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Man—a Human Person in the Context of the Theory of Efficient and Purposeful Causality. Pedagogical Implications

Człowiek—osoba ludzka w kontekście teorii przyczynowości sprawczej i celowej. Implikacje pedagogiczne

Abstract: This article aims to justify the thesis about the need to develop transcendent, transcendental and teleological pedagogy in connection with the anthropological basis, which is the theory of the person and causality. A man—a person – is an ontically substantial individual being, demanding an external cause, which is the Pure Act of Existence—Transcendens—Absolute. The personalistic pedagogics and the pedagogy of the person are therefore inherently related to transcendence. If the subject and object of education is a human person, then transcendental pedagogy must be a sine qua non condition for practising personalistic pedagogics and pedagogy of the person. Personalistic pedagogics and the pedagogy of the person are also intrinsically related to teleology. Efficient cause is coupled with purposeful cause. If there is an action of the Absolute which results in the existence of a man, a human person, then the Absolute, as the fullness of good, is the ultimate goal-motive and final cause of the man—human person. The teleological aspect in personalistic ped-

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agogy and the pedagogy of the person means a particular aim and meaning orientation; full realisation of potentialities and tasks dormant in a unique being—a human person. The goal is not to achieve perfection, but to direct to your original source—the Transcendent—the Absolute—God.

Keywords: theory of causality and pedagogy; transcendental pedagogy; teleological pedagogy.

Abstrakt: Niniejszy artykuł jest próbą zaprezentowania tezy o konieczności rozwijania pedagogiki transcendentalnej i teleologicznej w powiązaniu z antropologiczną bazą, którą stanowią teoria osoby i przyczynowości. Człowiek—osoba ludzka—jest ontycznie substancjalnym bytem jednostkowym, domagającym się zewnętrznej przyczyny sprawczej jaką jest Czysty Akt Istnienia—Transcendens—Absolut. Pedagogika personalistyczna i pedagogia osoby powiązane są zatem immanentnie z transcendencją. Jeśli podmiotem i przedmiotem wychowania jest osoba ludzka, to warunkiem *sine qua non* uprawiania pedagogiki personalistycznej i pedagogii osoby musi być pedagogika transcendentalna. Pedagogika personalistyczna i pedagogia osoby powiązane są także immanentnie z teleologią. Przyczynowanie sprawcze jest sprzężone z przyczynowaniem celowym. Jeśli zaistniało działanie Absolutu, którego skutkiem jest istnienie człowieka—osoby ludzkiej, to Absolut jako pełnia dobra jest ostatecznym celem—motywy i przyczyną celową człowieka—osoby ludzkiej. Aspekt teleologiczny w pedagogice personalistycznej i pedagogii osoby oznacza szczególne nakierowanie na cel i sens; pełną realizację drzemiących w niepewtarzalnym człowieku—osobie ludzkiej potencjalności i zadaniowości. Celem nie jest osiągnięcie doskonałości, lecz skierowanie ku swojemu praźródłu: Transcendensowi—Absolutowi—Bogu.

Słowa kluczowe: teoria przyczynowości a pedagogika; pedagogika transcendentalna; pedagogika teleologiczna.

1. Introduction

Much is said today about man as a person, about his greatness and dignity. Similarly, often (especially in times of plague) one thinks about the end of human life, if only to loudly manifest the will to sustain life at any cost. However, the 'world discourse' is not followed by a scientific reflection on the causes of human existence—the human person. This, in turn, results in

a lack of reference to transcendence and purposefulness in pedagogical theory and practice.

The need for transcendental upbringing, according to Bogusław Śliwowski (referring to the results of research conducted by the company operating the Google search), is evidenced by the number of queries commencing with ‘who is’, where the question about God held first place (Śliwowski, 2012, p. 284). And Robert Spaemann claims that the lack of reflection on a purposeful cause (the so-called a-teleologicality), which is noticeable in the contemporary world, may influence thinking about God as the ultimate goal of the human person (Spaemann, 2004, p. 250). Therefore, one can risk a statement (expressed in the language of dominant consumerism) that in the modern world there is a (conscious or unconscious) large ‘demand’ for matters related to what exceeds the ‘here and now’, with what constitutes the goal and meaning of a man’s life and a small ‘supply’ of the pedagogical offer related to transcendence and teleology.

This article is an attempt to justify the thesis about the need to develop transcendent, transcendental and teleological pedagogy in connection with the anthropological basis, which is the theory of the person and causality. Firstly, the theory of causality will be defined, emphasising the efficient and final cause. Successively, the theory explaining man as a human person will be outlined. Then the reflection will move to the question of the pedagogical implications of the relationship between the theory of causality and the concept of a human being—human person. This justifies the need to develop the issues of transcendence and teleology in pedagogics and pedagogy of the person.

