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Zamoyska’s Conception of Work as a Method of Self-Fulfillment

Human life, in its diverse aspects and levels, is characterized by a clear dependence on work. Work constitutes one of the most common life experiences. All people’s shortages and needs have a direct correlation with work. This concerns both the most basic shortages, connected with feeding and providing protection from cold as well as higher needs, which encompass discovering the world or building relationships with other people. Each person as *homo faber* has at their disposal the hand and brain which constitute exceptional *organa organorum*. By virtue of them man can function at various levels of reality and develop by means of created tools. People forge such tools as results of work not only in the directly observable domain of material and generative transformations but also in a broadly conceived spiritual sphere. They function as improved forms of cognitive, moral or religious life. However, for people work is a difficult activity marked to some extent with suffering (Lat. *labor*—work, burden, suffering). It is connected with the necessity of a certain sacrifice related to undertaking a systematic effort which requires overcoming various human weaknesses. Against this background, work appears to be an activity constituting an integral part of the nature of human existence and requiring authentic involvement.

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The phenomenon of work as an activity integrally connected with human life concerned the Polish social and educational thinker, Jadwiga countess Zamoyska (1831–1923). She was the creator of a practically oriented conception of work. She presented its main outline in the book *O pracy*, which was published in the English language under the title *Ideas in Practice*.¹ The reflections it presents, involving the problems of human moral life, belong to the realm of practical philosophy.² This paper will discuss the main assumptions, theses and inspirations constituting the specific nature of Zamoyska's conception of work.

Zamoyska treated work as the most important dimension of human life. At the same time, she did not limit the understanding of work solely to professional activity, some chosen kind of work, a type of employee activity or to organizing work in terms of profit. The focus of her attention was work that everybody must undertake in order to fulfill their life to the fullest. And it is in this aspect that she discerned a significant deficiency in social life. It consisted in the fact that people were not educated for such work. The fundamental question: how to work in order to fulfill one's life as a human life remains without a methodically developed answer. Leaving outside the scope of interest the cru-

¹ Jadwiga Zamoyska, *O pracy* [On work], Zakład Kórnicki (Szkoła pracy domowej w Zakopanem) [The Kórnik Library (The School of Home Work in Zakopane)] (Poznań: Biblioteka Kórnicka, 1900). The translation of the book into French (*Sur le travail*, trans. H. C. [Paris: M. Lethielleux, 1902]) provided the basis for its translation into English: Countess Zamoyska, *Ideals in Practice. With Some Account of Women's Work in Poland*, trans. Lady Margaret Domville (London: Art and Book, 1903). The book was also published in Italian: Contessa Zamoyska, *Del lavoro* (Roma: Pustet, 1904), and in Spanish: Condesa Zamoyska, *El trabajo*, trans. Corina de Carlos (Barcelona: Gustavo Gilí, 1905).

² The following dissertations also belong to the same domain: Jadwiga Zamoyska, *O miłości ojczyzny* [On the Love of Homeland] (Poznań: Biblioteka Kórnicka, 1899); *id.*, *O wychowaniu* [On Upbringing] (Poznań: Naczelny Instytut Akcji Katolickiej, 1937); *id.*, *O czystości* [On Tidiness], manuscript 7685 (Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN). The book *O miłości ojczyzny* was also translated into French, the book *O wychowaniu* into French, Italian and Spanish.

cial factor of fulfilling one's individual and social life seemed to her to be downright paradoxical. Against this background, she discerned the need to tackle the problem of work firstly, as part of theoretical reflection, secondly, by means of methodically oriented teaching. Thus, she focused her research interest around two fundamental issues: work and educating for work.

Zamoyska's philosophy of work was distinguished by a research aspect which concerned the way of performing work. Zamoyska sought a method of work appropriate to the purpose of human life as well as characterized by a universal applicability. Such a method should encompass a wide range of human tasks, irrespective of individual life circumstances. Zamoyska's conviction of the fundamental significance of work for fulfilling an individual or social life affected both her theoretical studies and her practical actions. In order not to make the mistakes connected with detaching theory from the varied circumstances of a specific action, she developed her conception of work in a practical educational dimension. Additionally, she associated it with the conviction of women's essential role in shaping social life. She was the founder and sponsor as well as the author of the curriculum of the School of Home Work for Women. The conception of the curriculum was based on the main theses of her dissertation *Ideas in Practice*. The educational initiative was successful since this unique educational institution prepared several thousand young women for an involved participation in social life.

