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Ethics in Education

Etyka w edukacji

Spis treści

Marzena Chrost
Sławomir Chrost
Introduction 9

Marzena Chrost
Sławomir Chrost
Wprowadzenie 13

ARTYKUŁY I ROZPRAWY

Sławomir Chrost
Trans-/Posthumanism and the Ethics of Protecting People:
Between Possibility and Responsibility 19

Jan Rutkowski
Wytwarzanie czy ulepszanie świata i człowieka?
Pytanie o etyczne podstawy wychowania 39

Piotr Domeracki
Prowizoryczny (substytutywno-dyspersyjny) status etyki
w polskim systemie edukacji 55

Katarzyna Szymczyk
Etyka a pedagogika. Myśl pedagogiczna Jacka Woronieckiego
w odniesieniu do współczesnej edukacji 87

Maciej Jemioł
Struktury narracyjne w edukacji z perspektywy etycznej 105

Dominika Dziurosz-Serafinowicz
The Worth of Words: The Ethical Significance of Dialogue Structured
as Asking–Responding in Józef Tischner’s Philosophy 127

Szymon Tarka
Edukacja w perspektywie filozofii dialogu.
Aspekty etyczne w dobie pandemii COVID-19 145

- Andrzej Skupień
163 Etyka w edukacyjnym science-fiction
w dobie transhumanizmu i posthumanizmu
- Magdalena Maciejewska
179 Patronka do bierzmowania jako wzór moralny.
Perspektywa wierzących katoliczek u progu dorosłości

RECENZJE

- Mariusz Konieczny
W trosce o godność człowieka
- 199 Janusz Mariański, *Godność ludzka w narracji społecznej.*
Studium socjopedagogiczne, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2021, ss. 302

Contents

Marzena Chrost
Sławomir Chrost
Introduction 9

Marzena Chrost
Sławomir Chrost
Wprowadzenie 13

ARTICLES AND DISSERTATIONS

Sławomir Chrost
Trans-/posthumanizm a etyka chronienia osób –
między możliwością i powinnością 19

Jan Rutkowski
Producing or Improving the World and Humans?
The Quest for the Ethical Foundations of Education 39

Piotr Domeracki
Provisional (Substitute-Dispersive)
Status of Ethics in the Polish Educational System 55

Katarzyna Szymczyk
Ethics and Pedagogy: The Pedagogical Thought of Jacek Woroniecki
in Relation to Contemporary Education 87

Maciej Jemioł
Narrative Structures in Education from an Ethical Perspective 105

Dominika Dziurosz-Serafinowicz
Wartość słowa. Etyczne znaczenie dialogu ustrukturyzowanego
relacją pytanie–odpowiedź w filozofii Józefa Tischnera 127

Szymon Tarka
Education from the Perspective of the Philosophy of Dialogue:
Ethical Aspects During the COVID-19 Pandemic 145

- Andrzej Skupień
Ethics in Educational Science Fiction in the Era
of Transhumanism and Posthumanism
163
- Magdalena Maciejewska
Patroness for Confirmation as a Moral Model:
The Perspective of Catholic Women on the Threshold of Adulthood
179

REVIEWS

- Mariusz Konieczny
For the Sake of Human Dignity
Janusz Mariański, *Godność ludzka w narracji społecznej. Studium socjopedagogiczne* [*Human Dignity in Social Narrative: A Socio-pedagogical Study*], Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2021, pp. 302
199

Marzena Chrost

ORCID: 0000-0003-3309-6574

Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow

Sławomir Chrost

ORCID:0000-0001-6787-5379

Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce

Introduction

Ethics, in the most general terms, is a philosophical discipline that encompasses the issues related to determining the essence of moral duty (good and evil). According to Feliks Koneczny (*On the Plurality of Civilisations*, 1962: 104–108), ethics is also an integral element in determining the civilizations. To preserve the identity of the Latin civilization in Poland and Europe (in times when multiculturalism and fascination with technology and consumption are promoted), it is necessary today to reflect on personalistic ethics and its application in education. It is not enough to simply reflect on “how to do something,” as it is necessary to address the purpose, meaning, and rightness of actions (“What is the purpose of my action?” “Why am I doing this?” and “Is what I am doing good?”).

In every place and time, people have had some moral convictions; we make different moral judgments about how to act. For example, who among us has not judged their parents, teachers, and lecturers and wondered about the rightness of their actions? Ethics puts forward questions about moral obligations and ideals. Its task is to regulate human behavior and to set the ideal of living a morally good life, not only to describe specific attitudes and behaviors. Ethicists seek answers regarding moral rightness and goodness, referring either to the very idea of moral law, or to the most fundamental human desires and primal moral intuitions, or the very concept of human nature.

We present to our readers a thematic issue of our journal entitled “Ethics in Education,” trusting that the texts collected here will become an incentive for a discussion (not only general, but also scientific discussion) of ethical issues in education. We deliberately intended to give voice not only to experienced, independent academics, but also to young people taking their first steps on the road to academic degrees and titles. After all, discussing the ethical issues in education from different points of view (knowledge, experience, perception, etc.) seems to us to be the best way of making dialogue.

This issue consists of nine articles and one book review. The opening text by Sławomir Chrost is a reflection on anthropology and ethics in the context of the growing efforts to biologically and technologically modify human beings. This trend is present in the world of today’s science and leads to “posthumanism.” Jan Rutkowski’s article examines the cultural, ethical, and educational context of the emergence of certain concepts that seem to question the relevance of the distinction between “producing” and “improving” humans and the material world. The author presents a polemic against the charges raised by advocates of transhumanism in criticism of traditional pedagogy. He points out that education must take into account the freedom of the pupil and therefore cannot be understood only as Greek *poiesis* – as a human action that leads only to the achievement of an external goal or concrete result.

The subject of Piotr Domeracki’s text is the actual – not only formal, but also factual – location of ethics as a school subject in the supervisory, management, and organizational structure of the Polish education system. The author argues that in the Polish education system, ethics is the only subject whose “rachitic and nebulous” status can be described as institutional dispersion, or in other words, as a dispersive presence. The subject of Katarzyna Szymczyk’s inquiry, meanwhile, was the topicality of Jacek Woroniecki’s views in relation to contemporary spaces of educational interactions. An important aspect of the connection between ethics and the pedagogy developed by the outstanding Polish Dominican was pointed out. This connection constitutes the pillar of the original pedagogy based on arethology, which is a synthesis of the humanism of Greek *paideia* and Christian pedagogy.

The authors of the next five texts are young students and scholars, aspiring to play an important role in scientific discourse in the future: PhD students from Gdańsk, Toruń, and Krakow. Despite some deficiencies (due to the authors' relatively limited experience with academic texts) these contributions are important and deserve a kind reception and consideration.

In his article, Maciej Jemioł reflects on how various ethical problems concerning education are related to the narrative structures that occur in educational processes. In their texts, Dominika Dziurosz-Serafinowicz and Szymon Tarka analyze the ethical significance of dialogue, drawing inspiration from the philosophy of Józef Tischner. In turn, Andrzej Skupień discusses various philosophical concepts that underpin transhumanism and posthumanism and reveals the main ethical problems that arise in the world of futuristic visionaries, which in turn influence the form of present and future education. Magdalena Maciejewska addresses issues related to the choice of patron saints for the sacrament of Confirmation with a small focus group of young women attending religion classes in western and northern Poland. The author shows that the interviewees often presented the patron saints they had chosen as moral role models worth following.

The issue ends with a review of Janusz Mariański's book *Godność ludzka w narracji społecznej. Studium socjopedagogiczne* [Human Dignity in Social Narration: A Sociopedagogical Study] by Mariusz Konieczny.

We wish all our readers a pleasant and fruitful reading, at the same time hoping that it will become an opportunity for in-depth reflection on the ethical dimension of modern education.

ADDRESSES FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Marzena Chrost
 Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow
 Institute of Educational Sciences
 e-mail: marzena.chrost@ignatianum.edu.pl

Sławomir Chrost
 Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce
 Institute of Pedagogy
 e-mail: schrost@op.pl

Marzena Chrost
ORCID: 0000-0003-3309-6574
Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie

Sławomir Chrost
ORCID: 0000-0001-6787-5379
Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach

Wprowadzenie

Etyka, najogólniej rzecz biorąc, jest dyscypliną filozoficzną obejmującą zespół zagadnień związanych z określeniem istoty powinności moralnej (dobra lub zła). Według Feliksa Konecznego (*O wielości cywilizacji*, 1935: 113–119) etyka stanowi także nieodłączny element, dzięki któremu można rozpoznać cywilizacje. Aby zachować tożsamość cywilizacji łacińskiej w Polsce i Europie (w czasach promowanej idei multikulturalizmu oraz fascynacji techniką i konsumpcją), konieczny jest dziś namysł nad etyką personalistyczną i jej stosowaniem w edukacji. Nie wystarczy bowiem sama refleksja nad tym, „jak coś robić?”, ale należy się odnieść do celu, sensu i słuszności podejmowanych działań („jaki jest cel mojego działania?”, „dlaczego to robię?”, „czy to, co robię, jest dobre?”).

W każdym miejscu i czasie ludzie mieli i mają jakieś przekonania moralne, wydają różne sądy moralne na temat tego, jak należy postępować. Któż z nas nie oceniał na przykład swoich rodziców, nauczycieli i wykładowców, nie zastanawiał się nad słusznością ich postępowania? Etyka stawia pytania o moralne powinności i ideały, jej zadaniem jest normowanie ludzkich zachowań oraz wyznaczenie ideału życia moralnie dobrego, a nie tylko opisywanie konkretnych postaw i zachowań. Etycy poszukują odpowiedzi na pytanie o moralną słuszność i dobro, odwołując się albo do samej idei prawa moralnego, albo do najbardziej fundamentalnych ludzkich pragnień, pierwotnych intuicji moralnych czy samej koncepcji natury ludzkiej.

Oddajemy do rąk Czytelników zeszyt tematyczny zatytułowany „Etyka w edukacji”, ufając, że teksty tutaj umieszczone staną się zachętą do dyskusji (także naukowej) nad problematyką etyczną w wychowaniu. Celowo zamierzaliśmy oddać głos nie tylko doświadczonym, samodzielnym pracownikom naukowym, ale także ludziom młodym, stawiającym pierwsze kroki na drodze do stopni i tytułów akademickich. Naświetlenie problematyki etycznej w edukacji z różnych punktów widzenia (wiedzy, doświadczenia, percepcji itp.) wydaje nam się bowiem najlepszym sposobem dialogowania.