2. The theory of causality—basic characteristics

Scrutinising the optics of epistemological realism (as opposed to the optics of nominalism or conceptualism), we can search for what is basic and irreplaceable in the being. Therefore, philosophy, mainly metaphysics, seeks to recognise and indicate (identify) what is necessary in a given object, which makes it a separate and real being. Thus, the necessary in being, constituting it, was what Aristotle called a rule (Greek *arche*). In Latin, *arche* is expressed with the term *principium*, that is, something first, irreplaceable, starting, constituting, most deeply constituting a given being.

Arche—principium—Aristotle recognised the principle of being as an object of the first philosophy, that is, metaphysics. According to him, meta-

physics is ‘the knowledge of the most knowable, and the things which are most knowable are first principles and causes’ (Aristotle, 1983, 982b).

Four types of causal explanation were presented by Aristotle in the central chapter of the *Analityki wtóre* [*Posterior Analytics*] (Aristotle, 1973, 94a 20–24), as well as formulated in the postulate of investigating all four causes in *Metafizyka* [*Metaphysics*] (Aristotle, 1983, 1044a 32–1044b 2).

Aristotle distinguished four reasons that justify a specific reality: material, formal, causal and purposeful. On the basis of the question ‘why?’, one can look for ultimate philosophical answers explaining the changing reality, that is, the emergence, changes and destruction of being. These responses amount to pointing to the factors which anything really comes from as dependent on them in being. In the Aristotelian tradition, these very factors are called external causes: the goal and agent, and internal causes: matter and form.

The causes (external and internal) appear essentially combined, as necessary, and complementary to each other regarding the states of material factor that constitute the limits of *a quo* and *ad quem* of the movement. In the realm of internal causes, that is, matter and form, this correlation is strict and occurs in terms of act and potency. In the field of external causes, the correlation is not so close, or leastwise it does not occur under explicit conditions. Therefore, the goal does not affect the actual action correspondingly. This means that not for the same reasons and not in the same sense, the goal is always a factor that constitutes a dynamic being, which is manifested in movement.

Pursuant to Aristotle’s term, the material cause is something that arises and lasts (what? from what?). The substance it is made of (*hyle*; *hypokeime-non*) is matter or substrate (Aristotle, 1983, I, 3, 983a). The formal cause is the essence of the matter; what something is (*eidos*; *to ti en einai*). We call this reason substance and essence, because ‘why?’ ultimately implies definition, and the cause and principle is the first ‘why?’ (Aristotle, 1983, I, 3, 983a). The efficient cause causes the existence of being. The efficient cause can be everything that causes or actually contributes to the existence of a thing (why? for what reason?). The causative cause indicates from where the change and movement come, the source of movement (Aristotle, 1983, I, 3, 983a).

In a commentary to Book II of Aristotle’s *Physics*, Thomas Aquinas wrote that the efficient cause can be understood in four aspects, namely causative (*perficiens*), preparatory (*praeparans*), auxiliary (*adjuvans*) and advisory (*consilians*). The executive is the one that introduces the substantial form in giving birth. Preparatory, or disposing, arranges matter for the final result.

The auxiliary cause, however, does not work for its own purpose, but only for someone else. The counsellor is among the causes acting by intention and provides forms for the acting factor, since the acting factor consciously uses the cognition given to it by the counsellor (Thomas Aquinas, 1954, lib. II, lect. 5, n. 5).

Deliberate cause is because of what or why each thing is or becomes (what for? for what purpose?). It is a goal and a good, because well-being is the goal of all creation and change (Aristotle, 1983, I, 3, 983a).

The question of purposefulness and the nature of the action of a final cause is related to the concept of transcendental good. It is notable that everything that is the goal of an action is also the good. The goal is really the same as the good, although we express them in different words due to the different form. Good has the ability to arouse self-desire. A goal is the good as long as desire accomplishes it.

The goal as an object of actual desire can be understood in various ways. It can be something where desire and real movement end (*finis terminus, finis qui*). Another way of understanding the goal is the act itself that ultimately achieves the intended good (*finis quo*). Understood otherwise, it may mean a person to whom this desired good is subordinated by a lusting factor (*finis cui*). Finally, the goal may be a motive for which an activity is triggered to achieve or produce something (*finis cuius gratia*).

In the Aristotelian understanding in the fourth sense, the goal is considered as a causal factor. Only in this sense the end is conceived as the reason for activating action in the causative agent. In order for an action to take place, there must be a reason for action, as well as a reason for directing or determining action. A goal understood as a motive for action is the rationale behind the action. The aim understood as a cause, that is, a motive (the reason for an efficient action), may be either indirect (i.e. a means to a further end) or ultimate (containing all the moments of good that is desired for itself, not for some other reason), that is, one that is the ultimate motive of the causative act.

It is important to notice the difference between cause and effect. The cause is the being that causes the existence of being in its essence (*entia quo*). The cause is often called a principle that causes an effect. Accordingly, it is necessary to distinguish between causes and principles and, above all, differentiate their effects. The cause is always what precedes the effect in its existence. The effect is what is not there before its cause.

