of an attraction, in which one person is perceived by another as a good.

According to Wojtyla the attraction also consists of responses to a number of distinct values. All these values to which a person responds derive from the object of the attraction. The subject of the attraction finds them in its object. Wojtyla holds that it is because of this that the object is seen by the subject as a good which has attracted him/her. The object of attraction which is seen by the subject as a good is also seen as a thing of beauty. The appreciation of beauty goes together with the appreciation of values. He observes that in spite of this, however, there is more to an attraction than the sensations awakened by the contact between two persons. He believes "It is something more than the state of mind of a person experiencing particular values. It has as its object a person, and its source is the whole person. Such an attitude to a person is nothing other than love."<sup>66</sup> He acknowledges that even though the object of an attraction is a person, there can be no doubt that the attraction itself may take variety of forms. The emotional-affective reaction plays a prominent part in attraction and leaves a specific

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<sup>66</sup>*Love and Responsibility*, p. 76

imprint on it. For Wojtyla the sentiments in themselves have no cognitive power, but they have the power to guide and orient cognitive acts; this is evident in attraction.

Wojtyla asserts that ‘feelings arise spontaneously and unexpectedly, but this reaction is in effect blind.’ He holds that “This is where emotional-affective reactions often tend to distort or falsify attractions: through their prism values which are not really present at all may be discerned in a person.”<sup>67</sup> This rubric of love is seen in the early Philosophy of Jean –Paul Sartre.

According to him (in a paraphrase) love is not a selfless act; love is a seduction to manipulate/dominate the other, because to control the other, to master and possess the other we use modes of seduction. Think of the beginning of a relationship, or even a first date. Our thinking may not be based on having a good time with the other, but rather how to seduce or win the other. We may act in order to get the other to think of us in a certain way which probably we are not. For when emotional reactions are spent and they are naturally fleeting; the subject whose whole attitude is based on such reactions, is left as it were in a void, bereft of that good which he/she appeared to have found. According to Wojtyla, when we speak of the truth in an attraction it is essential to stress that the attraction must never be limited to partial values to something which is inherent in the person but is not the person as a whole. He believes “There must be a direct attraction to the person. In other words response to particular qualities inherent in a person must go with a simultaneous response to the qualities of the person as such, an awareness that a person as such is a value and not merely attractive because of certain qualities which he/she possesses.”<sup>68</sup> He holds that the attraction on which this love is based must originate not just in a reaction to visible and physical beauty but also in a full and deep appreciation of the beauty of the person.

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<sup>67</sup> *Love and Responsibility* p. 78

<sup>68</sup> *Love and Responsibility* p. 79

According to Wojtyla, apart from love as an attraction love is also found in **desire**. Desire too belongs to the very essence of the love which springs up between man and woman. Wojtyla believes that, “this is ‘love as desire’ for it originates in a need and aims at finding a good which it lacks. For a man that good is a woman; for a woman it is a man; there is however a profound difference between love as desire and desire itself, especially sensual desire.”<sup>69</sup> A man may, for instance desire a woman in this way: a human being then becomes a means for the satisfaction of desire; this he says suggests a Utilitarian attitude. Love as desire cannot then be reduced to desire itself. He holds that “It is simply the crystallization of the objective need of one being directed towards another being which is for it a good and an object of longing. And love is therefore apprehended as a longing for the person and not as a mere sensual desire.”<sup>70</sup> Desire goes together with this longing but is so to speak overshadowed by it

Wojtyla “believes that the subject in love works to perfect this love, and will see to it that desire does not dominate, does not overwhelm or else that love compromises; that even those that are not intellectually aware of it may sense that if desire is predominant it can deform love between man and woman and rob them both of it.”<sup>71</sup> This means that, love between man and woman would be evil, or at least incomplete, if it went no farther than love as desire. For love as desire is not the whole essence of love between persons. He says that “It is not enough to long for a person as a good for oneself, one must also long for that person’s good”.<sup>72</sup>

According to Wojtyla, apart from attraction and desire, **goodwill** is another element of love. Wojtyla asserts that, desire and goodwill are closely connected. “If one person wants another as a good for himself or herself, he/she must want that other person to be a real good; it

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<sup>69</sup> *Love and Responsibility* p. 80

<sup>70</sup> *Love and Responsibility* p. 80

<sup>71</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 81

<sup>72</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 81

is here we see how closely desire and goodwill can go together.”<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, he says goodwill is quite free of self-interest, the traces of which are conspicuous in love as desire. Wojtyla also believes that goodwill is the same as selflessness in love: “not ‘I long for you as a good’ but ‘I long for your good’, ‘I long for that which is good for you;’ He notes that the person of goodwill longs for this with no selfish ulterior motive, no personal consideration”<sup>74</sup>. Love as goodwill is therefore love in a more unconditional sense than love as desire. He holds that goodwill is the purest form of love.

According to Wojtyla another aspect of human love has to do with ‘from **sympathy to friendship;**’ apart from attraction, desire and goodwill. For Wojtyla, “love as sympathy means all that happens between people in the realm of their emotions; it is that by means of which emotional and affective experiences unite people. Sympathy is a manifestation of experience rather than of activity.”<sup>75</sup> He says that sympathy is love at a purely emotional stage, at which no decision of the will, no act of choice as yet plays a proper part. According to Wojtyla, “it is important that love between woman and man does not remain on the level of mere sympathy but must develop into friendship where it brings out the element of goodwill.”<sup>76</sup> Wojtyla notes that sympathy is not in itself friendship but it creates conditions for friendship between two persons to spring up. Sympathy must be transformed into friendship and friendship supplemented by sympathy. “In mere sympathy there is yet no active goodwill and without that there can be no true love”.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 83

<sup>74</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 82

<sup>75</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 89

<sup>76</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 90

<sup>77</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 91

### 3.3.2 The psychological reality of love

Wojtyla discusses in the psychological aspect issues of sensuality and sentiment. This part of the analysis centers on the ‘elementary particle’ of man’s psychological life. According to Wojtyla, love looked at on one hand in terms of psychology can be seen as a specific situation. It is on the other hand an internal situation, existing in a particular subject and it is simultaneously a situation between two persons, a man and woman. According to Wojtyla, “whether we think of its internal or its external aspect, it is a concrete situation and therefore unique and irreproducible; the external concreteness and uniqueness of the situation which we call love is closely connected with its internal aspect, with what is within each of the persons who are actors in the drama of their own love story.”<sup>78</sup> He says that love is certainly a drama in the sense that it is made up of happenings and of actions. The parties in the love drama discover the plot of this drama in themselves; perceive their love as a psychological situation unique of its kind and one of great and absorbing importance in their inner life. According to Wojtyla “psychology which is as its name indicates, the science of the soul, endeavours to lay bare the structure and the foundation of man’s inner life; its investigations serve to confirm that the most significant characteristics of that inner life are the sense of truth and the sense of freedom”.<sup>79</sup>

According to Wojtyla a sensory image is often connected with a particular feeling or reaction. When someone says that something or a person has ‘made an impression’ on him he means that together with the reflection of a certain sense content he has experienced a palpable stimulus to which the impression has impinged heavily on his consciousness. He says “this is where we move on to the sphere of emotions, they are separate and distinct from sense impressions; an emotion is also a sensory reaction to some object, but the content of the reaction

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<sup>78</sup> Love and Responsibility, p. 91

<sup>79</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 101

differs from the content of an impression.”<sup>80</sup> He holds that in the content of an impression what is reflected is the image of an object, whereas in an emotion we are reacting to a value which we find in the object. When an impression is linked with an emotion their common object is as a result more distinctly stamped on a man’s consciousness and stands out all the more clearly. According to him we often hear people say, ‘he/she made an impression on me;’ “If human love begins with an impression and if everything in it depends upon that impression this is because the impression is accompanied by an emotion, which makes it possible to experience another person as a value”.<sup>81</sup>

According to Wojtyla sensuality is also something more than an ordinary reaction of the senses to an object. Sensuality always implies experiencing a particular value bound up with this sensory awareness. Specifically, we are concerned with a sexual value connected above all with the body of a person. Sensuality in itself, according to Wojtyla, has a ‘consumer orientation’- it is directed primarily and immediately towards a ‘body.’ “Sensuality expresses itself mainly in an appetitive form: a person is seen as an object of desire specifically because of the sexual value inherent in the body itself; this value reaches the consciousness by way of an impression where the impression is accompanied by an emotion experienced not only mentally but bodily as well.”<sup>82</sup> So, sensuality is connected with the stirrings of the body.

Wojtyla observes that “this orientation of sensuality is a matter of spontaneous reflexes; it is not primarily an evil thing but a natural thing; the body is an integral part of the person and so it is not detached from the whole person: both the value of the body and the sexual value which finds expression in the body depend upon the value of the person, there can be no such

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<sup>80</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 102

<sup>81</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 103

<sup>82</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 105

thing as ‘pure’ sensuality such as exists in animals.”<sup>83</sup> According to him, the content of a sensual reaction in which the body and sex are experienced as objects of pleasure, indicates that sensuality in man is not ‘pure’ but modified in one way or another by awareness of values. This further means that sensuality by itself is not love. However, it is a sort of raw material for true spousal love to develop.

