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## **The Concept of Respect in the Bible and in Modern Sciences: A Descriptive Model of Respect in Interpersonal Relations**

*Abstract:* The concept of respect is found in thousands of years old written sources of Old Testament and New Testament, in later writings of philosophical thinkers, as well as in modern scientific literature. Despite the frequent use of this concept, we still lack the conceptual clarity of what truly leads an individual to respectful behavior. Therefore, in this paper we first present the results of a qualitative analysis of biblical quotations from the Slovenian standard translation of the Bible that contain the word »respect« (Slovene: »spoštovanje«) and can be classified into three categories according to whom the respect refers to (respect between God and man, respect among people in general and respect within a family). Certain key aspects of respect were also pointed out by authors from the field of humanities and social sciences, which are presented in the paper. In the latter part, all the aspects of respect expressed are integrated into a new descriptive model of respect in interpersonal relationships.

*Key words:* respect, descriptive model of respect, interpersonal relationships, qualitative analysis of Biblical texts

*Povzetek:* **Pojem spoštovanja v Svetem pismu in v moderni znanosti: deskriptivni model spoštovanja v medosebnih odnosih**

Pojem spoštovanja srečamo že v več tisoč let starih pisnih virih starozaveznih in novozaveznih svetopisemskih besedil, v kasnejših spisih filozofskih mislecev, pa tudi v sodobni znanstveni literaturi. Kljub pogosti rabi tega pojma še vedno nimamo konceptualne jasnosti, kaj posameznika dejansko pripelje do spoštljivega vedenja. Zato v tem prispevku najprej predstavljamo rezultate kvalitativne analize svetopisemskih navedkov iz slovenskega standardnega prevoda Svetega pisma, ki vsebujejo besedo »spoštovanje«, razvrščene v tri kategorije glede na to, na koga se spoštovanje nanaša (spoštovanje med Bogom in človekom, spoštovanje med ljudmi na splošno in spoštovanje v domači družini). V nadaljevanju predstavljamo ključne vidike spoštovanja, ki so jih izpostavili sodobni avtorji s področja humanističnih in družboslovnih znanosti. V zadnjem delu vse predstavljene vidike spoštovanja povežemo v nov deskriptivni model spoštovanja v medosebnih odnosih.

*Ključne besede:* spoštovanje, deskriptivni model spoštovanja, medosebni odnosi, kvalitativna analiza svetopisemskih besedil

## 1. Introduction

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Respect is an important part of interpersonal relationships, which we often encounter in the form of a request, a rule or a command, »Respect! « Despite the constant presence of this notion among people, it is still not entirely clear what this concept captures or how all the components mentioned by different authors in connection to respect are interconnected. For this reason, we first set up a research question on the aspects of respect in biblical texts; we were further interested in the aspects of respect expressed by authors in the context of contemporary social and humanistic sciences; and, finally, we were interested in how individual aspects that can be associated with respect, can be connected to a new integrative model of respect in interpersonal relationships.

## 2. The concept of respect in biblical texts

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### 2.1 Biblical invitation to respectfulness

In order to find out what biblical texts say about respect, we first searched for all the quotations that contain the word respect (in all its inflection forms). When searching for quotations, we used the Slovenian standard translation of the Bible, which is published on the website of the Bible Society of Slovenia ([www.biblija.net](http://www.biblija.net)) and enables a systematic search for selected words. We have found that the word »respect« (in Slovene language »spoštovanje« in various flexible forms) is used 76 times in 73 rows. We then analyzed all the quotes in accordance with the rules of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998; Charmaz 2006); we wanted to find out what the term »respect« in each individual quotation refers to, i.e. which aspects of respect are covered by individual biblical references. Grounded theory is qualitative research method used for understanding the meaning of text of various sort (like extant writings or transcriptions of interviews) through conceptualization of theory about the subject of the research (Rennie 2000, 481). Grounded theory can be understood as methodical hermeneutics (496) or inductive approach to hermeneutics (481; 487–491) and was already successfully used for the analysis of biblical texts (Fonnebo 2011). One of the main features of grounded theory is constructing explanations and theory from data and not relying on a literature or previous knowledge (Charmaz 2006, 5–6) and because of the lack of exegetical explanations of respect in available literature, this method was especially suitable for our research purpose.