3. The human person–definition attempts

Various explanations of the concept of ‘person’ can be found today. Historically, the term ‘person’ is derived from the Latin word *persona* (person), which in turn dates back to the Greek *prōsopon* (i.e. the mask used by an actor in ancient Greek drama; in the Etruscan language referred to as *phersu*). Carlos Valverde believes that, from an etymological viewpoint, the noun ‘person’ stems from the Latin verb *personare* (to ring, to buzz). In the Roman theatre, the word meant an actor’s mask. The actor’s voice echoed through the mask. Later, the word *persona*-person was used to describe the role played by the actor (e.g. king, soldier or slave). Eventually, the word *persona*-person no longer meant the external and apparent, but the actor himself. Then the term was applied to a free man—a subject of rights and obligations within Roman society. Valverde (after Xavier Zubiri) prompts that the introduction of the concept of a person, with all its specificity, is the work of Christian philosophy and revelation (Valverde, 1998, pp. 40–41).

Etymological analysis, as well as those considering the socio-cultural context in various languages and cultures, allows us to conclude that the concept of a person includes a statement about a person as a human being, in his form, individuality, in his way of life as a self-contained being, separated from things and from the environment, individual and unique. When analysing the concept of ‘person’, one can distinguish between the static and dynamic aspects, which are clearly noticeable in the historical perspective of the development of this category. In this publication, the selected, most representative examples of understanding and defining a human person will be presented, both in the historical dimension as well as in the static and dynamic (essential and existential) dimensions. Due to the size of the text, the choice of authors is limited. Therefore, the most historically significant concepts will be discussed, related mainly to Polish and Italian literature and the territory as countries developing theistic personalism.

The beginnings of reflection on the *persona*-person are related to the understanding of the mysteries of the Holy Trinity in Christianity, the understanding of the mysteries of the Incarnation (the bonding of two natures: divine and human in Christ) and the need to specify Christian teaching to defend it against heresies. It is impossible to ignore the theology and thinking of theologians when reflecting on the human person. In the Greek and Latin theological traditions, the greatness and transcendence of the person are rooted in the Personal God—because God has a personal character (He is

in three persons) and gives this character to each person. A person is entitled to this dignity which God entrusts to an individual man. Man is a person, or a hypostasis, because he was created ‘in the image of God’.

Already at the beginning of Christianity, there were disputes over the understanding of the nature of God and God’s persons. These disputes concerned the understanding of the terms *ousia* and *hypostasis*. The main dividing line was the understanding of the Aristotelian concept of the first substance (*próte ousia*) and the second substance (*deutera ousia*). If the term *ousia* was used in the sense of an Aristotelian prime substance, it indicated a concrete, individual existing being (Aristotle, 1983, 1003a), while the use of this term in the sense of the Aristotelian second substance generally indicated form, approaching the understanding of substance in the generic sense (Aristotle, 1983, 1028b).

The term *hypostasis* was introduced to the philosophical language by the Stoics, giving it a materialistic shade of meaning. The only substance (*ousia*) of everything that exists is prime matter, and indeed (*kaq’upo/stasin*) there is only that, which appears in material form (Diogenes Laertios, 1982, VII, 1, 150). In *The Enneads* by Plotinus, the next levels of spiritual reality were called hypostases.

The terms *ousia* and *hypostasis* have often been used interchangeably. It was only the Cappadocian Fathers (St Basil the Great, St Gregory of Nazianzus, St Gregory of Nyssa) that proposed a more precise definition of these terms. They proposed to link the terms *hypostasis* and *prosopon* and *ousia* and *physis*. St Basil the Great used the term *hypostasis* interchangeably with the term *prosopon*. This meant that each of the divine persons, having their own specificity, participates in one, common, eternal and unchanging God’s Nature (*physis*), which is understood as the source of ‘power’ and ‘power’, and hence as a single centre of specific action defined as *ousia* (Basil the Great, 1999, XVIII, 45). Basil associated *ousia* with what is common to individuals, and the term *hypostasis* indicates specific, unique and individual features, which are a concrete realisation of what is common.

In the mind of the Cappadocian Fathers, a person or hypostasis is a special, unique case of substance and is the centre of identity and individuality, as suggested by the term *prosopon* in a ‘theatrical’ context.

St Augustine develops the thought of the Cappadocian Fathers about the person. Quoting the Greek term *ousia*, he argues that the Father, Son and Spirit are *homoousioi*, that is, they have the same substance or essence. Augustine believes that the term *essentia*, which is one of the Latin translations of the term *ousia*, originates from the word *esse* – to be, and thus refers

to the divine name revealed to Moses in the Book of Exodus: 'I am who I am' (Ex 3: 14). According to Augustine, this indicates that God is the most perfect being, because He is the unchanging one, as expressed by the term *substantia vel essentia* (Augustine, 1996, I, I, 3).

Augustine renders the term *hypostasis* by *persona*. *Persona*, for Augustine, means something singular and individual (Augustine, 1996, VII, 6, 11). To Augustine we owe the analogous extension of the term *persona*—'person' to a human. The human person is treated as an irreducible individual subject: 'singulus quisque homo ... una persona est' (Augustine, 1996, XV, 7, 11).