Another psychological aspect is sentimentality. According to Wojtyla, sentimentality must be clearly distinguished from sensuality. “Sentimental susceptibility is the source of affection and differs greatly from sensuality, the content of the sense impression is the whole person, the whole woman or man.”<sup>84</sup> He says that affection is not an urge to consume; it is so frequently identified with spiritual love. It is therefore compatible with contemplative moods which go with a sense of beauty and responsiveness to aesthetic values. Affection appears to be free from that concupiscence of which sensuality is full. According to Wojtyla:

“Sentimental love keeps two people close together, binds them together even if they are physically far apart. This love embraces memory and imagination, and also communicates itself to the will, it is generally recognized that a woman is by nature more sentimental and a man more sensual; sensuality is more awakened in a man; more readily crystallizes in his consciousness and in his attitude. Whereas in the woman sensuality is as it were covered or concealed by sentimentality; she is by nature more inclined to go on seeing as a manifestation of affection what a man already clearly realizes to be the effect of sensuality. There exists then a certain psychological divergence between man and woman in the manner of their participation in love”.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Love and Responsibility, p. 104

<sup>84</sup> Love and Responsibility, p. 109

<sup>85</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 110

Wojtyla holds that, sentimental love is often a cause of disillusionment. Man and woman alike may be disillusioned to find that the values ascribed to the beloved person are fictitious. The discrepancy between the ideal and the reality often result in sentimental love fading or indeed changing into a feeling of hatred. This may resound what Sartre holds about relationships: that conflict is not only genetically fundamental to the structure of human relationships; that it is and irreconcilable. Nevertheless, Wojtyla observes that “If love remains just sensuality it will not be love at all.”<sup>86</sup> while if love remains mere sentiments it will equally be unlike love in the complete sense of the word. Love is always an interior matter, a matter of the spirit; “to the extent to which it ceases to be an interior matter and a matter of the spirit, it also ceases to be love. What remains of it in the senses and in the sexual vitality of the human body, does not constitute its essential nature.”<sup>87</sup>

### **3.3.3 The ethical reality of love**

Where love between man and woman is concerned, “we must admit two meanings of the word: love can be understood as a certain situation with a psychological significance, but it also has an ethical significance.”<sup>88</sup> In other words, there is no possibility of psychological completeness in love unless ethical completeness is obtained. According to Wojtyla whether we look at love as a concrete situation or as a whole series, a continuum of such situations, all of them separately and together are psychologically complete and integrated to the extent that the ethical value of love is present in them. That is to say that “love as experience should be subordinated to love as virtue; so much so that without a virtue there can be no fullness in the

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<sup>86</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 113

<sup>87</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 114

<sup>88</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 120

experience of love”.<sup>89</sup> This view expresses the background to Wojtyla’s opposition to the use of contraception and other forms of birth control. His view is that Periodic continence is the acceptable method of birth control. According to him “it is a virtue and inherent in the essential character of this method as a virtue is the conviction that the love of man and woman loses nothing as a result of temporary abstention from erotic experiences.”<sup>90</sup> The personal union takes deeper root grounded in affirmation of the value of the person and not just a sexual attachment.<sup>91</sup> In light of the above, Wojtyla proceeds to discover in what way this love can be realized as a virtue. It is difficult to show this in full, he says because the virtue of love is a spiritual reality that is not open to observation. Wojtyla identified those elements which are most important, and which also stand out most clearly in this experience. A person differs from a thing in structure and in degree of perfection. “To the structure of the person belongs an interior in which we find the elements of spiritual life and it is this that compels us to acknowledge the spiritual nature of the human soul and the peculiar perfectibility of the human person; this determines the value of the person.”<sup>92</sup> And so a person possesses spiritual perfectibility and is by way of being an embodied spirit, not merely a body magnificently endowed with life. The value of the person as such, according to Wojtyla, must be clearly distinguished from the particular values present in a person. These are either inborn or acquired and are linked to the whole complex structure of human existence. These values find expression in love between man and woman; the psychological analysis of love has already shown. He says that “The value of a person is bound

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<sup>89</sup>*Love and Responsibility*, p. 121

<sup>90</sup> This is the same as the Natural Family Planning method

<sup>91</sup> On the contrary, this thesis sees this temporary abstention as creating a distance between couples and campaigns for the use of simple birth control methods that do not take life.

<sup>92</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 123

up with the whole being of the person and not with his/her sex”.<sup>93</sup> Sex is only an attribute of that being.

According to Wojtyla, that being so, every person possesses value in the first place and only secondarily possesses a sexual value. The person as such is not the content of an impression, for no essence can be so contained. “Since the person is not the content of an impression, but only the object of conceptual knowledge, it follows that a reaction to the value of a person cannot be immediate as a reaction to the sexual value connected with the body of the specific person.”<sup>94</sup> Wojtyla holds that in every situation in which we experience the sexual value of a person, love demands integration; meaning the incorporation of that value in the value of the person. This is where we see clearly expressed the fundamental ethical characteristic of love: it is an affirmation of the person or else it is not love at all; if it is informed with a proper attitude to the value of the person; this attitude he calls ‘affirmation;’ it is love in all its fullness, integral love. He holds that “this is particularly true of the love between man and woman. Love in the full sense of the word is a virtue, not just an emotion and still less a mere excitement of the senses”.<sup>95</sup>

According to him, “love as a virtue is oriented by the will towards the value of the person; the will then is the source of that affirmation of the person which permeates all the reactions, all the feelings, and the whole behaviour of the subject”.<sup>96</sup> Love as a virtue is connected with emotional love, and with the love contained in sensual desire. He holds that in the moral order “there can be no question of slurring over or neglecting the sexual values to which the senses and emotions react, his concern is simply to bind these values tightly to the

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<sup>93</sup>*Love and Responsibility*, p. 122

<sup>94</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 122

<sup>95</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 122

<sup>96</sup>*Love and Responsibility*, p. 123

value of the person, since love is directed not towards the body alone but precisely towards a person; it is only when it directs itself to the person that love is love”.<sup>97</sup>

Another element he touched on is the ethical requirements of betrothed love or spousal love. According to him “love’s true nature is most fully revealed in the gift of self by the person who loves to the beloved; betrothed love is a kind of love that has a specific quality of its own; which differentiates it from other forms and manifestations of love.”<sup>98</sup> He holds that in “betrothed love, love forcibly detaches the person from the natural inviolability and inalienability and surrenders itself to another, to the loved one. The person no longer wishes to be its own exclusive property, but instead to become the property of the other.”<sup>99</sup> This means the renunciation of its autonomy and its inalienability. According to Wojtyla “what is impossible and illegitimate in the natural order and in a physical sense, can come about in the order of love and in a moral sense and a person can give himself/herself, or can surrender entirely to another, whether to a human person or to God and such a giving of the self creates a special form of love which is defined as betrothed love.”<sup>100</sup> He observes that:

“contrary to the superficial view of sex, according to which love culminates in a woman’s surrender of her body to a man; it should be the mutual surrender of both persons of their belonging equally to each other. It is a reciprocated gift of self, so that two persons belong each to the other. It follows then that the unification of the two persons must first be achieved by way of love and sexual relations between them can only be the expression of unification already complete”.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 123

<sup>98</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 123

<sup>99</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 124

<sup>100</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 125

<sup>101</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 127

Accordingly “there exists in love a particular responsibility; the responsibility for a person who is drawn into the closest possible partnership in the life and activity of another and becomes in a sense the property of whoever benefits from this gift of self.”<sup>102</sup> He observes that responsibility for love clearly comes down to responsibility for the person, originates in it and returns to it. This, he asserts, is what makes it such an immense responsibility. But its immensity can only be understood by one who has a complete awareness of the value of the person.

As discussed above, Wojtyla paints an ideal picture that is not universally upheld; he says: “the person no longer wishes to be its own exclusive property, but instead to become the property of the other. This means the renunciation of its autonomy and its inalienability... mutual surrender of both persons of their belonging equally to each other...” In previous discussions in chapter 2 about the ‘person’ Wojtyla did say that, the person cannot be someone else’s property; and so the above quoted affirmation seems to contradict that earlier view about the person. Secondly, it is the case in some parts of our world today where there is still a gendered aspect which makes one sex have authority than the other. The man has always been the defining subject while the woman is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her. She is the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the absolute, wives are an inferior property to the husband. For them there is no equality in marriage. What Wojtyla proposes is the ideal but in reality it may not be the case for some people. It is sad to say that in some cases even if the man falls in love, he is still the absolute subject and his whole goal is possession, whereas the woman has no choice than to be possessed. Some of these men seek domination more than marriage and reciprocity an alien language. More so, the woman has to be submissive in this relationship, she must do what she can to hold unto

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<sup>102</sup> Love and Responsibility, p. 128

that love. I was born and bred in a society where this was a reality, not much has changed today. If there were a sex neutral universal where both male and female could not over power the other worldwide; the hopeful outcome would be equality at least in a marital union.

### **3.3.4 Contrary views of the ‘unification of two persons in marriage’**

There is a lot to learn from Wojtyla’s theory of love. Wojtyla proposes nothing but bliss in ‘the two becoming one.’ But has he given us the entirety of what pertains in the world about love or there is still a part to be revealed? What has the story been long before his time? What about the contemporary views? Is the story still the same today? Do men and women still enter into love relationships to arrive at what he prescribes? What has changed? I shall begin the search with Plato<sup>103</sup> One of the most influential traditions of love in the Western world is Platonism; originating with Plato’s writings on love/sex. The tradition flourished through Aristotle, Plotinus and the revival of Neo-Platonism in the Renaissance. But Plato’s influence expanded beyond the tradition he started.<sup>104</sup> Plato’s theory of love and sex is a very complex one, but let me just zoom in on the fact that, in the popular mind, Platonism is associated with the concept of platonic love, which is understood today as a non-sexual relationship between persons; but also, Plato considers love between people, solely as homosexual phenomenon, whereas his discussion of sex includes both heterosexual and homosexual relationships. The sociological setting of Platonism around the fifth century, explains that men were married for reproductive ends, yet reserved the term love and passionate activity of sexual love for homosexual relationships.<sup>105</sup> In the *Symposium*, we hear more of homosexual activity than

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<sup>103</sup> Plato (428-348), B.C.E

<sup>104</sup> Levy Donald “Plato’s Definition of Love in Plato’s *Symposium*”, Source: Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 40. No.2, 1979.

