

1.1.- Let's Work:

- 1.The complexity of the human being
- 2.The importance of taking into account the different dimensions of human life in order to avoid partial approaches
- 3.That we are the result of the relationship between genetic and cultural inheritance
- 4.That we are defined by our origins, but also by our experiences (what we do, what we decide)
- 5.That our life is the result of our abilities, our vocation and our circumstances
- 6.That we have to organize our desires and aspirations to be able to write our biography
- 7.The importance of autonomy in our life, as well as counting on others
- 8.The richness of human feelings as expressed in the cinema or in literature (reflections of life itself)

Introduction

The reality of human life is peculiar. It is not just another thing in the world and universe. A range of information and different perspectives are necessary in order to understand, explain, analyse and take it into consideration. What are we? What is the human being? We could look in a science book for a scientific explanation, or in a catechism or religious book to find out the religious angle, or an anthropology book to understand the special socio-cultural characteristics. We could even resort to literature and cinema to see ourselves as beings full of feelings and passion. While the answer may be very simple, once we stop and think about it we realise how complicated an issue it actually is.

The same question we ask about the human being in the general sense - "What are we?" -, can also be asked by each of us from an individual point of view - "What are we?" "What am I?" "Who am I?" If someone asks us, "Who are you?", we quickly give our name, as if that explained everything. But a name is not always enough. I am my name, but maybe it does not define me. I might have to say something more, talk about my sisters and brothers, my parents, my city, my friends; or I could also describe myself: tall or short, the colour of my hair, my constitution, etc. Or maybe I have to talk about my achievements: what I've done, what I've achieved; or maybe, even, what I expect to do: go to university, have a family, go on an important journey, etc... All these things define us, and, in a sense, none of these things are enough by themselves.

This is just one of the reasons why it is said that personal life, each life - not only human life as a biological species -, requires many outlooks. It requires us to recognise and appreciate the integral

dimension of human life. Several points of view and perspectives are needed to contemplate human life, each person's life. The same happens when we are looking at a landscape or any other object, we only see part of it, and we need to move around it to see other perspectives, other angles. We are not just biology, we are not just biography, we are not just feelings, we are not just intelligence, and we are not just citizens: we are all that, and more.

The study of human beings as citizens, which is the objective of this book, should not be done in an isolated manner, detached from all the other factors that are part of us. Human life cannot be split into segments of perspectives. The segment of an orange is not an orange, it is only part of it; it is an orange when it has all its segments. The same happens with personal life; it cannot be broken into several pieces where just one part, one dimension is studied. Hence the term "integral dimension".