Theoretical Foundations of Understanding Work as a Method

Zamoyska defines work in a close correlation with the determinants of human nature, subject to processes of change and development. Zamoyska discerns and distinguishes three main kinds of powers

which she calls aptitudes: physical, intellectual or spiritual.³ She regards them as possibilities of human development in various spheres. The powers undergo development which occurs by means of work. Therefore, work appears in Zamoyska as a factor of human powers development. At the same time, an inherent feature of the nature of the powers is the activation of the opposite process. Namely, the powers which are not developed through work degrade in a certain way or even decline. Zamoyska does not define in a strictly philosophical context the terms which refer to the names and the workings of the individual human powers. Hence, a certain difficulty connected with the appearance of the terms: “mental faculties,” “spiritual faculties” or “the spirit.” However, following the course of her reflections enables one to infer in a justified manner that in the case of physical faculties Zamoyska takes into account motor faculties, that is body disposition activating the power of muscles and operation of one’s sensitive powers. In the case of mental faculties, she basically draws attention to very broadly conceived intellectual faculties as well as to some sensitive faculties. Whereas spiritual faculties concern the cooperation of the intellectual faculty with the volitive faculty. An essential distinguishing feature of the intellect and will is the fact of their ontic inability to be reduced to organic structures. It is probably in this context that Zamoyska calls them “spiritual powers.” Despite their non-material manner of being spiritual powers function against the background of clear relationships with cognition and sensual desire. Physical powers do not function independently but are guided by the intellect and will.

Zamoyska shows a range of possibilities of human development within the three elements constituting human nature: body, mind and spirit. If work is an essential factor leading to their development, then its significance in human life is exceptional. Work not only conditions

³ Zamoyska, *Ideals in Practice*, 2.

the provision of every human need, ensures safety, stimulates all material development, leads to the development of the higher culture and to the improvement of social life. Work determines human development, thereby being the essential way leading to life fulfillment. Zamoyska, emphasizing such close relationships of human life with work, holds that life itself consists in work.⁴ Thus, she accentuates that work constitutes a crucial manner of human life fulfillment. This fulfillment takes place in a particular way by activating the powers of the intellect and will. Zamoyska, calling them “spiritual” underlines the fact of their rationality which determines the exceptional ontic status of working people.

Zamoyska's conception of work shows a clear impact of the *actus-potentia* theory functioning within the framework of the Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. In its context, the emphasis is placed on the dynamic character of man's nature and activity.⁵ It is noted that people do not always currently do various activities, for example, painting a wall, writing an article. However, they are capable of them, that means they hold such a possibility, for instance, they may paint a wall, they may write an article. Therefore, the person appears to be a dynamic being who may perform various acts or hold a possibility of doing them. Acts of activity are performed by means of human powers holding a possibility of action. These powers are conceived of as action-oriented capacities for performing appropriate acts. Their subject is the human soul, remaining an act in its very essence.⁶ It does not act directly, but through the powers capable of action. The *actus-potentia* theory introduces a philosophical understanding of work by relating to

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *I-Man: An Outline of Philosophical Anthropology*, trans. Marie Lescoe *et al.* (New Britain, Conn.: Mariel Publications, 1983), 99–108.

⁶ S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Summa Theologiae* (Taurini–Romae: Marietti, 1952–1962), I, q. 77, a. 1.

the actual-potential ontic nature of people and their actions. This type of human nature provides the fundamental reason for which work occurs. People are not perfect beings; they need development in every aspect of their existence. Their detachment from the perfection of their own nature constructs the grounds for work to occur. Thus, work constitutes a necessary factor of the development of human potentialities. Whereas the perfecting role of work consists in the fact that thanks to work human potentiality is actualized or developed.⁷ At the level of the intellect and will, these potentialities are associated with rational actions and they have a personal dimension. For Zamoyska, the issue of human fulfillment through work constituted the focal point for developing a theory of work. Her understanding of work clearly implies a potential-actual or dynamic nature of human being and action. Zamoyska constantly emphasizes the need for development and pursuit of perfection at various levels of human existence, and this need results directly from recognizing the dynamic character of human nature. That is why this is the philosophical context in which one should situate Zamoyska's understanding of work as an essential way of human life fulfillment.