<sup>105</sup> Gonzalez-Reigosa 1989, O’Connor 1991, Tannahil 1989.

heterosexual relationship. By the sixth century B.C, the Greeks had come to think that a good-looking boy or youth should excite in an older male the same desire for genital contact and orgasm as is excited by a pretty lady. The Greeks did not think of a homosexual love affair as involving mutual desires on the part of two males of the same age group. The more mature male pursued the younger. The other dimension of this relationship was that, any relationship between an older and a younger male in a Greek community had an educational dimension which is missing in the relationship described by Wojtyla. The younger took the older as a model to be imitated. Plato looks at this outcome as a good foundation upon which a teacher-pupil relationship could thrive and then a cooperative intellectual enterprise could be built. This model stands parallel to Wojtyla's proposed theory. Nevertheless, the Athenians of Plato's time believed that a homosexual lover was thought capable of all the obsessive longing, self-abasement and devoted self-sacrifice associated with heterosexual love and more as Wojtyla's moral theory describes.

Against this framework, the social status of women in Ancient Greek, in Plato's time was a very limited one to say the least.<sup>106</sup> This is also against the backdrop prescribed by Wojtyla that, in marriage the two are not only one but equal. It was an era where women were little better than domestic slaves. Women were subservient to the will of their husbands and fulfilled the role of household managers and servants of the husband. Women were referred to as sexual objects, petty, nagging and cowardly.<sup>107</sup> Given these basic features of the social structure of the Athenian society, it was not surprising that Plato, in spite of general pronouncements to the contrary, could not stand his ground to the fact that women were equal to his male citizens. He felt it was a good

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<sup>106</sup> I believe it is no longer the same today

<sup>107</sup> Pomeroy S. 1975

idea but probably later thought it was impossible. And so while there is evidence in the *Republic* and his other writings, which speak of complete equality of education and employment because men and women are the same; there is also evidence where he was hesitant about this affirmation.<sup>108</sup> Even though he may be held among the first to promote the equality of women, he somewhat still considered them inferior; his equality comes at the price of their negation. In some of his texts, he either expressed directly or through images and metaphors that positioned women as property, prizes, slaves under the custodial care of men.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, Plato's views on women were no doubt revolutionary.

Wojtyla's moral theory, also parallels the moral views of some other thinkers. For Sartre, love is a failure let alone to talk about a marital union. My representation of the views of Sartre and also Simone de Beauvoir and later Irigaray; are by no means exhaustive since they are all philosophers who were prolific writers; their work is beyond my scope. But I shall just zoom in also on some of the salient aspects of their views that are relevant to this analysis. Jean-Paul Sartre, wonders why anyone would want to give up their freedom in a marriage. Sartre proposes rather that, we expand our identity and options by having as many lovers as possible because our freedom would be limited if we restrict ourselves to just one person. Sartre's problem with love or marriage or as Wojtyla calls it: betrothed love, is that we must give up our freedom and take away the other's freedom in order to create a new self. Sartre holds that we cannot completely give up our individuality to create this new self; we want some aspects of individuality too. To sum up his views; sexual desire according to Sartre is doomed to failure for the same reasons as love does, because sexual activities means deriving pleasure for one's own body. Once the affair is over, he says I am left with nothing except embracing an object; therefore, failure of the desire

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<sup>108</sup> Annas 1976

<sup>109</sup> Pomeroy 1975

can lead to either sadism or masochism. In consequence, all sexual activity is sado-masochistic. So in love he says, I want to capture a person's freedom, in sex, I want to focus on the person's body and gain possession. Accordingly, love ends up in conflict and throughout the cycle, love goes through these stages. And so for Sartre love leads to disastrous results where at least someone's freedom is limited. The question Sartre implicitly seems to leave us with is whether love is always doomed to fail?

Simone de Beauvoir believes that love can be redeemed. By contrast Beauvoir casts a positive light over the human condition. She heralds the possibility of individual fulfilment and social harmony. Although Beauvoir does not develop a sustained description of "authentic love" in the *Second Sex*, she implies that this is realizable in principle. For her, the key is overcoming the historical inequality between the sexes which has corrupted authentic love. She demonstrates that being in love is an irresistible ploy devised by men, such that happiness for women is recognized as part of a man. And so love is a male invention to entrap the women in the house. She looks at Sartre's model of love as "a bad faith version of love." Beauvoir holds that authentic love can only happen if the individuals are equal; that way love can have grounds for culmination and fusion. This would seem to be in line with the thought of Wojtyla of marriage or betrothed love: that we should rightly speak of the mutual surrender of both persons of their belonging equally to each other. It is a reciprocated gift of self, so that two persons belong each to the other. Beauvoir's view may not seem exactly as Wojtyla's thought. According to Beauvoir, love in a patriarchal culture is a snare for a woman. For her, woman can only gain value by bonding with a man. For a woman love is a supreme effort to survive by accepting the dependence to which she is condemned. Beauvoir holds that as soon as the woman is locked into love it is very difficult to escape because of financial and psychological reasons. Her livelihood,

her existence, her very meaning is enslaved in her lover, her master, her god. For Beauvoir every woman in marriage is another incarnation of her loved one, his reflection, his double, she is he. She lets her world collapse in contingency, for she really lives in his. And so there is no shared equaled self here. Beauvoir also notes that when the man says we, she is associated and identified with him, so there may be a chance to say that they become one, but it is the man who swallows up her transcendence while the man remains unaffected; that is why a woman falls in love in order to get an identity. According to Beauvoir the man's wants are limited. As soon as he has obtained what he wants he is satisfied. However, the woman has no limits to her devotion; she continually gives.

What then is authentic love for Beauvoir as proposed by Wojtyla? Authentic love is possible if both sexes will not be dominant one upon the other. The fusion ought to be founded on the mutual recognition of two liberties, the lovers would then experience themselves both as self and as other: neither would be mutilated, together they will manifest values and aims in the world. Love then would be revelation of self by the gift of self and enrichment of the world. Nonetheless, Beauvoir does not provide how women can get out of the repressive scheme so that they can have a reciprocal relationship with men. She gives no prescription except that of equality, how do we get there? May be the way out could be that, couples must first become complete persons. They should not be regarded as a unit, closed cell, rather each individual should be integrated as such in society at large, where each could flourish without aid; then attachments could be formed in pure generosity with another individual. Attachments that could be founded on the acknowledgment that both are free. Therefore, to have love in equality possible as Beauvoir says, woman must be economically independent and transcend herself without the aid of man. Nevertheless, it is also the case that one can be free according to cultural,

historical, social and so on and our freedom is limited when some more other factors limit us in what we do.

There is another dimension to all of these models of love: Luce Irigaray mirrors same sex love relationships. Irigaray concentrates on articulating a feminist ethics of sexual difference. Her ethics takes men and women to be specific in their needs, interests and rights. Love cannot take place in a hierarchical division of society between men and women; where women have no specificity or identity. She suggests that being equal to men is not enough; women merely equaled to men would “be like them” therefore not women. She passionately disagrees with the idea of becoming equal to men and argues for differences, particularly sexual difference. And so Irigaray seeks an altogether different space for women, one not defined in relation to men, but in their own terms. Under such a love relationship nothing is privileged and no one is the master. By recognizing the differences both would have contributions to society instead of one dominating the other. Does Irigaray want a ‘we’ or a union? Irigaray states that a ‘we’(fusion) needs to be formed but this ‘we’ is not the typical ‘we’ formed in traditional marriage. Thus the relationship is of two subjects where they both leave the subjectivity of the other intact. She says there is a creative and fecund interchange between two who are radically different from each other coming together in union in which difference is not eradicated.

Love for Irigaray would be free, a play of texts and bodies. Without any institutions or establishments of doctrine, politics or commitment. If not, it is stuck in the masculine order. Thus to use sex as a means for bringing children or forming a family is a perversion of love. Procreation of a child is not the aim, but procreation of beauty. Traditionally the aim of love was procreation, but on Irigaray’s account, love is already harmonious; it is not procreation that is beautiful and that constitutes the objective of love. The body as well as spirit is continuously

changing; why mess that up with a child? She says procreation cannot become the goal of love because the love between lovers loses its growth. According to her, what we seek in love is the fruition of interaction not reproduction. This view is totally opposed to the analysis of Wojtyla on love, one person does not hold the truth about love; love is dynamic and always a changing process.

Irigaray's model of love totally rejects any form or rubric of the traditional model of love. She holds that the differences make love. Focusing on the differences forms a new model of love, where the concentration is on the 'betweenness' of the couple itself and not the grindings of the fusion where one individual must succumb to the other in order to fuse. According to her love allows for respect and attracts, while maintaining a distance; love does not involve complete assimilation or appropriation of the other.

