

Abstract

WOMAN, NATURE & IDENTITY: INSIGHTS FROM OGOLLA, STEIN & ESCRIVÁ .

In this paper I look at woman, nature and identity from three different perspectives: that of a novelist, that of a woman philosopher and finally the explanation of the same from a spiritual leader.

In the novel, "*The River and the Source*" (1995) by Margaret Ogollaⁱ, I look at the ideal of woman depicted in the many attributes that the author portrays in her chief women characters, Akoko and Nyabera. Moving on I look at a philosopher's understanding of the nature of woman which, while not different from that of man with regard to being human, often appears to be very different in the practical and functional perspective. The question then arises: are there certain qualities in woman that are, ontologically as well as psychologically, feminine? And, if so, are these distinguishing characteristics part of human nature and identity or are they culturally and socially generated thereby relegating women to certain social tasks such as the family, the home and certain professions as the radical feminists claim? For this analysis I have chosen Edith Stein'sⁱⁱ contribution. Finally, I look at woman, nature and identity in the preaching of a spiritual leader (1967), St. Josemaríaⁱⁱⁱ who has a vision of the role and contribution of women in society and its healthy progress in the world today very similar to that of both Stein and Ogolla.

Key words:

Woman

Nature

Femininity

Identity

Professionalism