Zamoyska's distinguishing the powers of potential nature relates directly to differentiating three basic kinds of work. This, in turn, constitutes another important factor of formulating Zamoyska's conception of work. She distinguishes three basic kinds of work: manual or physical, mental and spiritual correlating to the three faculties: physical, mental and spiritual.⁸ They present three possible lines of people's development. In accordance with the character of human potential nature which may act in opposite directions, it is also possible that there will

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, q. 73, a. 2; Keith Breclaw, "Homo Faber Reconsidered. Two Thomistic Reflections on Work," *Thomist* 57, no. 4 (1993): 579–601.

⁸ Zamoyska, *Ideals in Practice*, 2. Zamoyska alternatively uses the terms: "manual work" and "physical work."

exist three kinds of idleness: physical, intellectual and spiritual. The thus diagnosed kinds of idleness show possible paths of degeneration, outlining the main threats to the harmonious human development.

The conviction of a fundamental significance of work for life fulfillment and identification of human faculties and the corresponding kinds of work defines the appropriate scope of the way of life fulfillment sought by Zamoyska. Thus, in the strict sense, Zamoyska seeks to specify precisely work as a way of life fulfillment. In this grasp, work will constitute an essential element of human development. According to Zamoyska, both the structure and the functions of this method are accurately expressed by the term triple-work. Its meaning is connected with emphasizing the parallelism of performing three kinds of work in human life: manual, intellectual and spiritual. Zamoyska disapproves of restricting the actions performed to one kind of work. In her opinion, in order to form one's life appropriately one needs triple-work which must be undertaken systematically and continued in life. It is a consequence of the determinants associated with the status of human nature which functions at several interconnected, and at the same time not reducible to one another, levels termed by Zamoyska as "matter," "brain," and "spirit." Confining oneself to doing one type of work leads to a development disturbance in people. Since in such a situation no conditions for forming the personality appropriately are provided. Moreover, there are specific relations between the three kinds of work. Zamoyska believes that each of the kinds of work makes sense only when it is supported and corrected by the other ones.⁹ And thus, each of the kinds of work involves a natural potential of complementing and possibly correcting the performance of the other kinds of work. Thereby, the individual components of triple-work as a method affect one another in a perfecting way. Whereas this condition cannot be fulfilled instantly in a

⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

situation of restricting human activity to one or two kinds of work. For these reasons, Zamoyska puts forward a thesis concerning the necessity of performing parallelly triple-work. Thus, triple-work shows structurally and functionally a method of work conceived of as a way of human life fulfillment.

The idea of triple-work as a method has got religious inspirations. Zamoyska specified the idea of triple-work in relation to the tradition of work present in the Benedictine Order and presented in St. Benedict of Nursia's *Rule*.¹⁰ According to Zamoyska, Benedictines perfectly understood the assumption of the necessity of performing parallelly three kinds of work, which is practically proven by the works they have left. They constitute the effect of various types of perfectly performed works.¹¹ Zamoyska became familiar with the Benedictine work tradition through her contact with the French Congregation of the Oratory whose priests based their religious activity on the motto: *prayer, study, work*.¹² For Zamoyska, the meaning of these terms was clearly represented by the cross, book and distaff which she placed in the coat of arms of the educational institution she founded. At the level of ideas, they were represented by the structure of the method of triple-work encompassing spiritual, intellectual and manual work. Religious references enabled Zamoyska to develop some practical aspects of work as a life fulfillment method.

The idea of triple-work shows the nature of the method enabling the fulfillment of human life in its most important dimensions. It reflects the vision of an integrally oriented human development. It allows for all kinds of human activity. Zamoyska consciously does not concern

¹⁰ Terence G. Kardong, *Benedict's Rule: A Translation and Commentary* (Collegeville, Pa.: Liturgical Press, 1996).