My take on all of this is that, we define ourselves in terms of other people and we are largely defined by other people no matter how nobly individual we may be. So the modern idea of the isolated self-defining seems to me a myth. In the story of modern romance, freedom creates an unbearable tension with the desire to merge with another person. The other's freedom is the foundation of my being and it is precisely this freedom that may bring some conflict into the project of love. Nevertheless, I may choose to either see the relationship as a futile entanglement with another or have faith that the presence of the other in my life will enhance rather than diminish my freedom. It is not written anywhere which choice of partner is better, only I can define what that value means for me.

### **3. 3. 5 Some Critical analysis of Wojtyla's position on love, desire and contraception**

Regarding Wojtyla's views on contraception, he advocates for periodic countenance as the only acceptable method of birth control. Irigaray, (mentioned above) wants to enjoy love and

not give birth; assuming she decides to use the periodic continence as a method to avoid giving birth would that be an acceptable choice of method to Wojtyla? What makes it wrong? For Wojtyla, this will be a wrong motive; because he believes that it is equally irresponsible to marry and not bear children for no medical reason or some other grievous reason. So Irigaray will be using the right method for Wojtyla with the wrong motive for that matter. As a result, in this case is the morality in the motive or the method? This thesis believes it is not the method but the motive that needs to be examined. And so, the choice of contraception as a method to use, is not the problem but the motive for the use of a particular method is where the morality lies. What makes the use of contraception reprehensible or irreprehensible is not the method but the motivation behind the kind of method that Wojtyla should be concerned about. This points to the fact that, even though periodic continence is the ideal method for Wojtyla, it can be used with the wrong motive. This vindicates the fact that contraception can be used responsibly in the married life by couples who have reached this motive responsibly for their good and the welfare of their children.

Furthermore, Wojtyla's theory is silent about what is helpful in dispelling the confusion and failure about love and does not propose some solutions to the suffering that love sometimes brings. In consequence, regarding Wojtyla's view on love; one might have at one point or another, have been in love and love ends up dissolving leaving the person in question with the uneasy feeling that he/she stood before something that was no more than a mirage. Without doubt the frustration that derives from the entire process of falling out of love, that radical disillusionment is a practically obligatory experience in the path of love. Wojtyla does not prescribe any way forward in this falling out of love since his theory guides us through falling in

love and the result he hopes will be the two become one. What if there is a fall out, how is this eventuality to be handled?<sup>110</sup>

It is evident in this discussion also that, Wojtyla concerns himself with what one may call ‘normal acts’ within the sexual sphere. What about the ‘abnormal acts’ when the object of love is an animal, a robot/artificial human being, same sex or masturbation? It is obvious then that, bestiality, masturbation and same sex cannot have the personalistic norm as their principle. The effect which the norm has on the relationship between love and sexuality is thus limited. It does not make love the determining principle of all sexual activities but only of those sexual activities that take another person of the opposite sex as their object of love. Nevertheless, from his tripartite analysis of love, he asserts the following:

“what is impossible and illegitimate in the natural order and in a physical sense, can come about in the order of love and in a moral sense and a person can give himself/herself, or can surrender entirely to another, whether to a human person or to God and such a giving of the self creates a special form of love which is defined as betrothed love.”<sup>111</sup>

I wonder if this pronouncement could be applied to other forms of love? I do know that he speaks in terms of two people of different sexes, but this affirmation above, he seems to be talking in general. If the other forms of love are regarded by society as ‘abnormal,’ then they may be esteemed as impossible and illegitimate and yet in the order of love and in a moral sense a person may give herself/himself to the experience; in that case, can that also be defined as betrothed love?

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<sup>110</sup> Nevertheless, let me speculate that, falling out of love is nonetheless a priceless lesson for an encounter with the ‘real’.

<sup>111</sup> Love and Responsibility, p. 125

Additionally, in explaining love as desire, Wojtyla asserts that, ‘a man therefore needs a woman so as to complete his own being, and a woman needs man in the same way;.....this objective, ontological need makes itself felt through the sexual urge’<sup>112</sup> In saying that man needs a woman, so to say, to complete his own being and in talking about an “ontological need”, Wojtyla seems to use a rhetorical language, that could lead to misunderstanding. It could lead to affirming that man and woman’s very being is somehow deficient. I believe man does not literally long to possess a woman. Rather he desires the presence of the woman as a helper fit for him.<sup>113</sup> So what happens in a case that a man desires another man or a woman another woman, or a person with an animal as a good for himself? Is this still a good?

Furthermore, is Wojtyla misleading a fiction that love is the most effortless, conflict free, one that is hindered not by internal or external obstacles? There is no doubt that jealousy while in part instinctive, is to a very large degree conventional. Jealousy is intimately connected to the sense of “property” and is much less where this sense is absent. If faithfulness is no part of what is conventionally expected, jealousy is much diminished. And so one of the difficulties I see as a challenge to Wojtyla’s theory as a workable sexual ethic stems from the conflict of the impulse of jealousy which may arise between couples with the undertone of the fact that: “...each becomes the property of the other...”. This is an impulse if not handled well, will be disastrous to successful marriages. Love is prone to jealousy. Jealousy is one of the greatest of psychological catastrophes, involving the possible ruin of both partners, a morality based on the need for erotic love must forestall and eliminate jealousy.

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<sup>112</sup> *Love and Responsibility* p. 81

<sup>113</sup> Genesis 2:20

### **3.3.6 Conclusion:**

Wojtyla has extensively discussed and tried in his analysis to disentangle the multitude of meanings which cling to the word love. Given the complexity of the word itself I wonder if he was successful in this. He has left us with more meanings and attachments. From his analysis he depicts the fact that a person is an entity of a sort to which the only proper and adequate way to relate is love. This analyzes on love is his desire to give love a central place in marriage. He demonstrates that love is not just what one can get but a deep appreciation of beauty which must go with the appreciation of values. It also means according to him that love is not mere attraction to beauty or some other. And so “the attraction on which the love is based must originate not just in a reaction to visible and physical beauty but also in a full and deep appreciation of the beauty of the person”.<sup>114</sup> He also asserts that, the essence of betrothed love is self-giving according to him. This does not entail giving of oneself only sexually without the gift of the person to validate it,<sup>115</sup> otherwise he cautions; it implies a hidden contraceptive mentality and becomes more or less the gift of self in a purely utilitarian sense and therefore degrade love to reciprocal sexual exploitation and use. And so, he recommends that betrothed love must form an ally with goodwill and friendship without which love becomes dangerous and helpless in the face of external and internal conditions. In this regard, I believe in the strength of these allies in betrothed love couples can embrace contraception; because these allies he mentioned if present in a marriage can safeguard the marital bond and weaken or breakdown the effect of the contraceptive mentality<sup>116</sup> and enable couples use contraception responsibly.

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<sup>114</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 132

<sup>115</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 110

<sup>116</sup> The mentality I mean is that it has the apparent feature of maximizing the possible amount of coitus; in other words, it has a pleasure seeking nature, it seems attractive and convenient. This maximization (mentality) is a marriage builder to some extent but there is the possibility to maximize beyond the boundaries of marriage; as Wojtyla observed, after all there are no procreative responsibilities.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ETHICAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONTRACEPTION AND ABORTIFICATION

#### **4.1 Introduction:**

Why should we practice family planning? We rely on our families to survive. The more of us there are, the better we can work to get food and shelter now and have the security when we are old. For this reason, family planning until recently was a very sensitive subject in Sub-Saharan Africa. Human beings have evolved to a point where we can separate the sexual act from its reproductive dimensions by recurring to various methods of contraception. We can likewise separate conceptive effect from contraceptive-abortionifacient effect in our world today. This chapter discusses the ethical issues surrounding the contraceptive- abortionifacient debate and the safety of contraception use.

#### **4. 2 The ethical issues regarding contraceptive-abortionifacients:**

Many different theories have been put forward regarding the time at which human life begins. Reasons have been offered for identifying the start of human life with each of the following events: the time of conception or fertilization, the time of uterine implantation of the fertilized ovum, the time of segmentation when the ovum is truly individualized so that twinning is no longer possible, the appearance of brain waves in the fetus, the time of fetal viability and so on. This thesis believes that human life is present or begins from the moment of conception/ fertilization and not any time later in the embryonic development. From the moment of fertilization there is a genetic package present which is certainly not part of any species other

than the human race.<sup>117</sup> This thesis believes that human life must be protected from its earliest beginning. From the time that the ovum is fertilized, a life is begun which is neither that of the mother's nor the father's; it is rather the life of a new human being with his/her own growth. It would never become a human being, if it were not human already. The probability that a human person is involved would suffice to justify an absolutely clear prohibition of any intervention aimed at terminating a human embryo. All my arguments will be built against this background.

This thesis defends the use of contraception in the context that contraception is in fact contraception and used as such. The following birth control methods are indeed contraception, (I use contraception to also mean birth control even though they are not synonymous) and do not cause abortion: The male and female condoms, the diaphragm, cervical cap and periodic continence also known as natural family planning. The most common forms of what we most generally call contraception today: IUDs, oral contraceptive pill and all its formulations among others; which are said to be the safest types of birth control methods available, act as abortifacients. Contraceptives that are injectable once a month and contraceptive implants have also been developed such as Depo-Provera and Norplant. The major function of the two is to alter the endometrium thus preventing implantation and also alters the cervical mucus and sometimes prevents ovulation.<sup>118</sup> If fertilization counts as the point of beginning for human life, then those forms of contraception terminate early fertilization of the fetus. It would seem we are not still dealing with the common barrier methods; we no longer just talking about condoms and diaphragms, things have changed morally. Several studies have shown that women on the pill

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<sup>117</sup> Genovesi Vincent SJ, 1987.