Another important stage in shaping the concept of a person is the thought of Boethius. He proposed that the Latin word *persona* should be used to render the Greek term *hypostasis*, meaning 'the self-existent being of a rational nature'. Then he tried to establish the relationship between the concept of nature and person. According to Boethius, the concept of a person is closely related to the concept of nature and substance, understood as a prime substance in the Aristotle sense; that is, a person is a substance, not by chance, and is a special kind of substance, that is, one whose key difference is rationality. As per Boethius' definition, a person is a prime substance; that is, a particular being which differs from other beings because of a specific difference which is rational nature:

Wherefore if Person belongs to substances alone, and these rational, and if every nature is a substance, existing not in universals but in individuals, we have found the definition of Person, viz.: 'The individual substance of a rational creature'. Now by this definition we Latins have described what the Greeks call hypostasis (Boethius, 2007, III).

St Thomas Aquinas believes that the concept of the person should be associated with act rather than potency. Man is a person because he exists in a different way, which is not conditioned by potency but by the act of existence. The fact that man is an individuality through his body is less important than the spiritual individuality, that he is 'the spiritual world'. Therefore, the problem of a person should be viewed rather from the point of view of God, who is a person to the most perfect degree. Aquinas believes that a person is 'what is most perfect in all nature': 'persona significat id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura, scilicet subsistens in rationali natura' (Thomas Aquinas, 1975, p. I, q. 29, a. 3), because God made man in his image and wants to be his first partner in the free dialogue of knowledge and love. For Thomas, man, by the will of the Creator himself, is constituted by the very act of the

gift of being, that is, of his existence, and the fact of being ‘existence or a spiritual hypostasis’. To say that a man is a person, hypostasis, essence, subject, individuality, thus means assigning to him specificity and elevation in essence and dignity, but also in freedom, and hence responsibility for the realisation of his being.

Due to the hypostasis of God himself, the person is also a ‘mystery’, irreducible to a purely intellectual concept (Thomas Aquinas, 1975, p. I, q. 30, a. 4). God makes man the image of his own mystery in the sense that a man who puts himself in union (*communion*) with God surpasses the categories of essence and also becomes a ‘mystery’ for other people. And, as a mystery, the human person is also a vocation.

For Mieczysław Gogacz, a person is an individual being, who has intellectuality in subsistence (*intellectualis subsistentiae individuum ens*) (Gogacz, 1987, p. 14). Regarding Boethius’ definition, the term nature was replaced with the term subsistence, where the essence is being affected by the act of existence. Gogacz divides the acts of existence of real beings into personal and impersonal. The act of existence is personal when it realises intellect in subsistence. In Gogacz, as in St Thomas Aquinas, we find the thought of the union of the human person with the person of God. Gogacz connects the human person and God in terms of existence, intellect and love (Gogacz, 1997, p. 69).

As mentioned, the development of the concept of the person over the centuries has led to the emergence of two main traditions: one that emphasises more substantiality in the term person (Boethius, scholastic, St Thomas Aquinas, neo-scholastic) and the other with a more existential inclination (St Augustine, J. Duns Scotus, M. Luther, B. Pascal, S. Kierkegaard). On the one hand, the structure of the singularity is emphasised, when the person is not only alone, but is the only one; on the other hand, being for someone/ something is emphasised, as well as changing and improving, which assumes existence in history and in the community, and thus living in it. The earlier (historically) tradition focuses on ontology issues related to the substantial individual being and the bodily-spiritual nature of man. The more modern tradition directs attention to the issues of specific and unique human existence and axiological issues.

For existentialists, existence (*existentia*) precedes essence (*essentia*). Soren Kierkegaard believes that man not only ‘is’, but has the capacity to exist. Existence consists mainly in realising one’s existence and then making conscious choices in life. For Kierkegaard, man is above all an individual feeling loneliness, fear, internal contradictions and hunger for transcendence. Thus,

human life consists of a series of crises, the effect of which can be twofold: either man loses himself and accordingly becomes a demonic being, or he finds himself and becomes a spiritual being. Man is in a way forced, according to Kierkegaard, to make dramatic choices on the basis of an alternative either-or: or he chooses finiteness or infinity. By choosing infinity, an individual must take a 'leap' into the absurdity of faith, become a 'knight of faith' and fully open up to God. The essence of human existence is, therefore, transcending towards infinity, towards God (Kierkegaard, 1972, 1976).

Józef Tischner concentrates his reflection on the human person within the human being who is the subject of the drama. Man is constantly faced with the need to make axiological choices. In the case of man, it is not a theatrical but existential drama. This drama is not about acting, but it is as real to man as salvation and damnation. Following Heidegger, Tischner states in the book *The Controversy over the Existence of Man* that man participates in the drama of 'the truth of being'. A man so understood 'goes out of himself' towards something that he thinks 'really is' beyond him, and in the light of this 'really', having returned to himself, 'understands' himself as being (Tischner, 2011, pp. 81–83).