¹¹ Zamoyska, *Ideals in Practice*, 10.

¹² The Congregation of the Oratory of Jesus and Mary Immaculate (Oratoire de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ) was founded in France by Pierre de Bérulle.

herself with a narrowly conceived methodology of some type of work. The purpose of her reflections is not confined to presenting specific ways of efficiently organizing everyday tasks. Admittedly, these elements are important, however from the perspective of work as a life fulfillment method they are only of an ancillary nature. Understanding triple-work as a universal method of human life fulfillment was presented by Zamoyska by means of the analysis of the three types of work.

Significance of Manual (Physical) Work

Each of the three kinds of work has its specific features determining the necessity of their being performed. Physical work ensures a constant and systematic contact with the concretely existing world which contributes to developing a realistic outlook on reality. Its effect is somewhat visible in all transformation of reality. This kind of work is associated with all the determinants characterizing the existence of a material world. Man encounters the resistance of material things overcoming which requires activating bodily powers. The one doing physical work constantly correlates their actions with these conditions. That is why physical work involves a natural potential for stifling apriorism and daydreaming. Contact with a concrete material being characteristic of physical work contributes to the ordering of abstract thinking. It facilitates the appraisal of conceptions of an ideological and utopian nature functioning in society. At the same time, contact with material reality providing human cognition with a wealth of sensual data activates the functioning of human imagination and intellect. In this respect, physical work facilitates discovering and understanding the laws of nature, which, in turn, stimulates man's inventive creativity.

Man's striving to facilitate the performance of physical work improves the correlation between using the intellect and physical strength. That is why Zamoyska emphasizes the importance of man's personal

struggle with the toils of physical work. This peculiar kind of experience of the reality of physical work is a factor causing and stimulating intellectual activity, oriented toward finding out the laws of the world. This, in turn, translates into discovering and utilizing the tools protecting man from excessive toil and suffering connected with physical work. Such actions are an expression of the care for others and they have an important moral dimension.

Physical work subject to various circumstantial conditions requires, at each stage, performing actions respecting the principles of harmony. This concerns the manner of planning, organizing, performing work and it translates directly into the results. It needs to be done with, planned and carefully maintained at each stage, tidiness and order, caring for the precision and repeatability of specific actions comprising the physical work process. Even the most simple tasks of hand work should be done according to symmetry rules, *e.g.*, maintaining appropriate distances, proportions, sizes, components, materials. This determines the symmetry of the observable work results. Although beauty is not a direct purpose of physical work, the effects resulting from doing work at a particular level of harmony contribute to the expansion of beauty.¹³ Despite the fact that physical work is aimed at a profit at a financial level, it also plays important preventive as well as therapeutic and curative functions. It strengthens man's organism at physical and mental levels. It stimulates vital powers, stabilizes the physical condition, prevents diseases, ensures an emotional balance, shapes the character. Zamoyska indicates the effects of working in a garden as a certain kind of symbol of the impact of physical work on man. Gardening work which includes selecting and planning the arrangement of plantings on a specific area of the ground, as well as sowing, planting, re-planting, gathering and protecting plants, weeding, preparing and rak-

¹³ Zamoyska, *Ideals in Practice*, 13–15.

ing the soil, trimming twigs or removing stones combines the skills encompassing agriculture, architecture and industry. The perfecting influence of gardening work affects both the working and the witnesses as well as possible followers, and also observers of the results. Gardening work inspires the love of beauty, teaches regularity, diligence, patience and humility. The therapeutic impact of gardening work in a particular way involves man plagued with life difficulties, having a strained psyche. A lack of control of the experienced emotions, annoyance and anxiety disturb the performance of the intended tasks, especially of the intellectual character. Internal agitation requires an external vent. In this context, gardening work constitutes a proposal of a safe buffer, enabling one to deal with adverse factors. The effort connected with doing it may be analogously referred to moral life conditions. Man placed in a conglomerate of circumstances which they can have no complete control over, awaits patiently for the growth, blossom and fruition of the plants. They gather crops to an extent to which they have cultivated land and provided appropriate conditions, except for the fact that unexpected circumstances may deprive them of the awaited fruit. Slight negligence in the regularity of the performed actions leads to a sudden increase of factors threatening the existence of the plant looked after. This situation is easily transposed to the sphere of moral life in which a lack of cultivation in a given area results in the appearance of deficiencies threatening to ruin the results of previous work.