<sup>118</sup> Kumar Anand T.C., Dhah R.S., Chitlange C.M., Hazari K.T., Gopalkrisnan K., Vadigoppula A. D., Vernekar V. J., Borkar D. M., and Puri CP, 1991

experience an early silent abortion during 5 to 13% of their cycle.<sup>119</sup> Others have researched this issue and concluded that all hormonal contraceptives have an abortifacient potential.<sup>120</sup> Even though it has been argued that current scientific knowledge does not establish a definitive causal link between the routine use of the combined-pill and abortion, there is also no data to deny a post-conceptual effect. They argue that, the risk is a theoretical possibility. But a theoretical, yet unproven risk should carry the same weight and be disclosed in the same fashion as a known, proven risk.

The major trend in fertility control seems to be toward the development of abortifacients. Accordingly, it appears that many if not all of the pharmacological contraceptives are at least in part abortifacient, and the newer preparations under development tend to be entirely abortifacient, notwithstanding that they are promoted as contraceptives. Objectively, and assuming that one should always favour human life, the abortifacient component of oral contraceptives should result in them being regarded as abortifacient and assessed that way. This then raises the issue of a wide range of ethical concerns. It is important in this regard for clear teaching on contraceptives–abortifacients and the apparent deceit involved, not only in order to address the matter of respect for life but also the matter of the right of women to know what they are doing to their own bodies and to the lives for whom their bodies are rendered hostile without their knowledge.

The terms contraceptive act and abortifacient act need to be clarified and understood as such. When the natural process of the formation of human life in the marital act is prevented by

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<sup>119</sup> William F. Colliton Jr., M.D., 1998.

<sup>120</sup> Harlap Susan, Kost Kathryn and Forrest Darroch Jacqueline, The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1991, pp. 17-28, as well as Alcorn Randy, 1998

some form of deliberate intervention in the human body or intervention in the act itself from fertilization of an ovum by a sperm, is a contraceptive effect. On the other hand, an abortifacient effect occurs when intervention takes place of a kind which would likely, if fertilization were to have occurred to destroy the human zygote,<sup>121</sup> embryo, fetus, to prevent its implantation, or to cause an implanted embryo or fetus to miscarry.<sup>122</sup> In other words, it is an effect that ends the life of a pre-born child after fertilization or conception.

Most birth control pills contain a combination of the hormones estrogen and progesterin, which is why they are also combined pills. Different pills have different doses of hormones in them and are taken in different ways. And so the contraceptive pill means either combine estrogen and progesterin preparations or the progesterin only preparations. There is not one formulation of the contraceptive-abortifacient pill but many varieties.<sup>123</sup> They do not all have the same pharmacological action. It is not merely a question of stronger or weaker doses of the same hormones but different preparations with different effects. In general, there are three modes of action involved: the effect on the cervix, on ovulation and on the lining of the uterus. In the various formulations it is not known how often that both ovulation is not suppressed and the cervical factor fails to block the passage of sperm and so allows fertilization followed by an endometrial effect causing the loss of a zygote. Often, anti-implantation effects of contraceptive-abortifacients would seem not to be regarded as morally the same as abortion. Given that there is loss of or possible loss of life involved in taking the oral contraceptives, users should be informed and the moral conclusions drawn as such. Simple logic demands that those who respect

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<sup>121</sup> The human zygote is the cell formed by the fusion of the two gametes

<sup>122</sup> Fillipini Nicholas Tonti, 1995

<sup>123</sup> Fillipini Nicholas Tonti, 1995

the sanctity of human life from fertilization until natural death should be concerned about the trend of events here.

The progesterone-only formulations are more likely to have an abortifacient result than the combined estrogen-progestogen formulations. There is a significant chance of abortifacient effect which increases as the estrogen content diminishes. In the formulations with low estrogen content, ovulation would be less likely to be suppressed and the actions of the progestogen on the cervix and the endometrium become more significant, which increases the risk of zygote loss.<sup>124</sup> In the case of the combined pill the higher and the more prolonged the dose of progestogen, the greater the disruption to the cervical mucus and the lower the chance of fertilization occurring and hence the lower the chance of an abortifacient effect.<sup>125</sup>

The type of progestogen formulation being used is also relevant. Some have a slower more sustained absorption than others. A sustained level of progestogen throughout the day is probably necessary to maintain disruption of the cervical mucus, thus maintaining a contraceptive effect. Progesterone levels may cause a breakthrough bleeding seen in some women using the low dose oral contraceptive pill, indicating that the endometrium is disturbed.<sup>126</sup> In that case the abortifacient effect on the endometrium rather than the contraceptive effect achieved in the cervix, is more likely in formulations that do not provide a sustained level of the hormones throughout the day.<sup>127</sup> It is assumed that any damage to the endometrium is likely to increase the risk of zygote loss. The combined pill certainly causes atrophic changes to the endometrium which then becomes an unreceptive environment to the

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<sup>124</sup> Aref I., Hefnawi F., Kandi O., Abdel Aziz, 1973

<sup>125</sup> Kumar Anand T.C., Dhah R.S., Chitlange C.M., Hazari K.T., Gopalkrisnan K., Vadigoppula A. D., Vernekar V. J., Borkar D. M., and Puri CP, 1991

<sup>126</sup> Youngkin E. Q., 1993

<sup>127</sup> Safro E., O'Neil, Saunders O.M., 1990

zygote; also there is a pregnancy rate in the actual clinical use of the combined pill indicating that the cervical effect is not always sufficient. And so the possibility that the combined pill in some cases does not prevent fertilization to occur while increasing the likelihood of implantation failure cannot be considered as impossible. That probability increases in the combined pills using lower estrogen doses.<sup>128</sup> It is not uncommon to hear it contended that in the higher-dose combined pill the likely risk to zygote loss is relatively small and therefore negligible; but not assuredly, so small that it is morally insignificant. It is risking human life which makes even a relatively small risk a matter needing attention and concern. Abortifacient effect of contraceptives must not be hidden in misleading terms and understatement. Manufacturers of these drugs owe the public to give clear warning to that effect. As a result, it is a crucial ethical issue that abortifacients have been accepted readily possibly because they have been approved and marketed as contraceptives only, other than what they really are.

Ethically, abortifacient effect of contraception should not be condoned or shelved as though all was well; the right to information requires that the effects of contraceptive substance or device be communicated to the person who will use that substance or device. How effectively is this technical description communicated to a less-educated woman who subscribes to the service in the deprived areas? Women using contraceptives might simply trust the advice given that what has been prescribed is indeed contraception. Furthermore, do all women understand when they read the inscription that is issued with the drug: “changes in the endometrium reduces the likelihood of implantation”? Most women may not understand that this has a bearing on an abortifacient effect. Therefore, users may be misled by the label: contraceptive.

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<sup>128</sup> Fillipini Nicholas Tonti, 1995

### 4. 3 The new definition of the beginning of pregnancy

The abortive potential of hormone – based birth control methods has further been clouded by the re-definition of the beginning of pregnancy by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). According to the bulletin issued in 1965, conception or fertilization should be understood to mean “the implantation of a fertilized ovum”<sup>129</sup> this became necessary because the pill after its development did not fit the traditional definition of contraceptive. In that the pill does not just prevent conception it also inhibits implantation because of changes it makes to the endometrium. This therefore created an ethical problem for the doctors who wanted to assure their patients that the pill was a contraceptive and not abortifacient. Accordingly, by redefining the biological definition, contraception now prevents pregnancy by interfering with ovulation, fertilization or implantation. This definition also holds that abortion ends an established pregnancy after implantation. Therefore, hiding under this new definition; contraceptive oral pills, copper IUDs and all the abortifacients have been shown not to disrupt existing pregnancy. In other words, by redefining the beginning of pregnancy, birth control methods that would otherwise have been said to end pregnancy can now be said to prevent pregnancy. Nevertheless, these semantic changes do nothing to alter the biology of prenatal development, but they do plenty to confuse the ethical implications anyway.

Is it then appropriate that we should not have any concerns about birth control methods that impede implantation today after fertilization has occurred? Well, how else would they have justified themselves? This leaves the ethical problems with abortion, or abortifacient birth control methods a much more complex issue to deal with. So do the birth control pills cause

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<sup>129</sup> American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Terminology Bulletin. Terms used in Reference to the Fetus. No. 1 Philadelphia: Davis, September, 1965.

abortion? The conclusion is that: it all depends on when pregnancy really begins. This thesis upholds the fact that human life is initiated at conception therefore fertilization not implantation marks the beginning of human life and that all human life is of infinite value. Disruption of the fertilized egg consequently, represents abortion.

As we have observed above, not all the methods employed in an attempt to avoid procreation do not have the same status from/ a moral standpoint. Some of the devices which are generally referred to as contraceptive, are not such in fact; rather, they are abortifacient or abortion-causing agents and have to be judged accordingly.<sup>130</sup> The Ghana National Reproductive Health Service Policy and Standards<sup>131</sup> cautions that abortion is not and shall not be used as a family planning method. With the same motive, it also adds that, emergency contraception shall not be promoted as a regular family planning method.

#### **4. 4 The safety of the methods of birth control**

Millions of otherwise healthy people use fertility control methods; their safety is a particularly important issue. With several possible fertility control methods available to most people, the relative effectiveness of the methods becomes a crucial factor in decision making.