Treść niniejszego zeszytu wypełnia dziewięć artykułów oraz recenzja jednej książki. Otwierający tekst Sławomira Chrosta jest próbą namysłu nad antropologią i etyką w kontekście rozwijających się prób modyfikacji bio- i technologicznych, którym poddawany jest człowiek – tendencji obecnych w świecie dzisiejszej nauki, które prowadzą do tzw. posthumanizmu. W artykule Jana Rutkowskiego analizowany jest kulturowy, etyczny i edukacyjny kontekst pojawiania się pewnych koncepcji, które wydają się kwestionować istotność rozróżnienia na wytwarzanie i ulepszanie człowieka oraz świata. Autor podejmuje polemikę z zarzutami wytaczanymi przez zwolenników transhumanizmu wobec tradycyjnej pedagogiki. Wskazuje m.in., że wychowanie musi uwzględniać wolność wychowanka i dlatego nie może być rozumiane jedynie jako grecka *poiesis*, czyli jako takie działanie człowieka, które prowadzi do osiągnięcia zewnętrznego celu, konkretnego rezultatu.

Przedmiotem tekstu Piotra Domerackiego jest rzeczywiste – nie tylko formalne, ale i faktualne – usytuowanie etyki jako przedmiotu szkolnego w strukturze nadzorczo-zarządczo-organizacyjnej polskiego systemu edukacji. Autor dowodzi, że w polskim systemie oświaty etyka jest jedynym przedmiotem, którego „rachityczno-mgławicowy” status można określić jako instytucjonalne rozproszenie lub inaczej jako dyspersyjną obecność. Natomiast przedmiotem dociekań Katarzyny Szymczyk uczyniono kwestię aktualności poglądów Jacka Woronieckiego w odniesieniu do współczesnych przestrzeni oddziaływań edukacyjnych. Wskazano na podnoszony przez myśliciela istotny aspekt związku etyki z pedagogiką, stanowiący filar jego autorskiej pedagogiki, którą ten wybitny polski dominikanin oparł na aretologii, będącej syntezą humanizmu greckiej *paidei* oraz chrześcijańskiej pedagogiki.

Autorami kolejnych pięciu tekstów są młodzi adepci nauki, aspirujący do odegrania w przyszłości ważnej roli w dyskursie naukowym – doktoranci i studenci z Gdańska, Torunia oraz Krakowa. Mimo pewnych niedociągnięć (związanych z brakiem doświadczenia czy wyrobienia warsztatowego), teksty te są ważne i zasługują na życzliwe przyjęcie i przemyślenie.

Maciej Jemioł w swoim artykule podejmuje refleksję nad tym, w jaki sposób rozmaite problemy natury etycznej dotyczące edukacji są powiązane ze strukturami narracyjnymi, które występują w procesach edukacyjnych. Dominika Dziurosz-Serafinowicz i Szymon Tarka analizują w swoich tekstach etyczne znaczenie dialogu, czerpiąc inspirację z filozofii Józefa Tischnera. Z kolei Andrzej Skupień omawia różne koncepcje filozoficzne, które stanowią podbudowę dla transhumanizmu i posthumanizmu, oraz ukazuje główne problemy etyczne, jakie rodzą się w świecie futurystycznych wizjonerów, które z kolei mają swoje przełożenie na kształt obecnej i przyszłej edukacji. Magdalena Maciejewska porusza natomiast problematykę związaną z wyborem patronek do sakramentu bierzmowania przez wyselekcjonowaną do badań własnych grupę młodych dziewcząt uczęszczających na lekcje religii w zachodniej i północnej części Polski. Autorka wykazuje, że patronki, na które przed kilkoma laty zdecydowały się rozmówczynie, często były przez nie prezentowane jako swoiste wzory moralne.

Zeszyt kończy recenzja książki Janusza Mariańskiego *Godność ludzka w narracji społecznej. Studium socjopedagogiczne* autorstwa Mariusza Koniecznego.

Życzymy naszym Czytelnikom miłej i owocnej lektury, ufając jednocześnie, że stanie się ona okazją do pogłębionej refleksji nad etycznym wymiarem współczesnej edukacji.

ADRESY DO KORESPONDENCJI

Dr Marzena Chrost
Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie
Instytut Nauk o Wychowaniu
e-mail: marzena.chrost@ignatianum.edu.pl

Dr hab. Sławomir Chrost, prof. UJK
Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach
Instytut Pedagogiki
e-mail: schrost@op.pl

Articles and dissertations

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Artykuły
i rozprawy

Sławomir Chrost
ORCID: 0000-0001-6787-5379
Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach

Trans-/posthumanizm a etyka chronienia osób – między możliwością i powinnością

ABSTRAKT

Niniejszy artykuł jest próbą namysłu nad antropologią i etyką w kontekście rozwijających się modyfikacji bio- i technologicznych, którym poddawany jest człowiek. Punktem wyjścia do dyskusji są pojęcia trans- i posthumanizmu oraz etyki opartej na koncepcji człowieka – osoby ludzkiej. Autor próbuje znaleźć odpowiedź na pytanie: Czy pojęcie natury ludzkiej, które przyjmujemy, dopuszcza, aby człowiek był konstruowany, tj. manipulowany w ramach określonych granic? Odpowiadając na to pytanie, autor proponuje następującą konstatację: transhumanizm, a w szczególności posthumanizm (ze względu na ontologię), zrywa z klasyczną koncepcją człowieka-osoby, równocześnie odrzucając etykę chronienia osób. W miejsce etyki chronienia osób trans/post/humanizm stosuje etykę sytuacyjną i utylitarystyczną. Z punktu widzenia etyki chronienia osób niedopuszczalne są jakiegokolwiek zmiany jakościowe (dotyczące przyczyny formalnej osoby ludzkiej). Można natomiast dopuszczać możliwość zmian ilościowych (dotyczących przyczyny materialnej osoby ludzkiej), jeśli takie prowadziłyby do ochrony relacji osobowych i ich podmiotów.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE
transhumanizm,
posthumanizm,
etyka chronienia
osób, modyfikacje
biotechnologiczne
człowieka, etyka
bazująca na ontologii

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Wstęp

Rewolucje zwykle pociągają za sobą ofiary. Co lub kto będzie ofiarą rewolucji biotechnologicznej, która została zapoczątkowana i się rozwija? Czy szkodę poniesie człowiek, czy etyka?

Niniejszy artykuł jest próbą namysłu nad antropologią i etyką w kontekście rozwijających się modyfikacji bio- i technologicznych, jakim poddawany jest człowiek. Punktem wyjścia do dyskusji są pojęcia transhumanizmu i etyki opartej na koncepcji człowieka – osoby ludzkiej. Autor próbuje znaleźć odpowiedź na pytanie: Czy pojęcie natury ludzkiej, które przyjmujemy, dopuszcza, aby człowiek był konstruowany, tj. manipulowany w ramach określonych granic?

Koncepcja trans- i poshumanizmu

Współcześnie, według niektórych, wkraczamy w epokę trans- lub posthumanizmu¹. Jest to nawiązanie do myśli rosyjskiego filozofa prawosławnego Mikołaja Fiodorowa (1829–1903), który za pomocą metod naukowych poszukiwał możliwości przedłużenia życia ludzkiego, ludzkiej nieśmiertelności i wskrzeszania zmarłych ludzi. W 1957 roku Julian Huxley opublikował zbiór esejów pod tytułem *New Bottles for New Wine*, w którym pierwszy zatytułowany był *Transhumanizm*. Według Kamila Szymańskiego (2015: 134) termin „transhumanizm” (określany również H+) w jego współczesnym znaczeniu utworzył Max More w esej *Transhumanism: Towards a Futurist Philosophy* (1990)².

- 1 Manifest Transhumanistyczny można odnaleźć na stronie internetowej: <https://humanityplus.org/> [dostęp 14.02.2019]. Czytamy tam m.in.: „Manifest Transhumanistyczny został pierwotnie opracowany w 1998 roku przez międzynarodową grupę autorów, w skład której wchodziło: Doug Bailly, Anders Sandberg, Gustavo Alves, Max More, Holger Wagner, Natasha Vita-More, Eugene Leitl, Bernie Staring, David Pearce, Bill Fantegrossi, den Otter, Ralf Fletcher, Kathryn Aegis, Tom Morrow, Alexander Chislenko, Lee Daniel Crocker, Darren Reynolds, Keith Elis, Thom Quinn, Mikhail Sverdlov, Arjen Kamphuis, Shane Spaulding oraz Nick Bostrom. Ten manifest był modyfikowany na przestrzeni lat przez różnych autorów i organizacje. Został oficjalnie przyjęty przez Radę Wykonawczą Humanity+ w marcu 2009 roku.
- 2 Max More pisze w tym kontekście następująco: „Transhumanizm jest rodzajem filozofii, która stara się prowadzić nas w kierunku osiągnięcia kondycji

Propagatorem idei transhumanizmu jest między innymi Raymond Kurzweil, amerykański informatyk i futurolog, który w 2009 roku wraz z NASA i Google stworzył wydział futurologii na Singularity University w Dolinie Krzemowej w Kalifornii, który ma przygotowywać ludzkość na przyspieszoną zmianę technologiczną i pojawienie się osobliwości (Kurzweil 2005). Transhumaniści wykorzystują ludzkie dążenie do uwolnienia się od ograniczeń. Simon Young uważa, że tak jak humanizm uwolnił nas od więzów przesądu, tak transhumanizm uwolni nas od więzów biologii (Young 2006: 32). Ostatecznym celem transhumanistycznej ewolucji ludzkości jest tzw. kondycja „postludzka” (*posthuman*). Postludzie, według Nicka Bostroma, mają być odporni na choroby, wiecznie młodzi i pełni życia; będą mieli władzę nad własnymi pragnieniami, emocjami i stanami psychicznymi, nie będą odczuwać zmęczenia czy negatywnych myśli; będą mieli większą zdolność przeżywania przyjemności, miłości, wrażeń estetycznych; będą odczuwać nowe świadome doznania, niedostępne zwykłym ludziom (Bostrom 2003: 5).

Przejściowym etapem pomiędzy człowiekiem a postczłowiekiem jest „transczłowiek”. Aby zmiana człowieka w postczłowieka mogła się dokonać, Max More wskazuje siedem tzw. „poprawek” do ludzkiego biologicznego życia.

Poprawka 1: Nie będziemy dłużej tolerować tyranii starzenia się i śmierci. Zmieniając geny, manipulując komórkami, używając syntetycznych organów i wszelkich niezbędnych środków, obdarzymy siebie większą żywotnością i wydamy datę śmierci.