We have found that all quotes containing respect in Bible can be classified into three categories according to whom respect refers to. The first category can be referred to as respect between God and man, the second, respect for people in general, and the third, respect within a family.

## 2.2 Respect between God and man

In the Bible we learn that it is firstly God who respects man: »Since you are precious and honored (respected) in my sight, and because I love you.« (Is 43,4) If man thus opens to God, he always receives his reverence, because respect is the permanent state of God. On the other hand, man is invited to respond to God and his work with respect, »let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe« (Heb 12,28, similarly in 1 Pet 1,17 and Ps 130,4). The term »worship with reverence and awe« (in Slovenian translation »služenje s spoštovanjem«) is used, which is in fact a double invitation to open up a relationship with God: worship or service is itself a term which signifies relationship; the same is true of respect, as the very concept of respect immediately raises the question of who or what we respect.

In God's plan of salvation, there is the desire that all people »turn to God and worship (respect) only him« (Tob 14,6), and in the circle of saints this is already realized, as the psalmist says: »In the council of the holy ones, God is greatly feared (respected).« (Ps 89,7) To others, God sends his son with hope: »They will respect my son« (Mt 21,37; Mk 12,6; Lk 20,13), and if people respect him, they will in return receive much more than they will give, since God listens to those who respect him (Heb 5,7), and entrusts them with the abundance of his grace: »Those who fear the Lord and who esteem (respect) His name /... / will be Mine /... / on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them.« (Mal 3,16-17)

Respect for God is closely intertwined with respect for the God's law. The Bible clearly states that disobedience to God's law is not the correct attitude (Wis 6,4; Est 8,26), and when a man ceases to honor the law, he no longer thrives (Dan 1,30). Similarly, man should respect wisdom (Wis 6,21), as well as those who find wisdom (Sir 18,28).

Respect should also mark man's attitude to holy things: to the sanctuary of God (Lev 19,30; 26,2; 2 Ma 3,12), to sacred offerings (Lev 22,2), to the holy city of Jerusalem (Tob 13,14), and for the holiday days, such as respect for the Sabbath in the Old Testament (Lev 19,30; 26,2; 2 Ma 6,11; Jn 9,16), which is then changed to Sunday in the New Testament period.

## 2.3 Respect among people

The relationship of respect that man primarily experiences and becomes aware of in his relationship with God should also be transferred to his relationships with people: »Outdo yourselves in honoring (respecting) one another.« (Rom 12,10)

When we carefully read the texts, we find that respect for people is sometimes perceived as being conditional, and sometimes as unconditional. There are three forms of conditional respect. The first one is the respect that comes from one's works (Pro 27,18; Sir 38,1; 1 Thess 5,13), for example: »Whoever tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who looks after his master will be honored (respected).« (Pro 27,18) The second form is the respect that comes from one's status or social

rank (Acts 26,25.26; 1 Pet 2,17; Lm 4,16; 5,12), for example: »Honor (respect) the king.« (1 Pet 2,17) The third form of respect comes from one's life situation (Deut 28,50; 1 Tim 5,3; Wis 2,10; Bar 4,15), for example: »Give proper recognition (respect) to those widows who are really in need.« (1 Tim 5,3)

The unconditional form refers to everybody: »Treat everyone with high regard (respect)« (1 Pet 2,17), even those that are less worthy of honor. With the latter, we are even invited to greater respect: »And the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unrepresentable are treated with special modesty.« (1 Cor 12,23) Here, the Bible uses a metaphor of respect for parts of the body, but it is clear from the context that it is an illustration of the relationships among people. If there is no respect in these relations, everything is destroyed: »The highways are deserted, no travelers are on the roads. The treaty is broken, its witnesses are despised, no one is respected« (Is 33,8), »people will oppress each other – man against man, neighbor against neighbor. The young will rise up against the old, the nobody against the honored.« (3,5)

There are also some suggestions in the Bible how to treat people in order to gain their respect. We can see that these hints do not apply either to performing work, or to seeking social status, therefore, it is not about searching for conditional forms of respect. As the foundation of respect among people, the Bible sets serving Christ, »because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval (respect)« (Rom 14,18), and the commitment to wisdom, and from the context it is evident that it is God's wisdom and not wisdom, which, for example, arises from human endeavors and musings: »She (God's wisdom) will bring me great honor from advisors and many others, even though I am young.« (Wis 8,10) Those who do not acknowledge that in their lives, will not be respected (Is 32,5).