If there was a perfect method of birth control, there would be no worry for prospective users. A perfect contraceptive would be 100% effective, totally safe, available to everyone, inexpensive, completely without side effects, instantly reversible and easy to use; one that would not interfere with intercourse in a way and would require no advice or care from a clinician. There is no such

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<sup>130</sup> Morton Mintz, 1970 p. 80

<sup>131</sup> The Ghana National Reproductive Health Service Policy and Standards 2014 p.12

method today, and according to research experts, there are no likely prospects for the near future.<sup>132</sup>

Two considerations rise to the top as the most important in the minds of couples considering contraceptives – effectiveness and safety. For each method of birth control there is a rate of failure or an estimated number of pregnancies that can be expected if that method is used perfectly. Just as no contraceptive is 100% effective, no contraceptive is without risk. As we can see in the discussion above on the contraceptive methods, in fact there are a variety of risks one might expose oneself to by using a method of contraceptives; even though some women are more likely than others to encounter problems with a specific method of birth control. When the phrase “it is a one in a million possibility” is used we usually mean to imply that it almost never happens. But for that one person who suffers a complication, it is now a 100% reality not a one in a million risk. Nevertheless, this phrase while it could not be used to totally allay the concern of a woman choosing a contraception, it may help a woman compare the risk of the contraceptive to other voluntary risks to which she exposes herself, especially the risk of death from each pregnancy. It is a reality though there are other risks even in everyday life not only in contraceptive use.

It is essential that individuals have a choice of and free access to safe, acceptable and effective birth control methods. In addition, the needs of many consumers are not met by existing methods and a large number of these methods are difficult to deliver in many service settings especially in developing countries, and most of these methods are not perfect.<sup>133</sup> It is also the case that; “many ancient remedies were poorly effective and some downright dangerous as

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<sup>132</sup> *Centre for Disease control*, 1983:234

<sup>133</sup> *Michael J.K. Harper*, 1982 p. 9-10

observed in chapter one. As I mentioned earlier, in an ideal world a contraceptive would provide complete protection against pregnancy, be entirely free of health risks and side effects, not involve any action during or immediately before intercourse, be completely reversible, not rely on the user's memory, and not involve the medical profession; and if it prevented the transmission of sexually transmitted disease. It is likely to take a very long time before this ideal becomes a reality.<sup>134</sup>

#### **4. 4.1 Conclusion:**

The above observations and moral issues regarding the use of contraceptives notwithstanding, it is without doubt that contraception is necessary to space birth; and so contraceptive use is the expression of individual desires to space or to limit birth. People who wish to limit their fertility do so primarily in pursuit of family or individual aspirations to enhance their chances for personal fulfillment and to provide a good home and opportunities for their children. The use of simple contraceptive methods that do no harm to mother or child, could be employed in this regard responsibly by couples to achieve their contraceptive need.

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<sup>134</sup> *Centre for Disease Control*, 1983 p. 236

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINAL CONCLUSIONS

#### **5. 1 Introduction:**

Wojtyla argues against the use of contraceptives for married couples. His view is that contraceptive sexual intercourse is reductive, does not fully respect the dignity of the other and does not fully express human spousal love. This chapter investigates Karol Wojtyla's position and defends the possibility of exercising responsible human love whilst using contraceptives in the sexual life of married couples.

Does Wojtyla's view above imply that there are righteous means to contracept? If there is a righteous means to contracept, are there also some righteous reasons to contracept? Are there contraceptives that work exclusively by preventing conception from occurring? And given that biological systems are not perfect, do the contraceptives cause harm to the child if conception mistakenly does occur? Or what are the health risks to the fetus/embryo. What are also the health risks to the user? These are relevant questions we are compelled to face if we are to use contraceptives responsibly, they are questions of profound moral implications. This is where the controversy begins regarding the use of contraceptives. The previous chapters have look at some of these controversies and would now make some conclusions. But, before I delve into my conclusions, I wish to say that this thesis is not in line with the justification some people give for the use of contraception that: we human persons are totally in control of all that there is in this universe including the ownership and control of our physical bodies. As humans we can embrace contraception, not to justify our self-centeredness or sexual appetites, but rather to properly carry out our role as responsible human creatures in the married life of couples. This thesis also rejects the mentality that sees pregnancy and children as an imposition to be avoided rather than gifts to

be received, loved and nurtured. There may be a couple who are so tied up in their mutuality as to wish no children. People marry for variety of motives. The idea of begetting children may be very secondary, perhaps only tolerated rather than desired in the minds of many marrying couples as I observed in chapter one. Wojtyla would say that marriage with the fixed intention of avoiding children under any circumstance is immoral and robbing the marriage of its primary purpose. I think I agree with Wojtyla on this. Another mentality that confronts us in the use of contraception is what is called the 'contraceptive mentality': there is no doubt that at first glance the contraceptive approach seems attractive and convenient it has a pleasure-seeking nature, it seems attractive and convenient this calls for responsible use of it. I have discussed in detail issues surrounding the use of contraceptive technology, especially its abortifacient effect and its relationship to the human person and marriage. And, having also analyzed the understanding behind Wojtyla's stand against contraception, in light of all these considerations, some conclusions can now be made.

## **5. 2 Reasons why contraception should be permissible in marriage:**

### **1. Ineffectiveness of Periodic Continence**

This thesis does not condemn periodic continence, but affirms it as long as the couple can exercise that discipline and self-control and keep at it. I also endorse the use of unnatural forms of simple contraceptive methods when a couple wishes to extend the naturally given infertile periods for good reasons, to limit the number of their children in order to care for them responsibly. First of all, Wojtyla works towards a positive task of a new interpretation of the moral life, he exalts the power of sensuality and the beauty of marital intimacy yet in practice his prescription brings disunity to this intimacy; his attempts to redefine the contraceptive mentality

are contrary to the intimacy he seeks. He proposes periodic continence or natural family planning as the ideal or acceptable method which is more or less an obstacle to the couple's intimacy. He acknowledges that:

“marital continence (abstinence) is much more difficult than continence outside marriage because spouses grow accustomed to intercourse, as befits the state in which they have both consciously chosen. The mutual need of the two persons for each other expresses itself also in the need for sexual intercourse. This being so, the idea of refraining from intercourse inevitably runs into certain difficulties and objections.”<sup>135</sup>

This brings to light the fact that the objective validity of an argument is one thing and its actual force or effectiveness in influencing beliefs and thus directly shaping actions and virtues is another. Periodic continence appeals to the love and discipline of the spouses and is not merely a scientific technique. The method is safe and avoids many of the dangers often associated with the pill. Periodic continence requires the joint cooperation of both spouses and does not put the burden of contraception on one especially the woman. There do seem to be many attractive aspects about periodic continence, but I personally see no moral problem in using other simple forms of contraception as a means of exercising responsible parenthood. Nevertheless, it does not appear to be effective where discipline, training and high motivation are not present so that its effectiveness is somehow questionable. Love and intimacy is the reason for which people go into marriage, as much as possible, nothing should militate against that. There is no intention to claim that the practice of contraception is a completely neutral act as I observed in chapter four. Many advocates and users of it are explicit in pointing to the disvalues inherent in their use.

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<sup>135</sup> *Love and Responsibility*, p. 237

One author, Morton Mintz,<sup>136</sup> in his book: *The Pill* calls it the most dangerous drug ever unleashed among the general public. Although he is an advocate of contraception, Mintz condemns the pill because it subjects women to the risk of blood clots, paralysis and death when such risk is unnecessary. In as much as I agree with this view, nonetheless there are risks even in everyday life too. There are risks everywhere; therefore, contraception should be looked at positively for it allows families to plan, thereby enhancing human flourishing and empowers humanity to be more autonomous in choosing the preparedness to have and space a family than left to chance.

## **2. Emancipation of women, empowerment and education**

Contraception has freed women from biological necessity of spending most of their life as bearers and nurturers of children. The ability to plan to limit the number of children has already contributed to the changing role of women in contemporary society. The availability of contraception comes with sexual freedom; that can help build marriages and also to build a home, a future for the community of family and also makes room for personal development and progress; nevertheless, this comes with a responsibility. It is hard for women to thrive economically, it's hard for her to participate politically, it's hard for her to have a voice if she cannot control how many children she has. The use of contraception is influenced by many factors; women's empowerment, women's decision making and their autonomy within the household is the most important factor affecting contraceptive use. Emancipation has many components, an indispensable one is the ability of a woman to decide for herself whether and when to become pregnant. In many countries birth control has an enormous positive impact on

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<sup>136</sup> Mintz 1970 p.10

providing women greater control over their own fertility. Women often need contraception before their last child is beyond infancy. Contraception makes sexual activity possible without procreation, it has led to new sexual responsibilities and rights for both men and women. Women's autonomy with respect to family planning and fertility and the decision to use contraception is manifest only if women are aware and informed about contraceptive methods. Schooling increases knowledge about contraceptive methods which suggests that schooling contributes to the process of empowering women with the ability to obtain and utilize information for the purpose of making fertility related decisions. However, there has been a continuing opposition to the use of the contraceptive pill especially from some feminist groups who view the risks connected with the pill as unacceptable and unnecessary. One can conclude there will probably never be a form of contraception which is absolutely safe with no negative side effects and no inconveniences. The woman using the pill now must make a prudential judgement based on the available information. There are other forms of safe contraception which do not put such a burden on the woman. It is these forms of contraception that this thesis believes can be used responsibly.