Ryszard Kozłowski, analyzing the definitions of a person by Wincenty Granat, Karol Wojtyła, Tymon Terlecki, Mieczysław Krąpiec and Czesław Bartnik, observes the differentiation of accents among Polish thinkers. They reflect the fundamental threads in personalistic creativity, and the existence of the human person seems to be illuminated from many sides – from the side of his subjectivity (Granat), from the side of his activity (Wojtyła), uniqueness (Terlecki), his me-mine relationality (Krąpiec) and from side of his relations with history (Bartnik) (Kozłowski, 2005, pp. 79–93). Kozłowski states:

Wojtyła places the emphasis on an act that fulfils and realises the potential of a person in his work *The Acting Person*. He creatively links classical thought with phenomenological approaches (Scheler), placing his considerations about the person in the sphere of self-experience. Terlecki's personalistic criticism shifts the issue of the person into the sphere of aesthetic considerations and thus introduces many new elements, including the uniqueness of the person as the creator of the work-sign. This concept creatively resolves the opposition of a person's non-communicability with his relationality. Krąpiec's relationality theory of the person, focusing on the acts of the person – my acts – retains its substantial dimension, being also an attempt to go beyond himself, towards being-for-others in acts of love and cognition. Finally, Bartnik's approach, emphasising the time-space structure of the human being, introduces it to the stage

of created reality (the world) and sees it as a role. The theatre vision of a person, initiated by the ancient Greeks and developed by the Stoics, shows here its synchronic and diachronic structure (Kozłowski, 2005, p. 93).

The human person, according to Wincenty Granat, is an integral bodily and spiritual reality, subsistent, with an immortal soul and a destiny beyond history. Granat states that a human person is a singular, individual, substantial, bodily-spiritual subject capable of acting in a rational, voluntary, moral and social way, in order to harmoniously enrich himself and others in terms of culture (Granat, 1984, pp. 79–80). Granat declares a person has multiple distinctiveness: physical, mental, psycho-spiritual, manifested in character and temperament, and in a broadly understood lifestyle. A person has his own distinctness as a centre (towards which external motives are heading) and as an active starting point (towards the world and other people). A person is empirically separate and inseparable from another reality (Granat, 1961, p. 244). Granat believes that a Christian person indicates duration that is not only temporal but eternal. He opined that the definition of a human person from the Christian perspective should include not only the statement that he is a body and spiritual subject but also an adopted Son of God, and acts intelligently and voluntarily cooperating with Christ the Redeemer (Granat, 2007, p. 393).

For Czesław Bartnik, the term ‘person’ means a kind of separateness from everything else, not mixing one’s personal identity with the species, not transferring oneself to other people in an existential (substantial) way, non-interchangeability between individuals (Bartnik, 1995, p. 85). The Polish personalist emphasises the transcendence of the human being – the person in relation to the surrounding world and, at the same time, the immanent relationship of the human – the person with God.

Bartnik’s view is the person became ever more clearly that focal perspective from which one looked at man, at collective life, at the whole world. It was considered mainly to be the highest mystery of existence, both in the natural and Christian sense. It is something, or rather someone absolute. It is a unique and indescribable way of objectifying reality. Consequently, it is the main centre of the meeting between immanence and transcendence and is a reflection of Jesus Christ: Man and God. Man is a part of this world, human nature, but also a person who constitutes some special world of being in himself, some kind of meta-nature. Man, therefore, is a process of the transformation of the body-spiritual nature into a person as the highest form of being, being the sense of creation and equally the most perfect and beauti-

ful image of the Holy Trinity. The person is inside the world, grows out of it and lives in it, but also transcends the world, opens up to an infinitely higher reality and strives to fulfil himself through history in the future. The person is the very depth and the very top of created reality. Yet, it is all related to the persons of God. This reference is not merely an addition, but constitutes the basic structure of a person (Bartnik, 1995, pp. 153–154).

Jacques Maritain believes that a human is a person, that is, someone ‘who holds himself in hand by his intelligence and his will’. Only the being of nature does not exist. He has a richer existence within him: a spiritual super-existence related to cognition and love. It is therefore the whole, not a part; it is a universe for itself, it is a microcosm in which a big world can fit. Through love, man can freely give himself to others. Man changes over time. But his nature, place in the world, rights and dignity, aspirations and purpose of life, for the sake of God, remain unchanged (Maritain, 1980, p. 34).

Another Frenchman, Emanuel Mounier, was also developing the theory of personalism in the Christian spirit. He believes that a person (*la personne*) is ‘precisely what in a person cannot be treated as an object’; that it is a reality that we ‘know and create from within’. Therefore, the world of immanence and temporality meets the world of transcendence and supernaturalism in the man. The person, according to Mounier, is superconscious and timeless (Mounier, 1935, p. 69). It has three spiritual dimensions inherent to it: the first—which descends and incarnates the person into matter (incarnation), the second—which directs it upwards and raises it to vocation, and the third—which turns it towards the breadth and carries it towards communion. Mounier calls these dimensions incarnation, vocation and community. The person is incarnated, but also socialised and spiritual.