Regarding human behavior, the Bible invites us to honor life (Wis 14,24; Sir 10,29); respectfully do good (Tob 12,7); respectfully listen to the word of God (Sir 41,16), and respectfully announce the word of God (Tob 12,6) and the works of God (Tob 12,7; Tob 12,11) to all people. We are therefore invited to spread among people the respect that we are given in our relationship with God through our attitude towards life, through our deeds, our obedience, and how we declare the word of God. Interestingly, apart from one single place (1 Tim 5,4), we cannot find a quote in the Bible in which we would be invited to teach others about respect. Everywhere else we only find an invitation to live it, to be its witnesses.

## 2.4 Respect within one's family

In the context of a family, the largest proportion of texts containing the word respect is dedicated to respecting one's own parents. Respect for the father and mother is one of the ten God's commandments, which in itself speaks of the importance and necessity of this attitude. Secondly, the number of biblical quotations that contain this invitation or command furthermore highlights this signifi-

cance. In no other phrase in the Bible, the term »respect« is used as many times as when combined with parents. (Exod 20,12; Lev 19,3; Deut 5,16; Tob 10,14; Sir 3,11; Sir 7,27; Mt 19,19; Mk 7,10; Mk 10,19; Lk 18,20; Eph 6,2)

With this commandment, we encounter two promises to man if he fulfills this commandment in the Bible: honor your father and your mother, »so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you« (Exod 20,12) and »that it may go well with you« (Deut 5,16) or »so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth« (Eph 6,2-3). Harmonious relations in a family, based on respectful interaction, create an environment of wellbeing and act as a protective factor also for human health: not only spiritual, but also mental and physical health. Interestingly, in research on the importance of interpersonal relationships on an individual's health, modern science actually confirms it. McShall and Johnson (2015, 797) with his colleagues, for example, showed that participants with a perceived higher quality of interpersonal relationships report better health, with the same trend being shown in different ethnic groups included in the study. Similar trends have already been observed in a number of other studies, transparently presented by Robles and Kiecolt-Glaser (2003, 409–16).

In addition to biblical quotations, which include respect for both parents, we find a number of other references relating only to respect for the father (Sir 3,3.5.7.8; Mt 15,6; Heb 12,9) and one that refers only to the respect for the mother (Tob 4,3). In this context, too, we hear some promises: honor your father so that »your sins will be forgiven« (Sir 3,3), »your own children will make you happy and God will hear them when they pray« (3,5), and your father »will bless you« (3,8). In this context, it is obvious that the commandment is not to be understood in terms of restraint, but in terms of a path leading to greater prosperity. Respect for parents could be understood as a kind of door opening to a space in which one can find the fulfillment of one's deepest yearnings: not only longing for belonging, connection and being loved, but also longing for long and good life, for fatherly blessing, being given one's own children, forgiveness, mercy, etc.

On the other hand, the Bible very radically condemns disrespect for parents: »Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.« (Mr 7,10) The statement in our time should not necessarily be understood from the point of view of the death penalty, since when considering such statements in the Bible we can take into account the socio-cultural context of the time of their creation (Tomašević 2016, 555–557) and read them not literally, but also explain them on spiritual level (551). Disrespect towards one's parents can also mean one's spiritual death. Parents who live in a respectful relationship with God, with themselves and with other people, bear God's blessing. If a child rejects his parents with his disrespect, the parents cannot forward this blessing and the children may remain without it, so they may be spiritually dead. It is therefore good for children to be »respectable« in every way to their father (1 Tim 3,2), to honor the mother, and never »neglect her or cause her any sorrow« (Tob 4,3) and to honor »the gods of their fathers« (Dan 11,37).

Respect for one's family that does not specifically relate to parents is rarely mentioned in the Bible. In one case, respect refers to a wife and a father-in-law (Tob 14,13), in another to one's family in general (1 Tim 5,4). Regarding respect among spouses, we first find an invitation to respect the marriage. In the letter to Hebrews, it is written: »Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.« (Heb 13,4) In the first part of the quote, we have a general invitation that everyone respect the marriage, which means that the social environment must show respect to spouses. In the second part of the quotation, we have an invitation that the husband and wife are respectful to each other, not to mislead one another and to have a proper, respectful attitude towards sexuality. The need for respect for the purity of marriage is also shown in the Book of Wisdom (14,24).