Poprawka 2: Rozszerzymy zasięg naszych zmysłów przy użyciu biotechnologicznych i obliczeniowych środków. Postaramy się przekroczyć zdolności percepcyjne wszelkich innych stworzeń, a także postaramy się rozwinąć nowe zmysły, by w jeszcze większym stopniu docenić i zrozumieć otaczający nas świat.

postludzkiej. Transhumanizm dzieli wiele elementów z humanizmem, w tym szacunek dla rozumu i nauki, zaangażowanie w postęp i docenianie ludzkiego (lub transludzkiego) istnienia w tym życiu, a nie w jakimś nadprzyrodzonym «życiu pozagrobowym». Transhumanizm różni się od humanizmu uznaniem i przewidywaniem radykalnych zmian w naturze i możliwościach naszego życia, które wynikają z rozwoju różnych nauk i technologii, takich jak neuronauka i neurofarmakologia, sztuczna ultrainteligencja, nanotechnologia, techniki służące przedłużaniu życia czy zamieszkiwaniu w przestrzeni kosmicznej – wszystko to w połączeniu z racjonalną filozofią i systemem wartości” (More 1990).

Poprawka 3: Udoskonalimy organizację i pojemność neuronową, rozbudowując pamięć roboczą i ulepszając inteligencję.

Poprawka 4: Uzupełnimy korę nową „metamózgiem”. Ta rozproszona sieć czujników, przetworników informacji i inteligencji zwiększy naszą samoświadomość i pozwoli przestrajać emocje.

Poprawka 5: Nie będziemy już dłużej niewolnikami genów. Sami zajmujemy się własnym programowaniem genetycznym i osiągniemy mistrzowskie panowanie nad naszymi biologicznymi i neurologicznymi procesami. Naprawimy wszystkie indywidualne i gatunkowe wady, będące pozostałościami ewolucji stymulowanej selekcją naturalną. Nie usatysfakcjonowani tym, będziemy wciąż szukać sposobów, by dowolnie wybierać swoją cielesną formę i funkcjonalność, rafinując i pomnażając fizyczne i intelektualne zdolności. Wykroczymy ponad wszystkich ludzi w historii.

Poprawka 6: Ostrożnie, ale gruntownie przebudujemy nasze wzorce motywacyjne oraz emocjonalne reakcje w sposób, który my – jako jednostki – uznamy za zdrowy. Spróbujemy zapanować nad typową dla ludzi nadpobudliwością, czyniąc nasze emocje bardziej subtelnymi. Wzmocnimy samych siebie tak, że pozbędziemy się wreszcie niezdrowej potrzeby dogmatycznej pewności. Usuniemy emocjonalne bariery stojące na drodze racjonalnego samodoskonalenia.

Poprawka 7: Dostrzegamy twój geniusz widoczny w użyciu do naszej konstrukcji składników opartych na węglu. Ale nie będziemy ograniczać swych fizycznych, intelektualnych i emocjonalnych możliwości, pozostając czysto biologicznymi organizmami. Stale rozwijając naszą biochemiczną doskonałość, będziemy zarazem dążyć do większej integracji naszej zaawansowanej technologii z nami samymi (More 1999).

Już pobieżna lektura powyższego listu skłania do refleksji nad tym, co w poglądach transhumanistów jest mrzonką i zwykłym dziwactwem niemającym żadnej racjonalnej podstawy (np. postulat nieśmiertelności człowieka, tworzenie kopii mózgu), a co miałyby sens i mogłyby być realizowane na przykład w sferze manipulacji genetycznych.

Grzegorz Osiński – informatyk, kognitywista, fizyk kwantowy, który naukowo zajmuje się badaniem aktywności ludzkiego mózgu, stosując teorię nieliniowych modeli dynamicznych – w swojej książce zatytułowanej *Transhumanism. Retiarius contra Secutor* (2008), pisze o nadziejach i obawach związanych z praktycznym zaimplementowaniem idei transhumanistycznych. Autor opisuje jak obecnie realizowane są projekty dotyczące globalnej symulacji mózgu w środowisku

komputerów krzemowych (w USA realizowany jest projekt Brain Activity Map, natomiast w Europie Human Brain Project, które mają na celu utworzenie cyfrowej kopii nie tylko wszystkich neuronów, jakie znajdują się w mózgu człowieka, ale również sieci połączeń pomiędzy nimi). Według Osińskiego szczególnie kontrowersyjne tezy transhumanizmu redukują człowieka do „materialnej powłoki”, która służy tylko do właściwej obsługi mózgu, gdzie znajduje się jedyna siedziba ludzkiego umysłu. Zgodnie z tą tezą, można zatem nie tylko dowolnie udoskonalić technologicznie „powłokę”, ale nawet wykonywać kopie samego umysłu, gwarantując mu jednocześnie nieśmiertelność. Parlament Europejski wprowadza na przykład pojęcie „osoby elektronicznej”, nadając robotom prawa przysługujące do tej pory tylko człowiekowi (Osiński 2018).

Alexis Halapsis zwraca uwagę, że trwające próby modyfikacji bio- i technologicznych prowadzą do tworzenia modularnego człowieka-hybrydy:

Wśród nas jest już wielu cyborgów i z czasem ich liczba będzie rosła. Przyzwyczajamy się do tego, że niektóre części ciała można zastąpić „zapasowymi” – dawcami, sztucznie wyhodowanymi lub całkowicie sztucznymi. To nie tylko dalszy rozwój medycyny i nauk z nią związanych, ale zasadniczy zwrot w spojrzeniu na samego człowieka, którego istotą jest przejście od człowieka integralnego do człowieka modułowego (Halapsis 2019: 81).

Dalej autor dodaje:

W dzisiejszych czasach przystosowanie się do naturalnego ciała wiąże się z poważnymi interwencjami chirurgicznymi obciążonymi powikłaniami (przypomnijmy sobie Michaela Jacksona, którego dążenie do piękna spowodowało kalectwo i przedwczesną śmierć). W niedalekiej przyszłości zmiany w ludzkim ciele mogą być bardziej radykalne, a negatywne konsekwencje zminimalizowane. Piękno nie tylko stanie się normą, jak przewidywał Julian Huxley, ale z pewnością pojawią się nowe typy (post) ludzkiego piękna, a współczesne Barbie i Elfy będą wydawać się naszym potomkom odległymi klasykami na tle potworności estetyki postludzi. Moda wejdzie na nowy poziom, a projektanci ubrań i akcesoriów zostaną zastąpieni przez bodydesignerów. Wzrost, waga, rysy twarzy, sylwetka, wiek, rasa, płeć okażą się parametrami zmiennymi, stając się czymś w rodzaju ubrania i makijażu; decyzyj o optymalnym ciele na wakacje lub imprezę będzie ograniczać tylko wyobraźnia (Halapsis 2019: 81).

Grzegorz Lindenberg we wstępie do swojej książki *Ludzkość poprawiona* pisze:

Modyfikacje genetyczne i sztuczna inteligencja to największe wyzwania najbliższej przyszłości. Nadchodzące zmiany będą szybsze i bardziej znaczące niż cokolwiek, co się ludziom zdarzyło w historii, i przyniosą zarówno dobre, jak i złe następstwa (Lindenberg 2018: 9).

Według Lindenberga w 2012 roku zostały opublikowane dwa rewolucyjne artykuły: jeden dotyczył genetyki, a drugi sztucznej inteligencji. Pierwszy opisywał nową metodę łatwego i taniego sposobu zmieniania genów, nazywaną się CRISPR/Cas9, a drugi traktował o roli sztucznej inteligencji w wykorzystywaniu sieci neuronowych.

Yuval Noah Harari w słynnej książce *Od zwierząt do bogów. Krótka historia ludzkości* (2014), sprzedanej na całym świecie w nakładzie ponad pięciu milionów egzemplarzy, opisywał ewolucję i historię ludzkości. W swym nowszym dziele *Homo deus. Krótka historia jutra* (2018) stawia kolejny krok – myśliciel skupia się na teraźniejszych wyzwaniach, szuka odpowiedzi na pytanie, co nas czeka w przyszłości, a przede wszystkim udowadnia, że już wkrótce człowiek stanie się równy bogom (Harari 2018).

Transhumanizm stawia sobie za cel przemysłowanie możliwości rozwoju człowieka, wykraczania poza narzucone mu ograniczenia, za pomocą stworzonych przez ludzkość narzędzi, takich jak technologia. Według Moniki Bakke „transhumanisci w istocie identyfikują się z humanizmem uprawianym w duchu oświeceniowym, czyli w centrum lokują takie cechy ludzkie, jak racjonalizm, samoświadomość, samokontrola oraz wiara w postęp” (Bakke 2010: 341). Jest to z pewnością echo dążenia ludzkości do emancypacji pojętej jako zerwanie z wszelkimi ograniczeniami. Dokonuje się, jak trafnie zauważa Jan Białek (2017), przejście od środowiska naturalnego do technologicznego. Łączy się to z ideą świata postnowoczesnego czy też rewolucją postindustrialną. Dodatkowo rozpoczęto szeroką promocję transhumanizmu, jako sposobu na skanalizowanie głębokiego ubezwłasnowolnienia w kierunku wewnętrznym, ciągłej ewolucji człowieka pod względem fizycznym, społecznym, kulturowym i duchowym. Ogranicza on popędy eksploracji, aranżowania i kontrolowania środowiska naturalnego, kanalizując je na eksplorację świata wirtualnego,

a rozwój osobowości na rozwój poprzez rozszerzenia technologiczne (Białek 2017: 82).

Ważnym pojęciem, które wykorzystują badacze transhumanizmu, jest postczłowiek. Ma on być symbolem „tego, co nadejdzie”, lepszego człowieka czy też człowieka 2.0, bowiem dotychczasowy projekt człowieka się skończył. Jak pisze Halapsis, kończy się czas człowieka i zaczyna czas postczłowieka:

Neurotechnologie protetyki, transplantacji narządów, instalacji różnych stymulantów i implantów stały się rzeczywistością dnia dzisiejszego. Jutro będą to nanoczipy i nanokomputery zdolne do modyfikowania ludzkiego ciała i wzmacniania inteligencji. Będzie to oznaczać dalszą cyborgizację ludzi. Już dziś organizm ludzki może być poddany nie tylko zewnętrznej korekcie, ale także wewnętrznym przekształceniom, w przyszłości możliwości medycyny w kwestii jego „naprawy”, „odnowy” i „dostrojenia” wzrosną wielorako. Kończy się historia człowieka i zaczyna się historia postczłowieka. Nie możemy już jednak zbyć z tej drogi; w naszej mocy jest to, aby zachować nasze ludzkie cechy w postludzkiej przyszłości (Halapsis, 2019: 86).

