

# The Discovery and Affirmation of the Concept of 'Human Person' in Christian Philosophy

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The concept of the 'Human Person' has a long history and has become the subject matter for many branches of study. Human beings are characterized as 'Persons' apart from all other kinds of entities. 'Person' is a comprehensive name which expresses the entire nature of the human being.

The term person in English is derived from the Latin *persona* which is also traceable to the Greek *prosopon* (πρόσωπον). The direct meaning of *prosopon* is face which was originally used in the Greek theatre to denote the made-up faces or the masks worn by an actor. For Romans, *persona* had a juridical sense which expressed a kind of dignity, recognized by the law. For them only a Roman citizen was *persona*.

With the advent of Christianity a new world vision was opened. This vision influenced the outlook on the human being as well. Human beings were considered unique because of their special place in nature and their superiority over other creatures. According to the Christian metaphysical tradition, human being is unique because of the endowment of the immortal rational soul and being created in the image of God.

Severinus Boethius, a Christian philosopher of early 6<sup>th</sup> century, defined the concept of 'Person' for the first time. This was considered a classical definition which provided a firm theoretical base to a new humanism, that is, to view all the human beings as persons who have equal rights and dignity. Thus, Christian Philosophy pioneered to discover and affirm the concept of 'Human Person' in an innovative way, discarding the previous oppressive and narrow perspectives. My research focuses on this aspect in order to declare once more the value and dignity of each individual as a 'Human Person'. There is a serious need for it in the contemporary society, to provide a theoretical forum to affirm the personhood of all individuals, so that all may become 'persons' and allow others to be 'persons' and construct a society based human values.

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