In addition to respect towards the marriage, we find also the invitation to the wife in the Bible to honor her husband (Sir 26,26; Eph 5,33), accompanied by an invitation to her husband to love her wife as much as himself (Eph 5,33). The question arises, then, why the husband gets a different invitation than the wife. If we add to this quote another one, which does not use the term respect in Slovene translation, but rather the related word »to treat someone with honor« (1 Pet 3,7), we immediately find that the invitation to honor is not intended only for women, but also for men: »Husbands, in the same way, treat your wives with consideration as a delicate vessel, and with honor as fellow heirs of the gracious gift of life.« The love that is required from the husband in the letter to the Ephesians is already contained in the main commandment, which is meant for all: »Love your neighbor as yourself.« (Mk 12,31) If, therefore, we do not see the quotation from the letter to the Ephesians outside the context of the rest of the Bible, it is quite clear that both husband and wife should respect one another and as well as love one another.

### **3. The concept of respect in modern social sciences and humanities**

Although the word respect in the Bible is not often used (e.g. the word love in various inflection forms is used almost ten times more often), the analysis of the context in which this word is used gives us a rounded view of the importance of respect in human community. Here the question arises as to how modern scientific findings illuminate this view, and whether it is possible to integrate these findings into a descriptive model of respect.

#### **3.1 Respect as a categorical imperative**

As a starting point for the modern concept of respect in social sciences and humanities, we could take Kant's perception of respect, since Kant was the first major philosopher within the Western culture who put the respect for a person (which also included respect for the self, because the self is a person) in the very

center of moral theory (Dillon 2018, s.v. Respect). He set respect as a categorical imperative: every person deserves respect simply because they are human beings. Therefore, respect for him is unconditional. (Kant 2003, 218) Kant's insistence that an individual has absolute dignity and must always be respected as such has become the central ideal of modern humanism (Dillon 2018, s.v. Respect). According to Kant, respect is a moral law that we know directly (2003, 222), so we do not create it ourselves by our own will; it exists independently of us. Kant attributed the source of this moral law to the pure mind (224), which corresponds to the biblical concept of respect in which the source of respect is God, and man finds respect in relation to him (Is 43,4; Heb 12,28; 1 Pet 1,17; Tob 14,6; Heb 5,7 Mal 3,16–17). It is therefore a universal rule (Kant 2003, 227), which must be implemented regardless of whether it brings comfort or discomfort (218). This, of course, raises the question of how people imagine God as a source of respect. According to Petkovšek (2016, 17), respect in relation to God is possible only if the human being perceives God as the personal God who addresses the person, richens him with meaning and responds to the needs of man, but it is impossible to respect God if the image of God remains empty, impersonal.

### **3.2 Perception and realization of respect among people: conditional and unconditional respect**

Modern authors who study the concept of respect, usually do not speak of respect as a single concept: rather, they distinguish several types or forms of respect. One of the early authors who have researched respect, Darwall, distinguishes two ways in which people can be respected by another person (1977, 37–39). The first is the so called recognition respect and refers to the recognition of the value of another as a person. It is essentially similar to Kant's concept of respect, following the categorical imperative that people need to be respected just because they are persons (2003, 218). Van Quaquebeke and his colleagues (2009, 424) add that it is similar to the golden rule found in the Bible: »So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.« (Mt 7,12) It is therefore universal respect, which applies to all and recognizes everyone the same rights and obligations, and thus links with the moral principles that need to be followed. In literature, we will encounter some other terms for this form of respect, for example categorical respect (Janoff-Bulman and Werther 2008, 147) or unconditional respect (Lalljee et al. 2009).