Koncepcja etyki chronienia osób

Etyka to dyscyplina filozoficzna obejmująca zespół zagadnień związanych z określeniem istoty powinności moralnej (dobra lub zła). Przedmiotem etyki jest działanie ludzkie (decyzja, czyn, postępowanie). Obejmuje ono wolne i świadome akty ludzkie, postawy ludzkie odniesione do norm moralności. Snując refleksję na temat etyki, możemy wyróżnić podejście: nomologiczne, aksjologiczne, aretologiczne lub egzemplarystyczne. Mieczysław Gogacz prezentuje w swoich publikacjach model etyki chronienia osób. Dla tego autora etyka i pedagogika stają się w ramach tomizmu konsekwentnego metafizyką kształcenia, wychowania i postępowania, która pozostaje wierna prawdzie o człowieku, zgodnie z którą to wskazuje się na wybór działań mających chronić osoby i ich wzajemne powiązania w środowisku.

Etyka zajmuje się postępowaniem człowieka i dlatego musi najpierw zidentyfikować człowieka. Gogacz pisze: „Etyka i pedagogika dotyczą realnego człowieka. W nim należy szukać norm chronienia go przez realistycznie zorientowaną etykę i wychowania go

przez realistycznie zorientowaną pedagogikę” (Gogacz 1997: 67), a w innym miejscu: „Aby zbudować etykę, która dotyczy człowieka, trzeba najpierw zidentyfikować człowieka. Identyfikacja człowieka jest bezpośrednią podstawą realistycznie formułowanej etyki” (Gogacz 1998: 42).

Jako przedstawiciel tomizmu, Mieczysław Gogacz w następujących słowach określa osobę: „Osobą jest taki realny byt jednostkowy, który zawiera w sobie intelekt, a pod wpływem swego istnienia wiąże się miłością z innymi osobami. To wyjściowe określenie można wyrazić krócej: osobą jest taki istniejący byt rozumny, który zarazem kocha. Jakiś byt czynią więc osobą trzy elementy konstytutywne: istnienie, intelekt, miłość. Istnienie jest w jednostkowym bycie pierwszym elementem strukturalnym, na który wskazuje bezpośrednie poznanie realności bytu. Rozumność poznania wskazuje na intelekt. Bezinteresowna troska o dobro osób jest w człowieku miłością. Istnienie, intelekt i miłość charakteryzują ludzi i Boga. Człowiek i Bóg są więc osobami” (Gogacz 1997: 69).

Zadaniem etyki jest ustalenie, które z działań ludzkich chronią dobro osób. Określenie tych działań jest wskazaniem na normy wyboru działań chroniących. Ochronie podlegać muszą relacje powstające dzięki istnieniu i na jego przejawach, zwanych transcendentaliami, z których trzy posiadają miano osobowych. Są to: wsparta na realności – relacja miłości; na własności prawdy – relacja wiary oraz zapodmiotowana na transcendentalnej własności dobra spotkanych osób – relacja nadziei. Relacja miłości objawia się we współzyciowości, a nawet wzajemnym umiłowaniu osób. Relacja wiary jest otwartością wobec ujawnianej prawdy – pryncypiów spotkanego bytu. Natomiast relacja nadziei jawi się jako ufność, że dobro w bytach osobowych będzie akceptowane i dostępne, że będzie trwało w powiązaniu między osobami.

Etyka zajmuje się działaniami każdego człowieka, tymi jednak, które podejmuje on świadomie wobec siebie oraz wobec innych osób jako autor działań. Etyka nie bada struktury tych działań, czym zajmuje się filozofia człowieka, lecz ustala, czy te działania chronią zgodne z prawdą dobro osób. Tym dobrem osób jest ich istnienie, rozwój duszy i ciała człowieka, doskonalenie jego intelektu i woli jako władz duchowych oraz jego władz zmysłowych, poznawczych i pożądarkich, z kolei wyobrażeń i uczuć, a przede wszystkim miejsca wśród

osób jako powiązań przez życzliwość i zaufanie, co nazywa się miłością i wiarą (Gogacz 1998: 36).

Dokonując określenia zasad postępowania, Gogacz zaznacza, że muszą to być pryncypia bezpośrednio kierujące działaniami, odnoszące się do słusznego celu. Z zakresu etyki ogólnej trzy warunkują wierne osobom postępowanie. Są nimi: kontemplacja, mądrość i sumienie. Kontemplacja to namysł intelektu, który na poziomie mowy serca skierowuje wolę do danego bytu według rozpoznanych relacji osobowych. Będąc miłującą afirmacją powiązań osobowych, wyznacza cel postępowania zgodnego z ich dobrem, polegający na ochronie osób. Jest to możliwe przy wsparciu mądrości, która pozwala na ujmowanie dobra bytu z pozycji prawdy o nim. Dzieje się tak wówczas, gdy intelekt odbierając prawdę o bycie ukazuje ją woli jako dobro adekwatne dla danego bytu. Funkcja sumienia przejawia się natomiast w jednoczesnym działaniu intelektu i woli. Intelekt jest skłaniany przez sumienie do liczenia się z dobrem przy rozpoznawaniu prawdy, ponieważ właśnie sumienie jest pryncypium tego, że człowiek chce dobra i unika zła.

Etyka ze względu na swój przedmiot jest nauką o pryncypiach wyboru działań chroniących relacje osobowe i osoby. Pryncypia wyboru postępowania, chroniącego osoby i ich powiązania przez miłość, wiarę i nadzieję, to mądrość, kontemplacja i sumienie. Mądrość jako scalanie w nas prawdy i dobra wskazuje na działania chroniące osoby. Kontemplacja, która jest świadczeniem o trwaniu relacji osobowych, sprzyja namysłowi, potrzebnemu intelektowi, by określił w prawdzie i dobru działania chroniące osoby. Sumienie kieruje nas do dobra, które mądrość musi zidentyfikować i wybrać jako dobro dla nas (Gogacz 1991: 6).

Celem i efektem finalnym etyki chronienia osób jest trwanie relacji osobowych. Gogacz przypomina o uzyskiwaniu i spełnianiu wartości, które stanowią fundament trwałości takich relacji. Punktem dojścia etyki, a tym samym jej zadaniem lub celem, staje się chronienie relacji osobowych i ich podmiotów, a przez to osób, jako podstawowego środowiska właśnie osób. Chronimy to środowisko osób działaniami intelektu i woli oraz ich wytworami. Skutkiem tych działań chroniących jest trwanie relacji osobowych czyli spełnianie wartości. Zadaniem lub celem etyki staje się wobec tego uzyskiwanie wartości jako trwania relacji wiążących osoby (Gogacz 1991: 178–179).

Etyka chronienia osób, według Gogacza, nadaje sens życiu, wszelkim przemianom wewnętrznym i zewnętrznym. Jest ściśle powiązana ze środowiskiem osób, sytuuje we współobecności z osobami.

Etyka chronienia relacji osobowych oraz osób i ich godności sytuuje nas w środowisku osób. Ukazuje przez mądrość i kontemplację działania chroniące jako sposoby powodowania trwania w relacjach miłości, wiary i nadziei, które są pierwotnymi relacjami osobowymi. Ukazując działania chroniące i ich pryncypia, powoduje naszą metanoię i humanizm, co czynimy programem tworzenia kultury. Kierując do skutku, którym jest trwanie relacji osobowych, sytuuje nas we współobecności z osobami. Ta współobecność, spełniająca się w miłości, wierze i nadziei, staje się ciekawym, możliwym do osiągnięcia sensem życia. Terenem realizowania sensu życia jest poprzedzony metanoią humanizm, czyniący z kultury sposób służenia z czcią osobom (Gogacz 1991: 181).

Etyka uprawiana przez Gogacza odsyła do człowieka jako osoby oraz odpowiednio do rozumienia określa zasady wyboru działań szlachetnych. W tak rozumianej etyce chodzi zatem o ustalenie za pomocą czego można rozpoznać działania chroniące osoby i ich dobro.

Dyskusja

Jürgen Habermas (2003) i Francis Fukuyama (2004) w publikacjach dotyczących przyszłości człowieka i świata stawiają pytanie: Czy pojęcie natury ludzkiej, które przyjmujemy, dopuszcza, aby człowiek był konstruowany, tj. manipulowany w ramach określonych granic? Tak sformułowane pytanie sprawia, że pojawiają się też inne: Czy można zmieniać naturę/istotę ludzką? Co w człowieku jest otwarte na biotechnologiczną transformację, a co nie? Jakie działania są dopuszczalne, a jakie nie?

Biorąc pod uwagę koncepcje transhumanizmu i etyki chronienia osób, można zauważyć, że w kwestii dopuszczalności manipulacji natury ludzkiej pojawiają się echa dwóch przeciwstawnych stanowisk opartych na odmiennych koncepcjach antropologicznych – tzw. antropologii ograniczonej i antropologii nieograniczonej oraz dwóch odmiennych postaw wobec świata – tzw. ogrodników i demiurgów. Thomas Sowell (2007) rozróżnia antropologię, według której człowiek jest istotą ograniczoną (przez grzech pierworodny i fakt,

że został stworzony przez Boga) oraz antropologię, według której byt ludzki jest moralnie i epistemicznie doskonały (Sowell 2007: 21–22). Skutkuje to dwoma podejściami do wszelkiego rodzaju działalności podejmowanej przez człowieka, które syntetycznie można ująć w dychotomii: „można i wolno wszystko” i „nie wszystko jest możliwe i nie wszystko wolno”. W podobnym duchu wypowiada się Chantal Delsol (2017), która wyróżnia dwa rodzaje ludzkiego stosunku do świata, posługując się figurami ogrodnika i demiurga. Ogrodnik kocha świat jako powierzone mu dziedzictwo. Przyczynia się do utrzymania porządku świata, którego nie stworzył i który w znacznej mierze go przerasta (Delsol 2017: 6). Demiurg nie kocha świata, jest nim zde gustowany i zniesmaczony, dlatego często wyraża swój gniew, oburzenie i potępienie. Demiurgia definiuje się sama jako przewyżczenie ograniczeń i obalenie wszelkich granic. Takie stanowisko wiąże się z założeniem wszechmocy, które wciska się wszędzie, do najróżniejszych nurtów myśli (Delsol 2017: 293).

Ogrodnik (zwolennik antropologii ograniczonej) i demiurg (zwolennik antropologii nieograniczonej) to w skrócie dwie postawy, dwa bieguny stanowisk dotyczących rzeczywistości, odniesienia do przeszłości, teraźniejszości i przyszłości człowieka i świata. Między tymi skrajnymi i przeciwstawnymi stanowiskami lokuje się odpowiedź na zasadnicze pytanie dotyczące możliwości i słuszności modyfikowania natury ludzkiej przez ingerencje bio- i technologiczne.