The Significance of Intellectual Work

Intellectual work occupies an important position within the framework of triple-work. The potential character of the intellect, on the one hand, opens up before man an incredibly beneficial possibility of lifelong education. On the other hand, however, man's intellectual degradation is possible. It is quite frequently difficult to diagnose since

it takes the form of an apparent involvement of the intellect consisting in holding its natural mindfulness on trifle activities. In this case, the intellect does not have to exercise a concentrated effort. The apparent activity of the intellect leads to its functional latency, which results in the dullness or, in an extreme case, passivity of one's intellectual powers, which Zamoyska considers to be intellectual suicide.¹⁴ Concentrating the activity of the intellect on dreams is associated with a steady decrease of the ability to think.

Intellectual work is exercised by means of intellectual education that is by means of man's activity in the domain of learning the assumptions, rules and achievements of various sciences and arts. In this respect, people have quite different aptitudes and inclinations, which naturally guide their actions, even though they do not completely determine them. The point of intellectual work is not to develop scientific activity characterizing researchers who specialize in a specific discipline. Due to the need of having complicated tools and ensuring a large amount of time it would be an unreal plan. Therefore, the main aim of intellectual work is not achieving specialist knowledge but treating the intellect according to its potential nature: as a tool which needs to be cultivated in order to serve further work.¹⁵ The pursuit of intellectual work is for the mind to develop constantly, becoming critical and acute. The performance of intellectual work suggested by Zamoyska consists in a systematically acquired knowledge of the basics of the main fields of science and an attempt at understanding their fundamental principles. Zamoyska adds very demanding methodological conditions to the condition of the elementariness of the content. And namely, holding at every level of intellectual work, cognitive accuracy and critical cautiousness with respect to the adopted theories. She underlines the signifi-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 42–45.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 82–83.

cance of such a way of educating students as early as at an elementary level. These two factors: learning the basics of a specific science while simultaneously maintaining a high level of the method of its acquisition delineate the way of performing intellectual work.

Correctly performed intellectual work is bound up with constant exercise of the intellectual powers. Its results turn out to be a crucial factor of human improvement. They involve an improved memory, more intense mindfulness, an ability to consider opposite arguments, avoidance of one-sided judgements. Intellectual work ensures the ability of using general terms, it improves abstract thinking. It is connected with acquiring the ability of making analogies, analyses and syntheses of the acquired contents. It improves reasoning, it enables the justification of the positions taken, a factual consideration of disputable problems, control of emotions and a substantively guided discussion. It leads to learning opposing views and their justifications. Thus, it shapes critical thinking.

Among the skills and disciplines improving the intellect, Zamoyska mentions calligraphy, orthography, grammar, foreign languages, mathematics, natural sciences, religious education, history, philosophy, social sciences (economy, sociology) and pedagogy. They develop the intellect in various directions and enable further education. Mastering a foreign language positively affects the functioning of memory and develops comparative thinking. A knowledge of Latin and Greek brings special abilities. It specifies the understanding of scientific terms and reveals etymological semantic contexts. Within mathematical sciences, Zamoyska underscores the significance of arithmetic and geometry. Arithmetic plays the role of gymnastics of the mind since it shapes logical thinking, improves reasoning, increases mindfulness, enables a quick mental grasp of a subject. Mastering it contributes to ordering the economic dimensions of life. A knowledge of the basics of geometry results in ergonomic abilities, organizes the way of acting in particular

space. It contributes to improving the art of drawing which may, under certain circumstances, constitute the best manner of expressing one's thoughts.