Another type of respect is appraisal respect, related to the characteristics of others, and to what extent these characteristics evoke respect (e.g. one's knowledge, work, achievements, skills) (Darwall 1977, 37–39). In this regard, respect makes the other in a positive way different from all other people who do not possess these characteristics or these are not so distinctively expressed (Van Quaquebeke, Zenker and Eckloff 2009, 424). Different authors name this form of respect with different terms, for example: respect dependent on circumstances (contingent respect) (Janoff-Bulman and Werther 2008, 149) or conditional respect (Clucas and Claire 2017, 124). In comparison with recognition respect, estimated or

conditional respect can be very partial, as some characteristics of an individual can be appreciated and respected, while others are not accepted or are even rejected (Darwall 1977, 42). Depending on which characteristics we put to the fore in judging whether or not another person deserves respect, we distinguish several types of assessed or conditional respect. Dillon (2018, s.v. Respect) lists Hudson's division of respect into four types that could all be classified under conditional respect: evaluative respect, following an assessment of whether an individual has met certain standards; obstacle respect, which leads to respect for someone with power that prevents us from reaching goals; directive respect, which leads to deliberate following of rules, instructions and law; and institutional respect, based on respect for social roles, positions and status. To these four, we could add achieved respect, which is based on what the individual has done or achieved (Lalljee et al. 2009, 452).

When comparing the consequences of recognized or unconditional respect, on the one hand, and estimated or conditional respect, on the other hand, we can conclude that recognizing or unconditionally respect has a significantly more important meaning than estimated or conditional respect, and has a much greater effect on them (Van Quaquebeke, Zenker and Eckloff 2009, 428).

A similar distinction between the types of respect is found in biblical texts, where we find both quotations of unconditional respect (1 Pet 2,17; 1 Cor 12,23) as well as quotations on conditional forms of respect (Pro 27,18; Sir 38,1; 1 Thess 5,13; Acts 23,26; 26,25; 1 Pet 2,17; Lm 4,16; 5,12; Deut 28,50; 1 Tim 5,3; Wis 2,10; Bar 4,15). Two forms of conditional respect mentioned in the Bible are also found in the above-mentioned Hudson division (respect on the basis of one's deeds and respect resulting from the status or individual's social position), while we have not found any other sources for the third form (respect that arises from the individual's life situation, e.g. from health status, marital status, or developmental period).

### **3.3 Key aspects of respect**

In addition to various types of respect, authors try to identify key aspects or components of respect that arise from the way in which an individual exists and functions in relation to the respected. Dillon (2018, s.v. Respect) highlights six key components of respect: attention to another, consideration of another, the deed of judgment, the recognition of reasons for respect, the evaluation of another as worthy, and an appropriate behavioral response. A person who respects, pays attention to another, which is the opposite of indifference and ignorance. Furthermore, she takes others into consideration and allows them to influence her, which is the opposite of conceitedness and self-sufficiency. In a relationship with another, she judges whether the other deserves respect and finally acknowledges that there are reasons for respect. The other is evaluated as worthy, which is the opposite of reducing the value of another, despise and contempt, as well as exploitation and abuse. Finally, the person who respects, adapts her response to another's reality, behaviorally as well as on the level of experiencing and thinking.



In relation to the latter another component could be added to which Darwall refers (in summarizing Cranor's view of the dynamics of respect), namely to the readiness of the individual to respond in a respectful manner, which immediately precedes the behavioral response itself. (1977, 37)

Most Dillon components relate to an individual, that is, how one processes information about another (and what information is crucial here), and how he responds to the presence of another. Two questions arise here: what is the role of the other and, more broadly, what is the role of the broader context. We can at least partially answer this question by means of the empirical findings of the Japanese author Muto, who points out key feelings that relate to respect. According to Muto, various forms of respect expressed in people are characterized by specific emotions. He enumerates the following types of respect (2014; 2016): respect which overlaps with love and attachment (the other is respected because we love him and we are in a long-term relationship with him); respect which overlaps with fear (the other is respected because he has power); respect which is associated with appreciation, worshipping or adoration (the other is respected because we attribute high value to him or we perceive him as an ideal or a role model); respect which occurs as a response to the admirable actions of the other (the other is respected for his actions over a long period of time), respect which overlaps with surprise and marvel (the other is respected because, for example, we are surprised to see his skills; it is a shorter response of respect), and respect which overlaps with moral duty (the other is respected because this is a moral requirement; the existence of others is inherently valuable in itself). From the findings of Muto's research, we can conclude that several factors play an important role in respect: the context of a relationship (e.g. in respect that overlaps with attachment), the perceived characteristics of the other (e.g. in respect that occurs in response to admirable actions), the individual's values (e.g. in respect related to adoration), the perceived influence of the other (e.g. in awe), the time context (long-lasting or short-term response to respect, e.g. with Muto's last two forms of respect) and recognized moral principles (e.g. in respecting the other solely for the dignity that he has as a human being).