Peter Sloterdijk w eseju *Reguły dla ludzkiego zwierzyńca. Odpowiedź na Heideggera list o humanizmie* (1999) analizuje tradycję samoposkramiania i hodowania człowieka. Zwraca uwagę na to, że w perspektywie rozwoju nauki może się pojawić możliwość genetycznego modelowania człowieka (Sloterdijk 2008: 56). Autor nie formułuje oceny moralnej tej praktyki, ale umieszcza ją na przedłużeniu procesów kształtowania i wychowywania siebie. Umieszczenie ewentualnych ingerencji genetycznych w *continuum* ogólnych praktyk antropotechnicznych może sugerować, że w istocie nie ma jakościowej różnicy pomiędzy modelowaniem człowieka poprzez wychowanie i wpajanie reguł a przekształcaniem go poprzez ingerencje w genotyp.

Roland Dworkin, analizując koncepcję nazwaną przez siebie „zabawą w Boga”, próbuje udowodnić, że moralna obawa przed tą zabawą jest w istocie strachem, który odczuwa ludzkość wtedy, kiedy

za sprawą rozwoju techniki i nauki to, na co wcześniej nie mieliśmy wpływu, staje się rozporządzalne i przekształcalne. Dla Dworkina wychowanie i proces przekształcania natury do naszych potrzeb na przestrzeni całej historii ludzkości to nic innego jak właśnie „zabawa w Boga”. Twierdzi, że inżynieria genetyczna może przynieść nam nowe, skuteczniejsze narzędzia przekształcania siebie i świata, nie ma tu jednak jakościowej różnicy w zestawieniu z tym, co robiliśmy od wieków. Zadaje retoryczne pytania: Koniec końców, jaka jest różnica pomiędzy wynalezieniem penicyliny a posługiwaniem się wyprodukowanymi, sklonowanymi genami w celu leczenia bardziej przerażających chorób niż te, z którymi radzi sobie penicylina? Jaka jest różnica pomiędzy zadawaniem swojemu dziecku wyczerpujących ćwiczeń, po to, by schudło albo poprawiło swoją kondycję, a zmianą jego genów w stadium embrionalnym z takim samym przyświecającym nam celem? (Dworkin 2000: 443).

Dworkin podsumowuje swój wywód stwierdzeniem, że strach przed moralną odpowiedzialnością nie powinien nas skłaniać do odmowy korzystania z możliwości otwierających się przed nami dzięki rozwojowi techniki. Należy kontynuować prometejski wysiłek dostosowywania natury do naszych potrzeb, zachowując moralną czujność i biorąc odpowiedzialność za konsekwencje działań dokonywanych za pomocą nowych narzędzi (Dworkin 2000: 446).

Peter Dabrock (zwolennik biotechnologicznych modyfikacji) uważa, że w debacie etycznej na temat biologii syntetycznej formuła „zabawy w boga” jest często stosowana w celu niesłusznego atakowania nowej gałęzi biotechnologii. Z teologicznego punktu widzenia Dabrock analizuje, kontekstualizuje i krytykuje użycie tego terminu, ukazując etyczny korytarz odpowiedzialnego radzenia sobie ze społecznymi wyzwaniami biologii syntetycznej (Dabrock 2009: 47).

Po drugiej stronie „barykady” odnajdujemy refleksję takich myślicieli jak: Vittorio Possenti, Edmund Kowalski, Natasza Szutta czy Adrian Magdici.

Vittorio Possenti snując refleksję nad współczesnymi problemami bioetyki przestrzega przed zamianą prokreacji na produkcję. Twierdzi, że: „Faust i Wagner uzyskali wyraźną przewagę nad Darwinem”. W nowej technologicznej wizji nowy człowiek staje się wytworem technologów. Prokreacja staje się produkcją. Powstaje nowy, wyrafinowany technicznie przemysł zapłodnienia pozaustrojowego, który

podlega znanym czynnikom ekonomicznym: zyskowi, prawu popytu i podaży, reklamie, konkurencji, rynkowi, pobudzaniu konsumpcji. Biznesem staje się produkcja dzieci i sztuczne wytwarzanie rodzin. Wszystko to prowadzi do przemiany „bycia kims” w „bycie czymś” (Possenti 2017: 195).

Dla Possentiego (zwolennika koncepcji osoby jako nowej zasady³) biotechnologie modyfikujące człowieka to nic innego jak kolejna po ideologiach totalitarnych XX wieku próba zawładnięcia osobą.

W nowożytności podjęto dwie wielkie próby zawładnięcia osobą: pierwsza to krwawy despotyzm XX-wiecznych ideologii totalitarnych; druga to próba podporządkowania Ja przez radykalne wersje biotechnologii (neuronauki, inżynieria genetyczna, eugenika, klonowanie). Ta druga trwa nadal i nie wiadomo czy się zakończy – chociaż aktualnie próbuje się zredukować osobę do przejściowego momentu ewolucji kosmicznej. Tak jak totalitaryzmy przyniosły prawdziwą nienawiść do człowieka, tak podobne skutki może mieć, jakkolwiek w sposób bardziej zawaolowany, projekt sprowadzenia człowieka do *physis*. Jeśli projekt ten nadal będzie rozwijany, to skutkiem próby całkowitej naturalizacji człowieka będzie wielka demoralizacja humanistyczna i „despotyzm tego, co organiczne”. Zachodzi bowiem sprzeczność między próbą wejścia nauki w ludzką sferę intencjonalną, moralną, poznawczą, decyzyjną a perspektywą lepszego panowania nad samym sobą w samostanowieniu. Podporządkowanie samostanowienia temu, co organiczne, prowadzi do jego podważenia, odsłaniając antynomię między impulsem wolności i organiczno-naturalistyczną redukcją człowieka (Possenti 2017: 64–65).

Niebezpieczeństwo ze strony biotechnologii wobec człowieka-osoby dostrzega także Edmund Kowalski. Uważa, że modyfikacje biotechnologiczne mogą niszczyć integralność osoby ludzkiej. Pisze, że interwencje biomedyczne nie stanowią „jedynie” ingerencji w „ciało”, „embrion” czy „płód”, lecz zawsze „dotykają” całego człowieka, ingerując w jego niepowtarzalny, jednostkowy i osobowy proces rodzenia się, rozwoju i dojrzewania. Interwencja biomedyczna czy biotechnologiczna stanowi ingerencję w bycie-stawanie się człowiekiem-osobą (Kowalski 2004: 239).

3 „Przyjmij «zasadę osoby» jako źródło reformy fundamentalnych instytucji konkretnego życia (małżeństwa i rodziny, kultury i wiedzy, polityki i prawa oraz religii) lub zastosuj «zasadę osoby» do społeczeństwa, polityki, kultury i oprzyj na niej swoje relacje z innymi w ramach sprawiedliwych instytucji” (Possenti 2017: 302).

Według Gogacza (twórcy etyki chronienia osób) czy Possentiego fundamentem rzeczywistości człowieka-osoby ludzkiej jest ontologia. W wypadku modyfikacji biotechnologicznych może ulec zniszczeniu ontologiczny podmiot, jakim jest osoba. Postczłowiek, czy dokładniej podmiot postludzki wyprodukowany w ten sposób, nie byłby osobą. „Termin «postludzki» jest ontologicznie ryzykowny, gdyż sugeruje istotową transformację natury ludzkiej, która nie jest możliwa. Podmiot postludzki, stworzony za pomocą technologii, która nadałaby mu nową formę, charakteryzowałyby cechy i zdolności, których nie posiada podmiot ludzki, a nie udoskonalenie tych cech, które człowiek już ma” (Possenti 2017: 215).

Antyhumanistyczne nastawienie świata proponowanego przez zwolenników trans- i posthumanizmu oraz eliminowanie ontologii z etyki może być paradoksalnie pokłosiem myśli Martina Heideggera (skądinąd myśliciela wielkiego formatu, w którego twórczości można znaleźć wiele głębokich refleksji nad człowiekiem duchowym). W *Liście o humanizmie* (1995) faktycznie zaproponował on odrzucenie w odniesieniu do człowieka tradycyjnych pojęć, takich jak: *animal rationale*, „substancja”, „osoba”, „podmiot”, „świadomość” czy „ego” i zastąpienie ich terminem *Dasein*, który polskie tłumaczenie oddaje jako „jestestwo”. Jest to w istocie krytyka humanizmu jako filozofii metafizycznej, krytyka podmiotu oraz krytyka metafizyki obecności.

U Heideggera *Dasein* nie może oprzeć swojego bycia na żadnym innym zastanym bycie. Będąc zawsze otwartym i niezakończonym, musi nieustannie projektować, czyli wykraczać poza zastany byt w nieznanym kierunku. „Istotą działania jest dokonywanie. Dokonać znaczy: rozwinąć coś do pełni jego istoty, do niej doprowadzić, *producere*” (Heidegger 1995: 129). *Dasein*, przekraczając byt w kierunku bycia, wykracza w nicość. Staje wobec faktu, że jest, że nie może się oprzeć na niczym, że otaczający go byt jest tylko kruchą nieistotną strukturą, przesłaniającą jego rozwijające się w nicości bycie, i w końcu że śmierć jako ostateczna i nieprzekraczalna możliwość bycia będzie jego nieodwołalnym kresem. Bycie *Dasein* okazuje się zatem byciem-ku-śmierci.

„Zasada osoby” dla Possentiego oznacza, że w badaniach nad człowiekiem i jego działaniem nie wystarczy ograniczyć się do terminów „świadomość”, „podmiot” lub „jednostka”, do których odwoływało się wiele nurtów filozoficznych w nowożytności i ponowożytności.

Termin „osoba” jest bowiem pierwotny i podstawowy, posiada głębię i trwałość, których nie mają pozostałe z wymienionych kategorii (Possenti 2017: 17).

Zerwanie z metafizyką, ontologią prowadzi do nihilizmu. Adrian Magdici zauważa, że „im mniej interesuje nas metafizyczny aspekt ludzkiego życia, tym bardziej płynna staje się granica między bioetyką a tym, co możemy nazwać tanatoetyką” (Magdici 2015: 45).

Natasza Szutta dostrzega także inne niebezpieczeństwo ze strony różnorodnych projektów udoskonalania ludzkiej natury, a mianowicie utratę autonomii (która jest też wyznacznikiem człowieka pojętego jako osoba ludzka). Autorka pisze:

Warto jednak zatrzymać się na bardziej ogólnym problemie, który dotyczy wszystkich projektów biologicznego udoskonalania ludzkiej natury. Chodzi o zmianę dotychczasowego sposobu definiowania siebie jako ludzi – istot, które są zdolne do dokonywania wolnych wyborów i decydowania o sobie, niezależnie od wszelkich biologicznych i społecznych determinant, mających szansę zarówno na doskonalenie siebie, jak i autodestrukcję.