Natural sciences develop the mind in the direction of clear-mindedness, mindfulness and also provide a constantly fresh way of viewing problems. Studying natural sciences gives the mental powers as if a rejuvenated youth which is characteristic of nature.¹⁶ At the same time, there holds a relationship between learning natural sciences and one's faith. In Zamoyska's opinion, natural sciences may contribute to consolidating faith and help conduct worldview discussions.¹⁷ Studying history brings an understanding of the determinants contributing to the functioning of society. It translates directly into the understanding of the significance of individual action as causing specific social consequences. The greatest development possibilities for the human intellect are opened up by studying philosophy. Philosophy arises and strengthens a love of the intellect for the truth. It opens up the possibilities of developing the most essential actions of the intellect, comprising the ability to cognize the world, to formulate problems and to consider them critically. It leads to the development of analogous thinking.

Zamoyska discerns a need for theoretical and practical artistic education matched to one's aptitudes. There appears a postulate of doing basic exercises, however strictly observing the rules of a specific art. Practising arts shapes character, teaches accuracy, patience and perseverance. It arouses a love of beauty and enables one to participate in the reception of works of culture.¹⁸ Due to the manner of presenting reality and using artistic means, the appropriate way of learning art are classical masterpieces. They have the best potential for shaping imagination and arousing the creativity of the intellect.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 53–54.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 70–73.

The Significance of Spiritual Work

Mental work improves the activities of the intellect for performing the third kind of triple-work, *i.e.*, spiritual work. It is the most internal and the most difficult type of work for man. Its results are particularly important from the point of view of human life fulfillment. Spiritual work is performed in cooperation of the powers of the intellect and the will. It takes place in the moral and religious spheres in which human action is performed in relation to the Absolute. Due to the relationship to transcendental reality, spiritual work is the highest type of human activity. Religious activity develops on the basis of moral activity. Thus, spiritual work constitutes a kind of activity of a moral and religious nature which affects the quality of performance of the other kinds of work, giving them ultimate motivation and sense.

Spiritual work in the domain of human morality has two essential dimensions: a negative and a positive one. Its negative dimension consists in constantly removing faults and avoiding restricting human activities to sensations and feelings, which is associated with faults. A positive dimension of spiritual work consists in acquiring systematically various moral capacities, centered around justice, prudence, fortitude, moderation. The negative and the positive dimensions are clearly connected with one another since the best way of removing our faults are exercises based on practising the opposite virtues.¹⁹ Zamoyska compares spiritual work to a battlefield. One cannot concentrate solely on the work opposing faulty actions. Such work is too passive; it does not bring the intended effects and leads to discouragement. That is why one needs to pass on to work of an aggressive nature, in which one attacks their faults with the opposite actions. For example, exercising regularly some art or science is the best way to combat idleness. An action which

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 98–99.

targets directly concrete faults with the opposite action gives to spiritual work some features of violence and radicalism. However, it is associated with the highest probability of success. Spiritual work opens people up to external reality and liberates them from the internal circle of constantly turning their attention to themselves.²⁰ At the same time, each acquired moral capacity involves the potential for the development of all others. Moral capacities build the human character, enabling one to attain religious ends.

The source from which Zamoyska draws inspirations for presenting the principles of spiritual work in the sphere of religion is the Catholic religion. Removing one's faults and acquiring moral capacities takes place in the context of the end which is identifying and fulfilling the will of God relating to one's own life. The proposal of developing spiritual work is based on theoretical grounds which is a regular study of the Holy Scriptures as well as learning the sense of the liturgy, reading biographies of the saints, of founders of religious orders, etc. The stage of proper preparation of intellectual conditions for undertaking spiritual work is necessary, however, the very essence of this work is of an active character, strongly involving the will. The function of the bridge facilitating the transition to spiritual practice is played by meditation, constituting a reflection on religious content in relation to the conditions of one's own life. Meditation results in specific resolutions concerning future actions. The fulfillment of such resolutions may be controlled by means of an instrument of spiritual work which is an examination of conscience, in which the actions committed are examined with respect to their cause and effect as well as to their number, etc. Prayer may be an important means helping toward spiritual work. The aim of prayer is the actualization of the relationship to God. Prayer fulfills the desire for communion with God by various acts of love. It may