### **3.4 Cultural context of respect**

In addition to the immediate context surrounding the individual and his primary social community, the broader social context also influences respect. We can observe that in Western cultures, people attribute different meaning to respect and express it in a different way than in Eastern cultures. Li and Fischer (2007) summarize that in Western culture, individual independence, individual rights, the pursuit of personal goals, achievements, success, and status are considerably more promoted. Consequently, respect is more frequently or intensely experienced in situations where no one threatens one's independence, where one's rights are respected, where one is allowed to realize one's personal goals, where one recognizes value in another, where another earns recognition or reward, achieves something, or has in an important position.

Eastern cultures are much more oriented towards the community and promote social relations, group goals and achievements, social order, roles in society which maintain harmony between people, etc. (2007) We can estimate that these values are the same that are often found in the Bible, e.g. in the descriptions of the first Christians' lives, when they sold their property and shared the money with everyone who needed it (Acts 2,45), not to mention examples of sacrifice for others. It is important that in the Bible, an essential characteristic of such prioritizing others, i.e. community, is that it is voluntary, rather than compulsory. In the Bible, however, we also find values that could in a way be understood as emphasizing individualism, when the interests of the individual or his salvation are important. A good shepherd leaves his herd to find the lost sheep (Lk 15,1-7). Nonetheless, in the Bible individual values are inseparably integrated into the community. The lost sheep finally has to return to the community. Li and Fischer (2007), however, point out that, despite the general social orientation, the Eastern cultures nevertheless promote values that are more individual-oriented: success, self-confidence, one's own activity, personal abilities, autonomy, and moral self-improvement. Consequently, people experience respect to those who achieve or strive to achieve these highly valued criteria and standards.

The emotional states associated with respect are typically directed towards inclusion in the community or turning the individual in the direction of the other (Kitayama, Mesquita and Karasawa 2006, 893). Consequently, in Eastern cultures people are more likely to experience emotions that are oriented towards social inclusion (for example, they emphasize respect, proximity, guilt, a sense of duty to another), and people in Western cultures experience emotions that are more focused on social exclusion (for example, they emphasize pride, self-esteem, anger, moodiness) (894–895).

We can therefore estimate that in the Western culture a lesser presence of community values is one of the reasons why people in Eastern and Western cultures understand respect in different ways. In order to be able to conclude more firmly in which culture respect is actually present to a greater or lesser extent, further scientific research is needed.

### **3.5 The studies of respect in partnerships, marriages and family interrelationships**

In the field of family relationships, very few studies have focused on the positive aspects of respect. A lot of research is focused on the absence of respect (e.g. injustice, violence, abuse, neglect), but there are few empirical data about how people develop a respectful attitude, how we understand respect, how we can promote respect for loved ones, how respect is linked to other aspects of relationships. Frei and Shaver drew attention to this shortage of research almost twenty years ago (2002, 121), followed by a handful of other authors (Hendrick and Hendrick 2006; Eckstein, Eckstein and Eckstein 2014; Owen, Quirk and Manthos 2012), but so far, the situation has not changed much.

From this handful of studies we learn that respect plays an important role in this field, too. Spouses who, for example, estimate their partner to be more respectful, feel that the two are more similar, they are more satisfied with their marriage, they attribute more positive moral qualities and less negative ones to their partner, they love their partner more (Frei and Shaver 2002, 132), they experience a higher level of mental well-being and are better able to adapt in a relationship (Owen, Quirk and Manthos 2012, 182), are more committed and devoted to marriage (Hendrick and Hendrick 2006, 889; Owen, Quirk and Manthos 2012, 182), they avoid marriage to a lesser extent and experience less anxiety (Frei and Shaver 2002, 132; Owen, Quirk and Manthos 2012, 182), in their marriage they experience more selfless love, as well as more passion and idealistic sex, in their behavior there is less non-committed and irresponsible connections with other persons, less superficial and random sexual contacts, less searching for merely physical pleasures in sexuality (Hendrick and Hendrick 2006, 889). Here we can also mention findings by Gottmann and his colleagues, who, based on their research, concluded that the absence of respect is one of the main factors of the breakdown of a partnership or marriage (Gottman and Silver 2015).