Dlaczego to budzi wątpliwości biokonserwatystów (przeciwników transhumanistów)? Ponieważ niezależnie od tego, czy taki projekt ma szansę na realizację (moralność to przecież nie tylko sfera behawioralna, ale także motywacyjna, silnie powiązana z bardzo złożoną sferą wartości, których nie sposób zredukować wyłącznie do kategorii biologicznych), można już dziś poruszyć ważną moralnie kwestię: nawet jeśli społeczeństwo zyska na podniesieniu poczucia bezpieczeństwa, to odbędzie się to kosztem autonomii jego obywateli. A ci, nawet jeśli będą działali moralnie słusznie, to nie dlatego, że sami tego chcą, lecz dlatego, że nie umieją inaczej. Tak jak w *Nowym wspaniałym świecie* Huxleya (Szutta 2016: 34).

Konkluzje

Jak twierdzi Edmund Kowalski, bioetyka jest dzisiaj bardzo modnym tematem, a antropologia filozoficzna o wiele mniej. Tymczasem nie może istnieć autentyczna teoria etyczna bez „właściwej” – czyli adekwatnej – wizji człowieka (*anthropos*) (Kowalski 2004: 240). Zastanawiając się nad korelacją trans-/posthumanizmu i etyki, należy zacząć od rzeczywistości ludzkiej. Transhumanizm czy jeszcze w większym stopniu posthumanizm oferują odmienną niż etyka chronienia osób koncepcję człowieka. Zrywa ona więzi łączące

rzeczywistość człowieka z metafizyką i ontologią. Jak twierdzi natomiast Vittorio Possenti, pojęcie (i rzeczywistość) osoby nie jest w pierwszym rzędzie moralne, lecz ontologiczne. Wartość, jaką przypisujemy osobom, wypływa z ich statusu ontycznego. Bataię o pojęcie osoby trzeba wygrać na nowo na tym poziomie (Possenti 2017: 27).

Transhumanizm, a w szczególności posthumanizm (ze względu na ontologię) zrywa z klasyczną koncepcją człowieka-osoby, równocześnie odrzucając etykę chronienia osób. W miejsce etyki chronienia osób transhumanizm (oraz posthumanizm) stosuje etykę sytuacyjną i utilitarystyczną. Decyduje często ideologia czy interes grupy wpływów, a nie dobro człowieka i dobro wspólne. Wspomniany już Jan Białek twierdzi nawet, że przechodzenie ludzkości ze środowiska naturalnego do środowiska technologicznego implikuje zanik etyki, bowiem w systemie zdominowanym przez etykę nie ma potrzeby, by rozbudowywać system prawny i policyjny, natomiast w sfragmentaryzowanym świecie środowiska technologicznego etyka jest drastycznie redukowana, prowadząc do ekspansji prawa modyfikującego etykę (Białek 2017: 98).

Dzisiaj, może bardziej niż kiedykolwiek w historii, potrzebny jest namysł nad tym, jakie są granice ingerencji biotechnologicznych w naturę człowieka, co jest dopuszczalne i właściwe. Nie oznacza to, że należy bezrefleksyjnie odrzucić wszystko, co proponują zwolennicy transhumanizmu. Warto się zastanowić czy sama możliwość działania może usprawiedliwić modyfikację wszelkiego typu? O jakie i czyje dobro chodzi? A to jest także zadaniem czy wyzwaniem dla pedagogiki i wychowania. Przypomina o tym Gogacz, według którego pedagogika jest określeniem szczegółowych celów i skłanianiem przez perswazję do podejmowania wskazanych przez cele czynności, które doprowadzają do usprawnienia intelektu i woli w uzyskiwaniu wiedzy i prawych decyzji, a na tej drodze do wybrnięcia istnienia, życia, zdrowia i moralności jako zgodnej z prawdą wierności dobru osób (Gogacz 1998: 43). W podobnym duchu Possenti twierdzi, że wychowanie jest najpierw wychowaniem osoby, a dopiero potem cywilnym i politycznym wychowaniem dobrego obywatela lub przygotowaniem do współzawodniczenia z innymi na wzór walki kogutów (Possenti 2017: 301).

Warto pamiętać, że wychowanie oznacza pomaganie osobie w dostrzeganiu integralnego sensu rzeczywistości, w konfrontacji z rzeczywistością, a nie ze snami. Każdy autentyczny proces

wychowawczy zaczyna się od realistycznego spojrzenia na rzeczy takie, jakimi są. Prawdziwe wychowanie jest procesem antynihilistycznym, odrzuceniem kryterium nierzeczywistości i snu, które wydają się stanowić istotne aspekty ponowoczesności. Zawsze, a wydaje się, że szczególnie dzisiaj, zadaniem pedagogiki jest krytyczna refleksja nad propozycjami zmian i utopijnymi planami proponowanymi ludzkości i realizowanymi przez państwa i korporacje w oderwaniu od naturalnych praw przysługujących człowiekowi (jak na przykład prawo do samostanowienia) czy rodzicom (do wychowania dzieci zgodnie z własnymi przekonaniem) czy szkole (do wychowania etycznego jako formy wspomaganie rodziców w procesie wychowawczym).

Produkcja człowieka 2.0, postczłowieka, może być kolejną w historii próbą tworzenia iluzji wiecznej szczęśliwości, niezrealizowaną utopią okupioną krzywdą i cierpieniem. Z punktu widzenia etyki chronienia osób niedopuszczalne są jakiegokolwiek zmiany jakościowe (dotyczące przyczyny formalnej osoby ludzkiej). Można natomiast dopuszczać możliwość zmian ilościowych (dotyczących przyczyny materialnej osoby ludzkiej), jeśli takie prowadziłyby do ochrony relacji osobowych i ich podmiotów.

Podobne zdanie wyrażają Grzegorz Hołub i Piotr Duchliński we wstępie do książki *Ulepszanie człowieka. Perspektywa filozoficzna* (2018):

Nasze stanowisko wyraża się w przekonaniu, że podstawą wszelkich prób ulepszania *homo sapiens* jest jego ludzka natura, której przysługuje określony status aksjonormatywny. To właśnie natura determinuje zakres i sposoby jej ulepszania. Spełnia ona funkcję formy pozytywnej, regulującej treść i zakres podejmowanych działań ulepszających, ale stanowi też coś w rodzaju normy negatywnej, czyli zakazującej podejmowania takich działań, które prowadziłyby do jej dezintegracji ontycznej i moralnej (Hołub, Duchliński 2018: 18).

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ADRES DO KORESPONDENCJI

Sławomir Chrost
 Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach
 e-mail: schrost@op.pl

Jan Rutkowski
ORCID: 0000-0002-3347-9420
University of Warsaw

Producing or Improving the World and Humans? The Quest for the Ethical Foundations of Education

ABSTRACT

The article investigates the ethical basis of education by making reference to Aristotle's distinction between *poiesis* and *praxis*, indicating the serious difficulties that arise when this distinction is challenged, and analyzing the cultural, ethical, and educational context of emerging concepts that question the relevance of the distinction between production and improvement.

The starting point of the analysis was the classical concept of natural law and the related question of "first things." The author relates the distinction between *praxis* and *poiesis* to the two types of objectives and then analyzes selected relevant concepts.

First, the notion of progress is invoked. Following Robert Spaemann, the article proposes a classification of types of progress. Then, it shows the relationship between type "A progress"—understood as production—to ideologies and totalitarianism. Following Eric Voegelin, it indicates the Gnostic origins of 20th-century intellectual and mass movements. The interpretations of modernism proposed by these authors are complemented by Chantal Delsol's considerations. The article uses her metaphorical distinction between two types of attitudes toward the world. The figures of "the gardener" and "the demiurge" are evoked.

KEYWORDS

totalitarianism,
transhumanism,
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posthuman, education,
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The article invokes transhumanism as an example of the demiurgic attitude and presents a polemic against the transhumanists' accusations in the area of pedagogy. It points out that education must take freedom into account, and therefore cannot be understood as *poiesis*.

Introduction

One of the most important discoveries enabling the development of the classical concept of the natural law includes questions about the first things and related distinction into human products and things that a man found or discovered. Separation of human products from what is not a product of a man is connected with the belief that

things produced by a man only lead to a man who is not a first thing for sure. Products of a human hand seem, in every respect, inferior to or later than things a man had not produced, but found or discovered (Strauss 1969: 85).

Also, the above reflection is related to the Aristotle's distinction of kinds of human actions. In the perspective of these considerations, it is particularly important to distinguish *praxis* from *poiesis*, which is not obvious nowadays. Such differentiation corresponds to two kinds of objectives: "It is because there is an objective for something and there is an objective in something" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, XII, 7, 1072b). Being unaware of such distinctions often leads to serious ethical and pedagogical problems. The analysis of the above issues will result in formulating the question concerning the ethical foundations of education.

Progress as an objective

Modern philosophy is dominated by the concept of progress. However, in order not to use this notion in an ideological manner, we should—as Robert Spaemann rightly notes—specify the area in which particular changes can be evaluated as positive or negative, and we should determine a parameter that will make it possible to classify the changes as improvement or degradation of the current status of things. An ideological manner of using this category appears when

progress is treated as an absolute value and the word “progressive” replaces the predicate “good” (Spaemann 1999: 73, 76–77).

This is connected with mistaken identification of two different kinds of progress. The above-mentioned author, referring to Aristotle, distinguishes two kinds, i.e. two “ideal types” of progress. The first one is called type “A progress,” and the other one—type “B progress.” The former includes an action the meaning of which is given by its end. In type “B progress” we can speak about improvement irrespective of its result. Type “A progress” examples include construction of a house, or an attempt to catch a train. If we fail to finish the house or move in, it does not really matter at which stage the construction process was stopped. The failure to complete the construction makes all related activities meaningless. Also, whether we were running faster or slower is not important if we did not make it on time to catch the train at the railway station. In such situations the end gives meaning to the action.

It is different with type “B progress” in which improvement is important even if we have not achieved the final result. Sometimes we do not even know what the result should include. Examples of such actions include learning to play an instrument or activities related to medicine or martial arts. In the first case (“A progress”), an object is produced (a house) or a whole is created; and parts of that whole are only meaningful from the point of view of that future whole. In the second case (“B progress”), a new whole is not produced, but we improve what had already existed. Improvement occurs irrespective of the end.

Distinguishing the types of progress results from two kinds of objectives. An objective may include a house as a whole that had been produced, but a house is built for a man who wants to live in this house, and in this sense the man is the objective of the house which is being created for the man and because of the man. The house is produced because of the man, i.e. someone who is not produced but who already exists. The indirect objective, i.e. producing something, assumes the existence of an ultimate objective. Producing the house is an indirect objective; the man is the ultimate objective.