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 99.

take on the form of words or consist in the intellect silently abiding in the presence of God in a volitively engaged fashion. An efficient way of spiritual work is a retreat which takes place in isolation, consisting in detachment from activities, duties and relationships, which engage one on an everyday basis. Zamoyska relied on organizing retreats according to St. Ignatius of Loyola.²¹ The result of the retreat is a better understanding of one's life experiences, a will strengthened for appropriate action and concrete decisions and resolutions.²² In spiritual work, there is also a possibility of applying such means as ascetism, consisting in mortification of faults with the opposing actions, in practising silence and remaining alone. These factors applied with moderation contribute to spiritual development.

Spiritual work facilitates finding the right balance between solitude and life lived in relationships with others. The two modes should interchange. Solitude enables one to gather strength, to replenish and extend one's intellectual and spiritual resources, to discover ideas and inspirations for acting in society. Whereas actions of a social character enable one to check how ideas and principles sought and discovered in solitude are applied in practice. Relationships with another person facilitate spiritual development and learning about oneself, they may be a way of training one's character and lead to friendship. For Zamoyska, a factor of spiritual development is both the potential for difficulty and for help, which are brought by human contacts. Man's excessive involvement in external actions, a multitude of superficial relationships close the possibility of broader spiritual development and reduce people to a status comparable to working animals. Whereas excessive solitude

²¹ George E. Ganss, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary* (Chicago, Ill.: Loyola Press, 1992).

²² The testimony of the course of her own spiritual development during a retreat is presented by Zamoyska in her book *Zapiski z rekolekcji* [Notes from a Retreat] (Lublin: Fundacja Rozwoju Kultury Polskiej, 2004).

results in thinking of a utopian and ideological nature which does not translate into the possibility of practical application and which may disturb the understanding of life fulfillment as the most crucial aim of human action.

Spiritual work clearly affects the way mental and physical work is performed. This happens for two reasons. Firstly, due to the fact of relating the activities carried out to transcendental reality, which significantly extends motivation, strengthens the power and shapes the way of performing an action. Incorporating each work into the process of individually shaping the relationship to God is a characteristic point of Zamoyska's conception of spiritual work. Religious references give each, even very simple and insignificant physical activity, a deeper dimension. In a religious context, there appears a postulate of the most accurate and orderly way of performing all actions. Since this type of action perfects and strengthens a working person. At this juncture, the way of performing physical and intellectual work constitutes a testimony of one's faith and clearly represents spiritual development. Secondly, a very important element of spiritual work is the process of forming one's character. The principle of moderation and order introduced into the domain of moral life is manifested in the tendency for allotting a proper place to the domain of emotional life. Thanks to spiritual work, the will and intellect develop in the direction of not altering the aim and the mode of acting under the influence of strong, short-lived emotional outbursts. A well-formed character is a factor determining the success in undertaking or in conducting each physical and intellectual work. It enables one to better bear the hardships connected with these works as well as determines the regularity of the undertaken action. While regularly performed actions ensure the attainment of appropriate results of work. This is why spiritual work influences physical and mental work in a perfecting way.

Conclusion

In her reflections, Jadwiga Zamoyska strove to answer the question in what way by means of work to fulfill one's life in its most important dimensions. Zamoyska's conception is quite elaborate and reflects the philosophical understanding of the essence, sense and aim of work. It also displays inspirations of a religious nature. In this context, one may distinguish several characteristic points.

The first one concerns treating work as an essential factor of spiritual self-fulfillment and the basis for social life improvement. In this context Zamoyska's conception overlaps with the understanding of work characteristic of the Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy. It elucidates work against the background of the *actus-potentia* theory. The person is a potential being, capable of perfecting oneself, and work is a crucial manner of achieving perfection. Work being a way of actualizing rational and volitional personal potentialities leads to the fulfillment of a human being.