For Romano Guardini, the human person is first and foremost a being who does not succumb to enslavement. He states that being human—a person means that ‘I’ cannot definitely be owned by someone or something outside. ‘I’ cannot be ‘used’ by anyone or anything outside. ‘I’ cannot be ‘inhabited’ by someone or something outside. ‘I’ cannot be ‘represented’ or ‘replaced’ by someone or something outside. Man—a person cannot exist in the plural – its meaning would be destroyed if ‘I’ existed in a double form (Guardini, 1987, pp. 181–182). The human person cannot be identified with individuality or personality. What is more a Man–person is always astonishing. Man—a person may begin to ‘get sick’. This happens when he moves away from the truth, justice and love. When he rejects justice and begins to understand life in terms of profit, he becomes enslaved. Man—a person can get tired of himself, run away from himself, put on masks. Man—a person may want to forget

about himself, sell himself and betray himself, lose himself in evil. Only a human–person (‘I’) can reject himself (‘I’) by touching the depths of his own being. Therefore, a human being—a mystical reality (Guardini, 1987, pp. 185–189).

In Robert Spaemann’s opinion, man is a living being—a part of nature characterised by reality through its existence similar to other living forms. But as a human being, thanks to reason, he is able to possess this nature and reject the self-centred perspective characteristic of other living forms. Man, for Spaemann, is more than an *animal rationale*, being an individual capable of self-transcendence; it is a persona, a moral being, a being capable of abandoning its own subjectivity and turning to the objectification of nature and openness to others (Spaemann, 2005, pp. 77–78).

Vittorio Possenti argues that in order to explain the concept of a human person one has to refer to ontology. He also believes that the human person has no intermediate degrees (for example, more or less dignity) but belongs to absolute beings. A man born into the world is not only a representative of the human species, but an individual being, an image and likeness of the Creator. Hence, it cannot be said, for example, that the right to life of the human person is gradual – it develops over time. From conception to natural death, this law is the same for every human being – it is not determined by state or international law, but by nature (Possenti, 2015, p. 30).

The above considerations presented selected attempts to define the human person and show his or her basic characteristics. Firstly, the following should be noted and specified; the individual substantial form, freedom, uniqueness and the specificity of existence, focusing on dialogue and meeting with others. Some of these characteristic features are related and shown primarily in the static gaze (concerning the essence), while others are shown in the dynamic gaze (concerning the specific existence) of the human person. These traits are compatible and complementary.

4. Discussion

After outlining the theory of causality with the emphasis on the efficient and final cause and the concepts explaining the category of the human person, it is time to reflect on the relationship between the beginning and the end of personal human life and the Transcendens–Absolute–Personal God.

Stanisław Kowalczyk discusses the Thomistic concept of man also from the viewpoint of causation. Man—a human person is, relative to the theory of

hylomorphism, the composition of matter and form. The form is the rational soul which acts as the formal cause of the human compositum. A formal cause is an act which gives things substantial or accidental existence. The form perfects and improves matter, which is ability. It is the ability which gives existence and perfection to being. This role belongs to form due to its intrinsic nature. This happens under certain conditions: firstly, it is the existence of form (*ut quo*, i.e. coexistence); secondly, the ‘proximity’ between matter and form; and thirdly, the necessity of a causative factor that connects matter and form into a single whole. The human soul has its own act of existence. The existence of a man—a human person is primarily the existence of his soul as an independent substantial form, and only secondarily the existence of the composite of matter and form. The immaterial soul as a form makes man a being, a body, a living being. The reason for the individualisation of the soul is matter related to quantity (*materia quantitate signata*) (Kowalczyk, 2002, pp. 219–222).

According to Gianfranco Basti, the acceptance of the concept of a human person, where the soul is grasped as an individual substantial form, implies the existence of a transcendent efficient cause. This, in Basti’s view, is metaphysically justified. Indeed, his works confirm this. The Italian philosopher and physicist compares man—the person to a ship. In the construction of a living organism (ship), it is the last component (causative–constructor) that controls the formal component (engineer), which in turn controls the active component (carpenter), which acts directly on the material component (wood from which the ship is made). Recognising God as the Creator, who is the First and Last Creative Cause of the individual, the substantial form that shapes a man who is a living body composed of matter and form, is, according to Basti, a matter of faith and the domain of theology. God can also cooperate with other causes in relation to human development (Basti, 1995, pp. 362–364).

Creationism does not exclude evolutionism. It is the direction and progressivity of evolution, explained on the basis of logical-ontological principles, which requires the presence of the causative and creative cause. God is the First Cause of everything, but not the only one. The theory of creationism confirms the participation of natural causes (the so-called second) – dependent on God the Creator – in the process of transforming the world. The Thomistic theory of the efficient interaction of God and creatures does not collide with the natural theory of the evolutionary development of the cosmos (Thomas Aquinas, 1975, p. I, q. 105, a. 5), but requires its completion. The Thomistic theory of cooperation of various types of causes does not exclude

the need for a special God's intervention for man, understood as a person created in the image and likeness of God (Kowalczyk, 2002, pp. 254–255).