These two kinds of objectives correspond to two types of human actions. Creation of *poiesis* is just an indirect objective; a stage on the path to the fulfillment of the ultimate objective; and it is only

meaningful in a broader perspective of *praxis* aimed at the improvement of the already existing individual or community. The A progress is related to producing and, as an indirect objective, it has its deepest meaning in the perspective of the ultimate objective, and that is why it cannot function as an independent objective. It cannot be separated from an independent objective and from the “B progress,” and in no way should it evoke regress in this area (“B progress”).

Type “A progress” corresponds to the process of producing things; type “B progress” refers to the growth and maturation of a living creature. The object of producing *poiesis* only appears as a whole at the end of the process. It is different with a living creature: it is present as a whole already at the beginning of its maturation and it is an objective in itself. Its maturation serves the creature itself, and not other, external objectives. In the perspective of the ethics of education it is particularly important to note that, as Spaemann rightly notes, “the idea of progress is defined by the idea of maturation, and not the other way round” (Spaemann 1999: 76). A teacher must always know what maturity specific to a man is, and only in this perspective he/she can interpret particular changes as progress or regress. The notion of progress is only meaningful in the perspective of fulfillment of a specific vision of humanity, and it can never be treated as an autotelic objective.

Just like progress, development cannot be an independent objective of education without specifying which aspects of humanity are to be developed and how. According to Allan Bloom, “the statements that each of us should be given the access to development are childish” (Bloom 1997: 402), because, in fact, they mean nothing. First of all, a teacher should ask: what kind of development is important? Which aspects of humanity should be developed? Using the notion of development without providing its predicates may be perceived as deceptive or camouflaging the ideological inspirations and aspirations of the speaker.

Totalitarianism and progress

The 20th century totalitarian systems (Communism and Nazism) were characterised by the failure to see or the ignorance of the difference between producing and improving. This resulted in tragic

events and serious problems in the area of culture, ethics and education. The huge amount of violence resulted in the fact that both of the systems are criticized, but we can say that such criticism is not symmetrical. The idea of Nazism is perceived as absolute evil, but the evaluation of Communism, despite documented murders (Courtois et al. 1999) and equal amount of victims, is not unanimously negative. The symbols of the cruel Nazi totalitarianism appear only in extremist and marginal groups, while Communist symbols have become fully acceptable in popular culture. It is forbidden to wear or present the Nazi or fascist symbols, but the images connected with Communism (e.g. T-shirts with the face of Ernesto “Che” Guevara, with the hammer and sickle, with the CCCP abbreviation, hats with the five-pointed red star) are accepted in the western culture. Such lenient approach to Communism is connected with qualifying it as a movement that expressed progress, because, according to Eric Voegelin, “there is actually no conflict between enlightened progressivism and Communism” (Voegelin 2011: 398). In other words, the above-mentioned asymmetry of evaluations results from the belief that Nazism was a reactionary ideology, and Communism—a progressive ideology.

The Nazi ideology is only promoted today by radical and marginalized groups of extremists. There is an impression that, due to excluding them from the public sphere, we can prevent evil from being reborn. Such optimistic assumption is based on the belief that the only supporters of dangerous ideologies are rightist extremists. There is an increasingly stronger tendency to ascribe hidden dangerous affiliations and fascist views only to those movements which are conservative and traditional, and which emphasize the communal dimension of human life (Holmes 1998: 14–16, 25–32). It is believed that, along with modernization related to progress that results in weaker influence of traditions, religions and national ideas, the threat of totalitarian movements being reborn will disappear.

However, according to Voegelin, the attempts to fulfil the totalitarian ideologies which lead to tragic consequences, are connected with other mass and intellectual movements that shape the modern western thought. The common source of those movements are, in Voegelin’s opinion, Gnostic ideas (Voegelin 1998). He describes modernity as a secularized version of spirituality typical of a sect

(Voegelin 1994: 66), and he enumerates six beliefs which characterise the Gnostic worldview and are a common denominator for such (seemingly different) concepts as positivism, psychoanalysis, progressivism, Communism, fascism, and Nazism. First of all, a supporter of such a vision of the world is not satisfied with his/her life. Obviously, this feeling is not only typical of Gnostics. In a way, all people have some reasons not to be satisfied with certain aspects of their lives. What is crucial for understanding the Gnostic perspective, and what is unique to it, is the second conviction according to which negative aspects of human life result from the wrong structure of the world. According to a Gnostic, “if something is not as it should be, it is the fault of the wickedness of the world” (Voegelin 1998: 37). The third thing typical of Gnosticism is the belief that it is possible to save the world from evil. According to the fourth Gnostic thesis, such salvation will take place in the process of history. This will happen (thesis number five) because, due to a man’s effort, it is possible to change the order of being. The last, sixth thesis, refers to knowledge, i.e. gnosis, which is necessary for changing the world, or, actually, for creating it anew.

Creating the world is not just a specific feature of totalitarian ideologies, but, according to Chantal Delsol, it is typical of the contemporary post-modernity. According to the philosopher: “Its essence is the idea that a man should create everything that is important; everything that refers to him. Nothing is given anymore; everything is constructed. There is nothing that would precede us; everything is our work” (Delsol 2017: 17).

Utopian ideas of the 20th-century ideologies aimed at rejecting the existing, imperfect and disappointing order of the world, and replacing it with a new reality, i.e. with the world made by a human being. According to Delsol, people who think like that do not like the world in which they live.

They want to leave it. They reject the cultural environment in which they were born and in which they grew up. They are ashamed of their parents whom they suspect of supporting various forms of racism, machismo or homophobia. They do not want to defend their history and transfer it to the next generations. These people want to abandon their world (which is manifested in all their attitudes, thoughts and beliefs) because, in a way, they are ashamed of it as they think it is too small for their expectations, too imperfect, and too ridiculous (Delsol 2017: 14).

Superhuman as a product

Aiming to replace the world (which is given and imperfect) with the own product, i.e. with the reality created by a human being, has to evoke the question concerning the status of a person. Is a man a product of his own? Obviously, he is not, and, just like the rest of the existing world, he should be replaced with a new creature: a superhuman.

Modern mass and intellectual movements aim at changing human nature and producing a superhuman, i.e.

a being created by humankind, who is to take the place of the ridiculous creature of God. This is the great dream the vision of which appeared in the works of Condorcet, Comte, Marx, and Nietzsche, and which, in practice, was later fulfilled by the Communist and Nazi movements (Voegelin 2011: 406).

In the common awareness, the term “superhuman” was only limited to the creature announced and expected by Friedrich Nietzsche, and then—in a vulgarized version—by the Nazis. However, according to Voegelin, the idea of a superhuman had appeared earlier, and it was typical of various kinds of modernism. The term first appeared in the *Faust* by Goethe. Then, it was adopted by Nietzsche and Marx to describe a creature living in the new world that was created by a human being. However, we can also distinguish other types of a superhuman, depending on the trends postulating the creation of a new and perfect world.

The basic models of a superhuman are: the progressivist superhuman of Condorcet (who hopes for eternal life on Earth), the positivist superhuman of Comte, the Communist superhuman of Marx, and the Dionysian superhuman of Nietzsche (Voegelin 1998: 40).

Nevertheless, we cannot treat this list as completed. It is constantly being extended by still valid trends based on progressivism, transhumanism and postmodernism.

The common denominator of such trends is the unchangeable set of eternal human problems which had already been known in the ancient times. These are principal categories that specify the burden of human existence, such as poverty, sickness, death, the necessity of work, and sexual problems. These movements and ideologies differed

from one another in the issues they determined as critical. For example, Communism declared elimination of poverty, and, while promoting work, it promised that work will no longer be necessary, in which it contradicted itself. For psychoanalysis, in turn, the key challenge of human existence was sexuality. It is worth emphasizing, however, that the Communists, especially in the initial period, promoted not only revolution aiming at taking over the means of production, but also sexual revolution.

Irrespective of the differences and varied accents, supporters of such trends believed that human nature may and should be changed, modified, and, actually, created anew. Humanity is to become a creation, and, more precisely, a product.

Gardeners and demiurges

Using the metaphors of a gardener and a demiurge, Delsol describes two models of a human relationship with the world. The above-mentioned, production-oriented approach to the world and human being, can be specified as “demiurgic.” Delsol places it in the opposition to the approach of a gardener (Delsol 2017; Rutkowski 2021).

A demiurge does not accept the existing world; he is disappointed and dissatisfied with it. He claims that the world is defective and constructed in a wrong manner. He does not want to take responsibility for it, and he manifests it in front of young people, which, according to Hannah Arendt (Delsol’s teacher), should exclude him from the group of educators: “A person who rejects taking shared responsibility for the world should not have children and cannot educate them” (Arendt 1994: 225).

However, a demiurge wants to exert an influence on future generations. He wants to create a new world and a being that would live in it. Due to the ultimate solution of old human existential problems, this new creature is to be someone different and better than the previous people. And it does not matter if we call the creature a superhuman, a transhuman or a posthuman.

A demiurgic approach to the world does not accept any restrictions in the radical quest for emancipation understood, first of all, as questioning the natural limitations. According to Delsol:

Demiurgy is self-defined as overcoming limitations and abolishing all borders. Such an attitude is related to the assumption of omnipotence, which is trying to permeate through all aspects of life and all trends in human thought (Delsol 2017: 293).

It is different with the gardeners. They affirm the world in which they live. They treat the world as their heritage which should be protected. A gardener does not produce plants, but cultivates, protects and develops them. Although a garden needs cultivation, it exists independently of the gardener who does not create the world, but looks after it and tries to improve it. A gardener is never sure if his work will be successful. Sometimes his effort is futile, and sometimes he is surprised at unexpectedly good results. This lack of certainty helps him maintain reasonable humility and avoid snootiness. The gardener's source of pride is the belief that he contributes to "maintaining the order of the world which he had not created and which, to a great degree, surpasses him" (Delsol 2017: 6). He is not frustrated by the fact that his knowledge and ability to act are not unlimited. He is happy that he can improve the world which was given to him in an embryonic form.

A gardener's behaviour is sometimes criticized by demiurges as a conservative attitude that is anti-developmental and reinforces stagnation. However, this objection is unjustified. A gardener does not aim at obstructing development and preserving the world in the current form; he is not against a change as such. He constantly searches for new methods of cultivating, growing, farming, and caring about the plants. However, he always bears in mind that the world has a structure and laws that should be learnt and respected. He acknowledges that there is a reality which is independent of a man and prior to him. The world, just like humanity, is not a human product.