The second distinguishing point in Zamoyska's conception was the development of a method of work. Zamoyska clarified this method in terms of structure and function within the framework of triple-work which comprises physical, mental and spiritual work. They display essential correlations affecting the improvement of the individual kinds of work. The idea of triple-work has a universal nature, and at the same it involves the potential of being applied to specific cases. It engages human spiritual and corporal spheres and it attributes to each of them a proper place and functions. In formulating the method, Zamoyska was to a certain extent inspired by methods of work in Christian religious orders, especially arising from the Benedictine traditions. What was important in this context was the way of performing work individually by each person. In Zamoyska, emphasizing work as a method of human improvement was associated with underscoring education for work. By

the same token, she specified the method in relation to the pedagogy of work. Her conception of education had a universal dimension, even though in practical terms Zamoyska dealt with women's education.

The third distinguishing point was that Zamoyska avoided theories built without reference to the specifically conditioned reality of work. As a researcher, she was characterized by a realistic approach to work. She conceived of work as a concretely existing activity which is affected and determined by variable and specific circumstances factors, characterizing the sphere of practical conduct. This is why her conception was characterized by methodological practicality, revealed in the acceptance of the conditions of work taking place and in the avoidance of creating rules of work imposed in a top-down fashion. Zamoyska implemented the methodological foundations of the conception of work and education following heuristic induction, using orientated observation, collecting and combining various experiences, acquired, *e.g.*, during visits in multiple educational institutions, religious orders or while organizing her own teaching system. Her methodology was formed in a consciously controlled fashion, in accordance with the adopted assumptions of proving theoretical assumptions in practice.

Work as a method of human life fulfillment clearly emphasizes the subjective aim of work. Although work serves to accomplish various important tasks, among other things, providing the means for life, these aims have indirect functions, facilitating personal life fulfillment. This, in turn, is accomplished in the sphere of conscious and free action. The subjective aim of work is associated with the possibility of imparting a dimension of human spirituality to every kind of work. At the same time, it opens up a possibility of improving oneself by means of properly done work. Zamoyska emphasizes the fact that life is not about doing sublime and great things, performing rare, spectacular or awe-inspiring acts. Since an opportunity for doing such acts may not present itself. The point is rather to do little things in a great way as

often as possible. One may complete numerous and little tasks, doing them without chaos, in a manner that is planned and focused, systematic, accurate, non-superficial. Individual little tasks from the domain of physical, mental or spiritual work stand a chance of being done accurately and even perfectly, if they are done with the acceptance of the rule of moderation, weight and order. This principle extends harmony both in the human sphere and in the external world. In such a grasp, work which seemed to be an obstacle to one's own development, is likely to become of assistance. Such accomplishment of work requires the involvement of the acuteness of the intellect, an appropriate intensity of the strength of the will and control of the sphere of emotional life. Zamoyska not only presented work as a factor crucial for human life fulfillment. She showed work as a method, serving subjective self-realization, proportionate to the status of the human person. She also provided a practical suggestion of applying work as a method of human improvement. Her conception of work showed that people, though functionally dependent on the material dimension of their body and of the world, fulfill their human lives in the sphere of the spirit, above matter.



Zamoyska's Conception of Work as a Method of Self-Fulfillment

SUMMARY

Zamoyska presented reflections unique for the European social thought. She identified with philosophical and religious views considering work as the fundamental manner of fulfilling man's individual and social life. However, from the standpoint of a practical human life, these ideas lacked an important factor. And namely, showing precisely the way of performing work itself. Thus, work requires employing an appropriate method, which translates directly into the practice of human life. And she did not mean a narrowly conceived method, concerning selected jobs or some kind of man's professional activities. The suggested method referred to work which every man needs to undertake

in order to fulfill his or her life. It concerned work which enables men to fulfill themselves in the most fundamental dimension as humans. This is accomplished by man undertaking systematically three kinds of work throughout their life: physical, intellectual and spiritual. They are interdependent and mutually complementary, this is why none of them may be excluded during human life. Only their parallel continuation ensures man's harmonious development. The suggested method is universal since it concerns the way of performing work as a factor conditioning the fulfillment of human life. Thereby, her considerations on the method of work bring new meaning into the field of practical philosophy.

KEYWORDS

Hedwig Zamoyska, method of triple-work, self-realization, physical work, intellectual work, spiritual work.

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