When it comes to sexual responsibility, women note that they are still the ones expected to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy and asked to bear the risks associated with contraceptive use. As most women view it, this state of affairs is an iniquitous one that needs to be remedied. Men no less than women are morally obligated to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancies, (because the baby is not only the "woman's problem") and if there are to be definite health risks associated with adequate contraception, these risks should be shared between the male and female partners. And so the fact that almost all contraceptives are female contraceptives has tended to place the responsibility for contraception on women. If men as well

as women were to use contraceptives, women especially would be spared the most burden. It will be the concern of a man and a woman equally responsible for, as well as equally free to bear and beget; or not to bear or beget children in a way that serves the best interests of themselves and society. Likewise, when it comes to sexual rights, some women wonder whether contraception has really increased their ability to make un-coerced choices about when to have a sexual affair, with whom and under what circumstance. With widespread use of contraceptives, there comes the presumption that women are to be more available for sexual intercourse than ever before.<sup>137</sup> It is no wonder that many women regard contraceptive technology as a double edge sword. Often women have chosen to use contraceptives to free themselves from the burden of unwanted pregnancies, but sometimes individual men have forced women to use contraceptives to serve not women's interests but theirs. Nevertheless, this thesis hopes that the use of contraception could come to signal not sexual promiscuity, but sexual responsibility, a willingness for men and women to consider the full meaning and consequences of sexual intercourse before they engage in it.

### **3. Contraception and biological laws**

Correspondingly, Wojtyla believes that the artificial contraceptive methods are not morally neutral. He affirms that human beings are not allowed to do violence to the biological laws in nature themselves by interfering with the intrinsic relationship of intercourse to procreation. However, this assumes that biological laws have a mind and intentionality of their own, which humans' intentionality must obey without possibility of interfering with them. This non-intervention argument positing a sort of: let nature take its course principle is a

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<sup>137</sup> *Lawrence J. Kaplan and Rosemarie Tong, 1990:100*

fundamentally mistaken interpretation of both the created world and humans' role in it. Humans are agents of reason and so we exercise some autonomy which other beings do not have. This means that humans have a unique role in affecting probabilities. Human choices, norms and relationships involve how to affect probabilities and so it is not about choosing not to intervene in natural processes. For example, a doctor's medical practice involves medical interventions which generally affects probabilities; of healing, survival, failure and death. More to the point human beings always interfere with natural processes and so the moral question of whether to interrupt nature's course or not, does not hold; but which actions are in accord with the meaning of human life and dignity. It is not about conforming to nature but transforming it. Thus knowledge of the natural world, for example reproductive processes, ecological systems, medical diagnoses, technological advancement and so on; are an imperative for responsible ethics.

Additionally, it also involves clarifying the values implicit in interventions in nature and stipulating which transformations are ultimately conducive to human flourishing and which are not; it involves a responsible moral discernment. And so it is impossible to argue that the natural capacity humans have to influence the essentially statistical basis of the laws of nature should not be exercised. Accordingly, human beings can indeed regularly intervene into natural processes and this also includes the biological processes of human sexuality. It is proper to man to use what is given in physical nature in a way that can develop it to its full significance with a view to the good of the whole person. This intervention of man into physiological processes, is an intervention ordained to the essential values of marriage, to the good of children.

#### **4. Contraception as a working-tool**

Furthermore, God's purposeful nature is still directed by the very laws and regularities biological science uncovers. And God's design is what is discernible with the results of evolution and biology itself. If what is in nature must also be identified as part of God's design, then it means that behaviours that are conducive to our flourishing are either part of God's design or a deviation from that design. And so if some practices are consistent with our dynamic evolving nature, then we have good reason to think that we should engage in that behavior and that's part of God's design. Consistent with the evolution of the human species, tool-making is a central activity of our success. From the flint-chipped cutting tools to agriculture, we have invented devices to address certain physical needs to enhance our flourishing. In that wise, contraception is one such tool and cannot easily be dismissed. Inventing and using contraception is part of technology to solve problems that prove advantageous to our being. And so contraception is a product of tool-making which is consistent with our rational nature or an extension of our rational and bodily natures. and this I believe is also consistent with God's purposes. Even though it may be argued that not all uses of tools or technology are good enough, nevertheless, inventing tools is an open ended intention of God's intended natural purpose to address and solve problems that may arise and contraception is one such useful tool, this study argues that it can be used by discerning couples responsibly.

#### **5. The contraceptive revolution**

The contraceptive revolution has not been without problems, there have been a number of significant debates in the area of contraception that can help to evaluate better the whole question of contraception as an illustration of the ethical and human possibilities and dilemmas brought about by the new biology. The debates have centered on a number of issues: the morality of

using contraception, the safety and the side effects of contraceptive devices especially the pill and the problems connected with it, as well as the uses and the abuses of the power of contraceptive technology. Contraceptive technology is a limited human good. Technology itself cannot solve or even touch the deeper human questions and problems of life and death, loving concern or egoism. However, the human problems and possibilities facing individuals, spouses, nations and the world transcend the level of biological technologies or of all technologies combined. Accordingly, the problem of limiting population in the narrow terms of providing safe, cheap and effective contraceptives should not fail to recognize the many other aspects of the problem. This limited human good remains somewhat ambiguous. The best example of the ambiguity in contraceptive advances has been the dangers and side effects associated with the pill. In my judgement, there will never be the perfect contraceptive in the sense of something that is perfect from every single perspective. At the very minimum all existing contraceptive technologies seem to have some limitations and imperfections about them. Contraception is a limited good which can be abused. While contraception has made it possible for people to practice responsible parenthood, it has also made it somewhat easier for others to engage in impersonal and irresponsible sexuality. Limited goods are always subject to such abuse. Another issue is that; contraceptive technology is susceptible to take over by the strong at the expense of the weak. The poor in the country, women in general and the poor nations of the world have all been victims of the contraceptive technology of the powerful. This assessment and understanding of contraceptive technology should provide us with a framework for judging the newer biological technologies that will come our way in the future.

Notwithstanding the setbacks, there can be no doubt that technology has made great progress. Human beings have come from the discovery of the wheel to the animal drawn cart, to

the steam engine, the automobile, the airplane and the rocket ships that landed human beings on the moon. Technological developments seem to be ever progressive in the sense that new developments build on older discoveries and constantly move forward as illustrated in the case of transportation. The changes brought by contraception have been enormous. On the level of families in all parts of the world, the procreation of offspring can now be controlled by the marriage partners. Contraception has given human beings control over the procreative aspect of sexual relationships and have contributed greatly to significant societal changes. In other words, contraceptive technology in general has been a good for human beings. The effects of contraception in the matter of family planning and population control have been very beneficial. To free human beings from physical necessity and to give them greater control and responsibility; enabling them to enhance the reality of the human being. And so, despite all the odds described above, the very term responsible parenthood accepted by about all people today, calls attention to the human good which has been brought into being by contraceptive technology. This is evident of the fact that, contraception can be used responsibly and can contribute to the wellbeing of spouses and families.

## **6. Purposes of human sexuality**

Wojtyla's main arguments are represented as follows:

**P1.** That human sexuality has two fundamental meanings: order of nature and the personal order

**P2.** That according to the natural design these two meanings are inseparably connected

**P3.** That man in his own initiative may not break this connection

**P4.** He affirms that by contraception the connection between these two meanings is in fact broken

**Conclusion:** Contraception does violence to nature and therefore immoral and against love and Responsibility;

**P1.** It is wrong that pleasure is the purpose of sexual relations

**P2.** Contraception can result in sexual relationships motivated purely by pleasure

**Conclusion:** Therefore, contraception is immoral and against love and responsibility

First of all, nature has in fact seen to it that in no small measure the procreative and unitive dimensions of the human sexuality are separable. They are separated in cases of sterility

or during a woman's periods of infertility. If human nature itself separates the unitive and procreative dimensions why can't we separate these intentions also in a contraceptive act? In the use of contraception are spouses not involved in assisting nature in this regard?

Secondly, it is worth noting that procreation is not the only form of fruitfulness or generativity. It has been noted that sexual activity has a plurality of meanings and outcomes beyond biological reproduction and the transmission of the genotype. These can be affirmed and celebrated within marriage. Contraception can facilitate these other meanings of sexual activity. And so humans have attributed to such a distinctive sexual behavior meanings and values beyond those pertaining to passing on their genotype: early human societies throughout the world understood this and developed many ways of thoughtfully preventing unwanted conceptions as I indicated some of these in chapter one of this work. The option for contraception would give married life its unitive value and do so in service of its procreative function.

Another course for concern is in the circumstance when a couple conclude for good reasons that they are incapable of supporting more children physically, psychologically, socially, financially, economically; to the drastic case in which it is determined that a woman's health would be in danger if she conceived again; according to the moral theory of Wojtyla, the only avenue opened to this couple, is the use of periodic continence or a marital life of sexual abstinence. Relying upon the use of periodic continence to avoid pregnancy when its failure could lead to endangering health or even life itself causes fear and anxiety between such a couple. Calling upon married persons to live as celibates in the name of 'heroic virtue' is equally unrealistic and places these persons in impossible circumstances. Wojtyla himself acknowledges that "marital continence (abstinence) is much more difficult than continence outside marriage because spouses grow accustomed to intercourse, as befits the state in which they have both

consciously chosen” as said earlier. Vatican II made the following observation “where the intimacy of married life is broken off, it is not rare for the faithfulness to be imperiled and its quality of fruitfulness ruined”.<sup>138</sup>

Consequently, using simple contraceptives that are not abortifacient in the practice of responsible parenthood is following through with a good intention formed by reason and an act chosen using the virtues of prudence, justice and charity. It is worth noting that, the abuse of a thing does not take away its legitimate use. Examples from daily life abound: the fact that alcohol and other drugs are abused by several millions of people does not mean that their responsible use by the rest of us should be forbidden. If we were to accept the argument that it is the a priori intention of the person taking or using contraception in the practice of responsible parenthood that determines its lack of moral integrity, what about the willful, intended physical acts of temperature and mucus plotting to ensure sexual intercourse is not procreative in the practice of periodic continence? And so, the belief that periodic continence renders every sexual act open to procreation because spouses are ‘not doing something physical’ to prevent procreation is misleading.