Looking more closely at how these authors explain the notion of respect in interpersonal relationships, we find some suggestions, but we can see that they lack substantial theoretical and empirical background. Frei and Shaver (2002, 129) speak of respect as a single concept (their »scale of respect for the partner« has, for example, only a single-factor structure). Hendrick and Hendrick (2006, 888) came to a similar conclusion. In contrast to these two models, Eckstein proposes a four-dimensional model of respect, which includes: 1) the ability to respond respectfully to interpersonal differences, 2) assuming personal responsibility, 3) willingness to reflect the reality of the relationship and to learn from past experiences, and 4) willingness to release negative feelings, thoughts and memories of negative experiences, i.e. willingness to forgive oneself and one's partner (Eckstein, Eckstein and Eckstein 2014, 99–102).

When Frei and Shaver (2002, 124) studied how people perceive respect, they found that they most often associate respect with the quality of interpersonal relationships (respectful people have moral qualities, are considerate, they accept the other, they are sincere, they listen to the other, are trustworthy, are reliable, caring, understanding, etc.). Among the first twenty-two characteristics with which people most often described respect, there were only two which did not refer to a relationship as such (membership in a respected social community and admirable talents or skills). From this, we could conclude that taking care of quality interpersonal relationships is one of the key factors in promoting respect among people. It should be added, however, that the research included participants from social sciences and humanities, who, by their professional orientation, are more focused on interpersonal relations. The question is, therefore, what kind of results one would get with participants from other professional fields, such as technology and natural sciences. Hendrick and Hendrick (2006, 885) developed their model of respect based on six topics summarized by Lawrence-Lightfoot, which,

however, do not have a completely clear either theoretical or empirical background. Similar confusion also applies to the model proposed by Eckstein and his colleagues (2014). Although her model has clearer theoretical starting points, we did not find empirical data to show the reliability and validity of the proposed model. We can conclude that in the area of partnership, marriage and family relations we still do not have a model that would satisfactorily explain the nature of respect in these relations.

#### **4. A descriptive model of respect in interpersonal relationships**

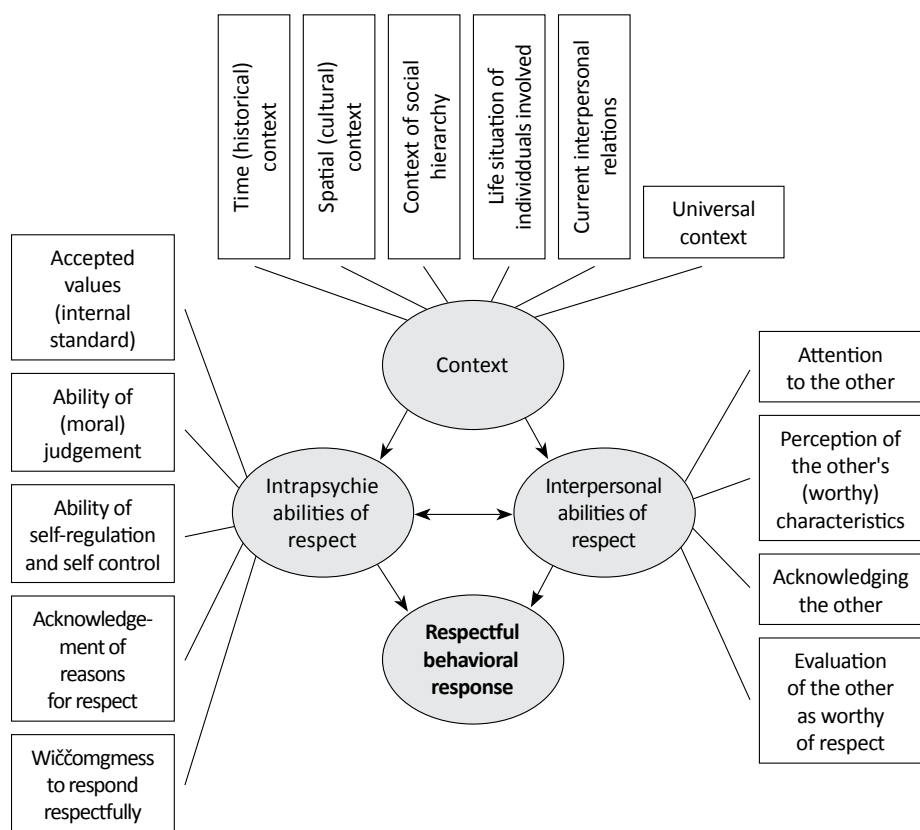
From the examination and analysis of the existing sources related to respect, we can understand that this is a complex concept that encompasses several levels of human existence. In the following, we have integrated all the above-stated and presented aspects of respect into a descriptive model of respect in interpersonal relationships (see Figure 1).