Tomasz Stępień speaks in a similar tone to Kowalczyk and Basti. He believes the first and most important cause of man is his act of existence (*ipsum esse*). The essence being an ability in relation to the act of subsistence cannot be the cause of existence. Therefore, one must seek some external cause that could cause the existence of being. Such a cause should itself be existence in order to be able to cause existence; moreover, it must be a more perfect existence. A being that can cause the existence of other beings is called philosophically an independent act of existence (*ipsum esse subsistens*), or, according to theologians, God. In the language of theology, the external causative cause of man is thus God, who creates the human act of existence (Stępień, 2013, p. 129).

In Stępień's view God does not create an act of existence in any place, but where all the other final causes necessary for human existence are present. The act of existence makes the essence real and actualises the essence of a human being because at the same time the essence of man is influenced by causes that no longer influence the existence of being, but cause its content to be shaped in a certain way. Their acting is based on the fact that they bring to the emerging man what they are. Since they act upon man by likeness, becoming the goal and model of this likeness, they are called end causes. The efficient cause causing the existence of a being creates it, and the purposeful causes influence the shaping of what is already there, and thus the content of being, meaning its essence. Hence, the act of existence is created by the Causal Cause, as it were, in the environment of purposeful causes (Stępień, 2013, p. 130).

We learn that God is the efficient cause at the beginning of the *Summa Theology* of St Thomas Aquinas, when we analyze the so-called five roads. Especially the second way – ‘from efficient causation’ – concerns the issue of interest to us. Two moments are important in it: the first, when Thomas states that no being can be the causative cause of himself, and the second, when he writes about the impossibility of an infinite investigation into the causative causes to indicate the first cause (Thomas Aquinas, 1975, p. I, q. 2, a. 3c).

We learn that God is also a final cause in St Thomas Aquinas, always in connection with philosophical considerations and theological considerations. In Thomas we read that we believe that we know perfectly when we know the first cause. Man, by nature, wants to know the first cause as the final end (*ultimum finem*). The first cause of all things is God. Knowing God is therefore the ultimate end of man (*Est igitur cognition divina finis ultimus*

hominis) (Thomas Aquinas, 2007, III, 25). Thus, purposeful causation always concerns firstly the creative act of God, and then knowing and striving towards Him as the ultimate end.

Zofia Zdybicka described the Thomistic theory of the participation of being in the Supreme Being (Zdybicka, 1972). Her view is that in Aquinas' philosophy the term 'participation' refers to the result-causal relationship. To be participatory is to 'be causative'. Hence, the participation relationship indicates the relationship between what is derivative and what is primitive. According to Zdybicka, transcendental participation in realistic metaphysics means the participation of complex and unnecessary beings in Absolute Being, which participate in God as the fullness of existence and the fullness of perfection; they come from Him, and in Him they have the ultimate source of existence and fulfilment. The essence of participation is causal dependence. Pure act—*Esse per essentiam*—is the necessary and only cause of existence of all beings that exist by virtue of participation in it, which are *entia per participationem*.

Efficient causation, in turn, postulates external causation, that is, exemplary causation, which directs and determines action. In the Absolute, the ideas-forms of all things existing in His intellect determine His action to produce certain effects. The most important moment of action is the final cause. It is about the goal as the reason (motive for action). The Supreme Being – the Absolute, cannot act for anything other than himself. If there has been an action of the Absolute which results in the existence of unnecessary beings, only the Absolute can be the motive for this action. The Absolute, as the fullness of good, is therefore the ultimate goal-motive for the emergence of the world of unnecessary beings. Consequently, we conclude that God as the highest Good also emerges as the ultimate goal of all unnecessary beings. All unnecessary beings (including man—human person) strive for the Absolute as their 'primeval source'. In this respect, there are rational beings who have the privilege of consciously striving towards God through knowledge and love (Thomas Aquinas, 2007, II, 46): *cognoscendo et amando* (Thomas Aquinas, 1975, p. I, q. 65, a. 2).

5. Pedagogical implications

Pedagogy is inherently related to anthropology. Man is primarily the subject and object of upbringing and scientific reflection on education. According to Marian Nowak, by placing man and his growth at the centre,

pedagogy espouses a specific character of anthropological science (Nowak, 2008, p. 82). Consequently, the truth about man must influence the theory and practice of teaching.

In light of the above considerations concerning the theory of causality and the personalistic view of man, several conclusions regarding the philosophy of education can be presented.

The human person, being a mystery irreducible to a purely intellectual concept, is, above all, treated as an individual subject composed of essence and existence, an individual body-spiritual being that has intellect. The individual form requires, from a philosophical aspect, a transcendent cause. The act of existence of man—the human person as an individual and unnecessary being—therefore requires, from a metaphysical perspective, an external causative cause, which is the Pure Act of Existence. Transcendens as a creative cause may be called God the Creator (*Alpha*); however, this is a matter of faith and theological considerations. Transcendens is one that cannot be known, beyond ordinary human experience, beyond human cognition sense, unknowable by the available scientific means.