## **7. Contraception and HIV**

The young Karol Wojtyla was highly influenced by the culture and the situation in Poland between 1930-1950 where under Nazism and communism, there was no respect for human life and dignity and immorality was the order of the day. The horrific acts of genocide in Poland during the World War II and the extreme oppression of post-World War II communism profoundly influenced and shaped Wojtyla’s world view on morality. This would seem to say

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<sup>138</sup> *Gaudium Et Spes*, section 51.

that Wojtyla is operating with a conception that is essentially outdated and should not be applied to lawfully married couples. Wojtyla leaves little if any flexibility for married persons who are attempting to manage their fertility in a responsible manner. It is common knowledge that if one spouse is HIV positive, this virus can easily be transmitted to the other spouse through an act of sexual intercourse. Should they not be allowed to use the condom? Wojtyla does not give exceptions. I believe the use of condom would in this case severely lessen that possibility and could provide protection for the other spouse who is not affected. So they can in this case use condoms morally than having unprotected sex.

## **8. Contraception and the morality of the method**

Users of periodic continence as a method of birth control argue that contraception differs from it morally. Periodic continence according to them affirms the good of the human person; because it affirms the proper order in divine providence of respecting the rights of the Creator in the creative process. The couples control themselves according to nature as God has created it. In the practice of periodic continence, the natural orders unite in ultimate communion. Will this motive expressed above be the same for a prostitute who uses the periodic continence in her trade? There have been cases whereby prostitutes resorted to this method because they had serious allergy to the contraceptive methods. Is it a worthy course? Is it the morality of the choice of method or the morality of the motive? Should we be concerned about the choice of the method to fertility control or the motive behind the motivation that needs critical examination? Let us consider another scenario whereby a married couple decides to use periodic continence (as much as their jobs will allow them to meet) because they are so pre-occupied with themselves and their career and will not want to have children and the woman particularly does not want to get pregnant. Is that a morally acceptable choice? Will the moral outlook outlined above about

periodic continence be applicable to them? (Wojtyla himself argues against the fact couples should not go into marriage if they would not bear children at all by choice). It is not just the method that makes it reprehensible or irreprehensible but the motivation; because the method or means may be acceptable but the end morally questionable. Therefore, to morally and responsibly employ the use of contraception, it is helpful to question why it is desired. If the pursuit of it is motivated by lust and greed, then these desires need to be pruned. So, it is possible to use both methods for the wrong motive or intention. Consequently, we can exercise responsible human love whilst using contraception if we can control the motivations of the heart.

## **9. Morality of contraceptive-abortionifacients**

Moreover, we can exercise responsible human love whilst using contraceptives in the sexual life of married couples as long as the methods employed do not destroy life or harm the mother, the baby or the couple's relationship. In other words, we should not employ contraceptive methods that harm or destroy human life. Subscribers to contraceptives have a responsibility to know the effects and potential effects of all forms of contraception they may use. The fundamental question that needs to be tackled is whether a particular form of birth control functions purely as a contraceptive or whether it has abortive potential. If a particular method of contraception terminates or potentially terminates life, we must be concerned. Certain fertility control methods have lesser health effects even though we may have cause to worry about their effectiveness. This thesis opposes abortion and morning after pills which are purposely abortive and should be universally judged as such, sterilization, because it is more or less a form of mutilation; also the IUDs as well as all the various types and brands of the birth control pills available today; this is because they function similarly with potentially abortive

effects. They each have three basic mechanisms of action. The first mechanism is primary, while the last two are backup mechanisms in case the first fails. These three functions are:

1. To prevent ovulation
  2. To thicken cervical fluid, impeding the progress of the sperm
  3. To weaken the uterine lining inhibiting implantation of any fertilized egg.
- It functions in such a way that; should the first two mechanisms fail; it creates an

environment less conducive for the survival of a fertilized egg. By weakening the wall of the endometrium, the mucus membrane that lines the uterus, a fertilized egg is less likely to attach to the mother and is more likely to be aborted” (Ferguson and Upsdell 1999:200). This is a very rare occurrence, but it is evident from this that not all the methods employed in an attempt to avoid procreation have the same status from a moral standpoint as I observed in chapter four. Most couples use these drugs and do so completely unaware of the abortive potential; though not intentionally or maliciously attempting to abort; those who use such forms of birth control pills risk an early spontaneous abortion. However, with knowledge of these risks comes a greater accountability and responsibility on the part of the user. There are very good and acceptable reasons for employing contraception; nevertheless, the following questions may be a guide:

1. What is the basic desire of the heart in using contraception?
2. Do all forms of contraceptive methods uphold human life?
3. Do I have enough knowledge of the effects and modes of action of the method I want to employ? Is it purely contraceptive or otherwise?

In light of my deliberations in this study, I come to the conclusion that there is a possibility of exercising responsible human love whilst using contraceptives in the sexual life of married couples.

#### **10. Chastity safeguards responsible use of contraception in marriage**

Chastity is very important for living any vocation: to use contraception responsibly, married people must appreciate more fully the virtue of chastity which is not merely continence,

but a decisive affirmation on the part of the will in love; which leads a couple to respect the mystery of sex and ordain it to faithfulness and personal dedication. Chastity can preserve faithfulness in a marital relationship and enable the couple to resort to the use of contraception responsibly.

### **5.2. 1 Conclusion:**

The need to and the ways to separate sexual intercourse from human reproduction are probably as old as human history. Contraception is fundamental to a woman's ability to achieve equality and realize her full social, economic and intellectual potential. How successful has this been? There are also much greater magnitude of the health and life threats resulting from pregnancy and child birth. Health care providers have the professional and ethical duty to have a proper updated knowledge of the benefits and risks; for example, the possible, side –effects and contraindications of the whole spectrum of contraceptive methods in order to provide adequate and comprehensive reproductive health. The rise in abortion may be traceable to the failure of contraceptive practice because of their inherent limitation or the carelessness of the users. It is not accurate to speak simply of the effectiveness of contraception for avoiding pregnancy. Some of these means do not prevent a pregnancy but rather bring one to an early halt through an unwanted unnoticed abortion. If even one abortion ever occurs in the whole history of the use of contraception, then these contraceptives should never be used and prescribers and users could be said to be guilty of abortion. I recognize there are currently differing viewpoints regarding whether some contraceptives especially the pill and its various formulations cause abortion. The current scientific knowledge does not establish a definitive causal link between the routine use of these pills and abortion; neither are there data to deny a post-conceptual effect. Some have

argued that this abortifacient effect is indirect and theoretical. But, once it was only a theory that plant life grew better in rich fertile soil than in thin eroded soil. It was certainly a theory good farmers believed and acted on. Nevertheless, a theoretical yet unproven risk should carry the same weight and be disclosed in the same fashion as a known, proven risk. Because this issue cannot be resolved with our current understanding, this thesis calls upon researchers to further investigate the mechanism of action of these pills. The theoretical risks serve the very important function of defining future research directions. Additionally, because the possibility of the abortive effect cannot be ruled out, prescribers of the pill as birth control should consider informing patients of this potential effect. This will be a prelude among other factors, that would facilitate a confident unquestionable trend that will boost couples responsible use of contraceptives without fear of possible termination of early human life.

### **5.3 My recommendations:**

In order to contribute to this important ongoing debate on the morality of contraception I recommend at the end of this thesis that; both couples must share decisions relating to procreation as equals through dialogue and a sign of being loving and sensitive towards one another as life givers. Artificial methods do not facilitate intimate communication between spouses, the burden of responsibility primarily is on the woman.

Secondly, the right to freedom and the right to information require that the effects of contraceptive substance or device be communicated to the persons who will use or prescribe or provide that substance or device. How effectively is this technical description communicated to a less-educated woman who subscribes to the service in the deprived areas?

Thirdly, the following are some challenges of ethical concern which are raising crucial moral issues in family planning: the abortifacient effect of certain contraceptives, the adverse effects of contraceptives; this problem of 'side effects' in contraception raises serious ethical issues, the right of each person to good health places an obligation on researchers, promoters to work out a way through these setbacks of contraceptive use. The obligation to respect the right to good health ought to require the elimination from contraceptive technology of any substance or device which threatens life. Accordingly, manufacturers who develop the contraceptive formulations that turns out to be entirely or partly abortifacient have the moral mandate to ensure that their product is unlikely to harm or take life.

Lastly, although abortion is viewed by the advocates of women reproductive rights as an integral component of a woman's right to reproductive health, the fact remains that the availability and the provision of quality services in the area of contraception can forestall or minimize the need for abortion. For it is argued that the health hazards and the failure rates attributed to the available contraceptive methods are good reasons to prefer abortion as a method of choice.

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