A respectful behavioral response of a particular individual is first associated with his intrapsychic and interpersonal abilities (Dillon 2018, s.v. Respect; Darwall 1977; Muto 2014). In intrapsychic abilities, the key role is played above all by the individual's accepted values or his inner standard and the ability of self-regulation (Greenspan and Shanker 2004, 77–80), the ability of moral judgment and recognition of the reasons for respect (Dillon 2018, s.v. Respect) and willingness to respond respectfully (Darwall 1977, 37). In interpersonal abilities, the key ones are: attention focused on the other (Dillon 2018, s.v. Respect), the perception of worthy characteristics of the other (Muto 2014, 163–165), the consideration of the other and the evaluation of the other as worthy of respect (Dillon 2018, s.v. Respect).

In addition to the characteristics that emanate from the individual himself, the context in which the individual is involved must also be taken into account. The closest context that relates to an individual's respectful behavior is the context of his current interpersonal relationships, which depends on current situation. The nature of each interaction between people to a certain extent determines the extent to which respect for people will be reciprocal, or whether symmetrical or asymmetrical forms of respect will prevail (in the first case we speak of the respect among equals, while in the second case it is the respect which is similar to caring, i.e. the stronger person protects the weaker). (Hendrick and Hendrick, 2006, 885)

The conditional forms of respect mentioned in the preceding chapters appear in conjunction with the typical contexts that we have also included in the model of respect. Temporal (historical) and spatial (cultural) contexts determine which values have greater relevance for people in a certain historical moment and a certain culture, and thus guide the judgment of what is more (or less) worthy of respect. (Muto 2014; Li and Fischer 2007) The context of social hierarchy guides

the judgment based on the social status of people in society (Dillon 2018, s.v. Respect). People connect life situations with specific characteristics, on the basis of which we then evaluate people and their positions. In this way, we judge people differently depending on their age and developmental maturity (we take a different stance towards a child than to an old person), the statutory status (we take a different stance to a widow than to a married person), the health status (we respond differently to a sick person than to a healthy one), and the like.



**Figure 1:** A descriptive model of respect in interpersonal relationships, as can be developed on the basis of previous findings in the field of research of respect.

The broadest context of respect, however, is the universal context of respect created by God as the source of all respect (Is 43,4), or the pure mind according to Kant (2003, 224). In this field, we find a universal moral, which is embodied in the basic commandment, »love« (Mk 12,28-31), or in Kant's language, the categorical imperative of unconditional respect for all people merely because every human being deserves respect simply due to the fact of her or his existence. The universal context of respect therefore invites us to overcome the conditionality of our existence and enter the love of God, which is the source of all, and therefore also a source of respect.

## 5. Conclusion

In analyzing the texts from the point of view of the concept of respect, in addition to the very different conceptions and accents that the authors point out in this field, we have noticed that this area is also very poorly studied from the empirical point of view. On the one hand, this is a key subject that is placed in the very center of moral theory and practice, many philosophical debates, and above all everyday life in human communities, and on the other hand, researchers pay little attention to it. There is a lot of talk about the absence of respect, but we still know very little about how to promote its development in situations of disrespect. The descriptive model of respect in interpersonal relationships, which highlights the key aspects of respect, derived from the findings so far, can serve as a starting point for further empirical research in this field, and can also be an incentive for further search for ways to effectively promote the development of respect among people.

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