The personalistic pedagogics and the pedagogy of the person are inherently related to transcendence. Man is a being by nature open to transcendence; a being that crosses the borders of the visible and tangible world. For Karol Wojtyła, a man is a model of vertical transcendence (based on metaphysical foundations), that is, crossing oneself thanks to the relation to God, truth and good, and this way of getting to know oneself as ‘me’ and fulfilling oneself in relation to the other ‘I’ and in the community ‘us’. Transcendence is understood here as the relation of superiority to oneself and one’s dynamism, that is, exceeding and, consequently, confirming oneself. Vertical transcendence means turning to the deepest in the person; it also allows the human spirituality to be revealed (Wrońska, 2010, pp. 185–186, 217–218).

From Bogusław Śliwerski’s standpoint, pedagogy without transcendence is pedagogy without reference to faith, understood as the area of divine revelation, as the sphere of what is given, and what educators and pupils should embrace is pedagogy without mysticism, without pointing to the role of the experiencing transcendence in their lives (Śliwerski, 2008, p. 80–81). In this sense, transcendent pedagogy is one that respects the existence of not only natural forces in the world but also spiritual (extra-natural) forces that are not subject to the laws of nature (Śliwerski, 2008, p. 79). In this context, Zbigniew Marek and Anna Walulik claim that the pedagogy of religion, which has its specific subject and scope of research, is part of the transcendent pedagogy trend. Thus, the assumptions of Catholic pedagogy, which are detailed

and centred onto the content of the Catholic faith, also fit into this trend of contemplating transcendent pedagogy (Marek & Walulik, 2017, p. 128).

Bogusław Śliwowski, describing education as a spiritual formation, refers to Neil Postman. He writes that if Neil Postman pleads for God in the school of education, it is because, in his opinion, God is only prominent in denominational schools. Postman is concerned with introducing transcendent, spiritual ideas into public schools, which would grant learning the appropriate meaning and clarity. In other words, he does not demand the restoration of a strictly religious dimension to public education, based on the Judeo-Christian tradition, but asks for some 'great story', a meta-narrative, to be introduced into it as a synonym for God. It is not meant to be a story of any kind, but one that would refer to its sources and simultaneously create a vision of the future for the students. It is supposed to be a story based on ideals, defining the principles of coexistence, creating authorities and—most importantly—conveying a sense of continuity and awareness of purpose (Śliwowski, 2012, pp. 274–275).

Pedagogy based on the concept of a human being understood as a human person, the causative cause of which is the Transcendens (Absolute), cannot, mindful of the above considerations, lose sight of the issue of transcendence and the reference to the transcendental. If the subject and object of education is a human person, then transcendental pedagogy must be a *sine qua non* condition for practising personalistic pedagogics and pedagogy. Man—a human person—is an ontically, substantial individual being, demanding an external efficient cause, which is the Pure Act of Existence—Transcendens—Absolute.

Transcendental means being a condition (possibility) for something to exist; one that is the foundation for knowing something. According to Mieczysław Gogacz, being has transcendental properties because of its existence. They are unity, separateness, reality, truth, goodness and beauty (Gogacz, 1981, p. 191). Transcendental pedagogy is receptive to the classical triad: truth, virtue and beauty; based on a realistic concept of reality.

Efficient causation is coupled with purposeful causation. The causes appear essentially joined as complementary factors of the states of affairs, which are the limits of *a quo* and *ad quem* of the movement. All derivative beings strive for their original source. If there is an action of the Absolute which results in the existence of a man—a human person, then the Absolute as the fullness of good is the ultimate goal-motive and final cause of the man—the human person. We conclude, therefore, that (in theological language) God, as the highest Good, also proves to be the ultimate goal of human life.

God is the efficient cause of the human person and can be his final cause. Man—the human person, being an ability, rationality and freedom, as the basis for the activities of cognition and decision, is not forced to achieve his goal. Rational beings endowed with freedom have the privilege of pursuing their goals through knowledge and love. Errors in cognition, understanding love and freedom of will mean that the pursuit of the goal (expressed in religious language as God the highest Good) may not be realised.

Personalistic pedagogics and the pedagogy of the person are also inherently related to teleology. The teleological aspect in both pedagogics means a particular focus on the full realization of potentialities and tasks dormant in a unique person—a human person. The goal is not to achieve perfection, but its original source—the Transcendent—the Absolute—God.

Pedagogical teleology is a special type of the theory of purposefulness, related (in the case of pedagogics and pedagogy based on the concept of a human being—a human person) with the axiological plane and the theory of personality and directed at the goal and meaning. Man—a human person, being an endowed being with a special kind of existence, someone unique in existence, is called (but always in freedom) to meet and unite with other people (through a relationship of love) and his efficient cause—the Absolute, which can be understood as the Personal God.

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