Ideologies and reality

A demiurge does not want to understand or accept it. What is crucial to him is his will which aims at ruling over the reality. However, such willingness to rule the world results in "selectiveness" in the reception of the surrounding reality. A demiurge only takes into account those aspects of it that match his projects and, at the same

time, he is very short-sighted, or even blind, to those elements that fail to comply with his imagination. Developing the thought of Voegelin, we may say that a demiurgic “thinker, while rejecting an important element of reality, enables himself to construct such a model of a man, society or history, that will match his desires” (Voegelin 1998: 43). Thus, the will to rule the reality triumphs over his discernment and obedience to the constitution of being. Nevertheless, the very constitution of being is beyond the demiurge’s power. This is the main reason why demiurgic projects always fail to succeed, as they do not take into account the whole complexity of the world and they reject its uncomfortable and “odd” elements. Demiurgic projects become ideologies that sooner or later collapse.

We can say that this is the basis for Delsol’s optimistic belief that although gardeners are in the minority nowadays and although they do not rule the world, in future the situation will change because “the common sense has more future than madness which destroys a lot, but never triumphs in the end” (Delsol 2017: 8). Reducing this optimism a little, we can add that a failure of discredited ideologies does not have to cause the renaissance of the common sense. New ideologies usually replace the old ones, the power of the previous demiurges is taken over by new demiurges rather than gardeners, and the price that has to be paid for the mistakes of further ideologies is always high.

However, before an ideology collapses, it aims at capturing the whole reality which is complex and ambiguous. It promises its own triumph and related, final and irreversible, solution to a man’s everlasting problems (“So comrades, come rally, and the last fight let us face, the Internationale unites the human race”). This promise is to be fulfilled in an unspecified future, but the ideological correctness demands people to behave as if it has already been fulfilled. “People live in a fiction as they constantly have to behave as if the expected world has already come” (Delsol 2017: 175). This results in an increasingly deeper gap between the ideology and the reality. The attempt to protect the ideology results in the escalation of various forms of violence (which, at the moment, is usually symbolic) in various areas of culture, language, education, family relationships, and sexuality. An ideology feels indignant when someone calls it an ideology, because, in its own opinion, it is the only possible, scientific

and universal truth. It can only be challenged by ignorants or villains. It is different with the truth of a human being: the common sense and empirical facts are discredited as an ideology. “Just like in the times of Communism, a description of the reality is called an ideology [...] while the dominant ideology pretends that it describes the reality” (Delsol 2017: 279).

Education as cultivation of the soul

The above-discussed distinction is particularly important in the perspective of asking about the ethical foundations of education, and it enables us to refer to the classical pedagogical metaphor of teaching as cultivating the human soul. Comparing education to a garden and cultivation of soil is not a new figure, and it has its roots in the Biblical description of creation and in the ancient Rome. Experience tells gardeners that if the soil is to give fruit, it needs care, cultivation and support. However, first they have to learn about the properties of the soil and treat it according to its nature. Proper care depends on the correct evaluation of the existing reality. Originally, the term *cultura* meant “agriculture: cultivation of the soil and its products, taking care of the soil and improving the quality of the soil in accordance with its nature” (Strauss 2005: 217).

A fundamental discovery of ancient pedagogy is noticing the analogy between a human soul and the soil that is being cultivated. Just like the soil, the human soul needs care, protection and development according to its nature. We may say that this idea properly characterizes both the perspective of the classical philosophy, and the Biblical perspective. As Leo Strauss notices:

despite huge difference, and even antagonisms, between the classical philosophy and the Bible; between the Athens and Jerusalem; they agree as to the crucial issue. According to the Bible, a man was created in the image of God and he was given power over the earthly creatures. However, he was not given power over everything and he was placed in a garden so that he can develop and protect it. God ascribed him a specific place. Righteousness is compliance with the order established by God, just like in the classical thought righteousness is complying with the natural order (Strauss 2007: IV–V).

Transhumanism

Challenging the natural order is connected with rejecting the distinction into production and improvement. A typical example of such way of thinking is transhumanism, i.e. a trend which develops and radicalizes a demiurgic approach to the world and human being. One of the most important representatives of this movement, Max More, confirms the possibility and need to fundamentally improve human condition, especially through development and provision of available technologies that can prevent us from getting old and significantly improve human intellectual, physical and psychological abilities (More 2022). At first, we could think that this is an attitude of a gardener who wants to improve what already exists. The postulated objective includes the elimination of diseases, old age and death through the replacement of particular body organs, and, in future, the whole body, with technological devices that are better than nature. Moreover, the use of new technologies is to make a man constantly happy and it is to help him achieve infinite and ultimate excitement (Klichowski 2014: 105). Solving the basic problems of a man will make him a transhuman, i.e. a creature in a transitional form that will make it possible to create a new, higher being in future. This will be a posthuman—a new being to replace a man who is an imperfect work of nature or God.

Transhumanists do not see the difference between improving and producing; or perhaps they believe this difference is not important (Bostrom 2003). In such an approach, distinguishing the kinds of progress and objectives is meaningless. Everything is a product, and each aim is indirect. For transhumanists education, which, in their opinion, aims at producing a certain kind of a man, is *poiesis*.

Essence of education

However, if education was production, it would be type “A progress” in which the end (achievement of the result) determines its meaningfulness. Despite the purposeful-rational organization of education at schools, i.e. education aiming at “A type progress” in which objectives and their fulfilment are important, teachers know that equally important is whether “B type progress” occurred while

achieving those aims; whether, while learning specific contents, a young person developed his/her humanity, or became emotionally and ethically degraded (Spaemann 1999: 75–76).

If we assume that there is no difference between improvement and production, or if we assume that the difference is not important, we come to the conclusion that education is simply to “produce” a specific kind of a human being. At the same time, objections are formulated (not only by transhumanists) that pedagogy is not very effective in fulfilling its aims; that its objectives would be better and more efficiently achieved by technology, biotechnology, genetic engineering, etc.

The objection of ineffectiveness may seem disqualifying for a given activity if the purposeful-rational perspective is perceived as the most important (also, the objection should be the basis for considerations to those teachers who want to see the efficiency of their educational actions as the crucial criterion of their assessment). However, in a slightly provocative manner, we can state that the lack of total effectiveness and the lack of certainty of achievement of adopted educational objectives are natural for pedagogy that must take into account the freedom of a student. Nevertheless, that freedom results in the fact that it is impossible to treat education as production (*poiesis*). Failure to take into account the student’s freedom results in the fact that education is degraded to training (Hessen 1997: 101–102).

Thus, the ethical aspect of pedagogy would be, first of all, connected with the fact that education, just like ethics, depends and is founded on the idea of human freedom. Questioning freedom—as an illusion or deception—and making a man subject to historical, biological (Bielicki 1997) or ideological necessities, makes ethics something absurd, and changes education into dark manipulation and demiurgic attempt to rule over a man and the world. And this is the only kind of situation in which efficient technology could be replaced with inefficient pedagogy.

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Jan Rutkowski
University of Warsaw
Faculty of Education
e-mail: jrutkowski@uw.edu.pl

Piotr Domeracki
ORCID:0000-0003-1339-9500
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

Provisional (Substitute-Dispersive) Status of Ethics in the Polish Educational System

ABSTRACT

The subject of this article is the actual—not only formal, but also factual—location of ethics as a school subject in the supervisory, managerial and organizational structure of the Polish education system. The research aim of the text is to argue—based on the domestic and foreign scientific literature, opinion-forming publications, and the author’s own work—that ethics is for some reason the only subject in the Polish education system whose rachitic and nebulous status can be described as institutional dispersion, or in other words, as dispersive (in)presence. The methodological instrumentarium of my paper consists of complementary methods of analysis and synthesis of sources and data, the method of comparative analysis, the method of contextual interpretation, the constructivist method and the method of exemplification. The line of argumentation of the article leads from demonstrating and analyzing the location of ethics in the legal and education systems in force in Poland, with its consequences for the “ordopractic” functioning of ethics in the realities of Polish schools. In the next step, I discuss the issue of asynchronously differentiating the ethical domain in the education system, which causes it to be parceled out and disintegrated between three uncoordinated domains: the subject matter, occasional ethical content, moral education

KEYWORDS

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and ethics lessons proper. The main line of argumentation of the article is the pivotal nature of ethics in Polish education. Its most serious consequence is its merely *ersatz* status, involving not only law and school *usus*, but also public perception.

Introduction: Implementation of ethics into the education system

At the very beginning I would like to emphasize that the analyses and reflections included in this text, which I wish to share with the readers (being open to reliable criticism and creative debate), are not just a product of purely academic considerations, but an outcome of my long professional experience that includes working as a teacher or ethics in a secondary school.

The subject of this article is the actual—not only formal, but also factual—location of ethics as a school subject in the supervisory, managerial and organisational structure of the Polish education system. The research aim of this text is to prove—based on the domestic and foreign scientific literature, opinion-forming publications, and the author's own work—that ethics is, for some reason, the only subject in the Polish education system whose weak and unclear status can be described as institutional dispersion, or in other words, as dispersive presence. The methods used to prepare this paper included the methods of analysis and synthesis of sources and data, the method of comparative analysis, the method of contextual interpretation, the constructivist method, and the method of exemplification. The methods used to prepare this paper included the method of analysis and synthesis of sources and data, the method of comparative analysis, the method of contextual interpretation, the constructivist method, and the method of exemplification (Judycki 1993; Szatur-Jaworska 2001: 85; Bronk 2006: 62; Besler 2007: 163–164).

In Polish schools, according to the law and reinforced common practices, ethics is treated in the way that raises numerous and justified objections. One may have the correct impression that ethical education in Poland is perceived as something redundant or even unwanted (Stolarski 2007: 415). It seems that ethics is to be present at school for only one reason: it is to legitimize the presence of religious education in formal public education, confirming its republican and

lay character. However, in my opinion, which is rooted in historical and legal aspects, it is exactly the opposite: introduction of religious education into the system of public education sanctioned the need to introduce ethics classes which were (in advance) planned as an alternative (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski 2018: 221) for religious education. Such solution made it possible to: (1) satisfy the demands of the Church (the episcopate of Poland, to be precise) which, from the time of the political system change, i.e. from May 1990, demanded restoring religious education at schools. Such restoration took place on 1 September 1990 according to the Instruction of the Ministry of National Education of 3 August 1990 (Krzywkowska 2017: 355; Janczarek 2021). It is worth mentioning that religious education had been removed from schools on the basis of the Act of 15 July 1961 on the development of education (articles 1–2) (Pyter 2015: 113–114; Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski 2018: 220); (2) satisfy (at least to a certain degree), progressive aspirations of the emerging civil society (Wałdoch 2008: 5, 12–13; Tomczyk 2018: 11, 14, 17–18), gradually changing into the information society (Szewczyk 2007: 10; Goliński 2011: 28, 31, 118, 138; Rozkrut 2017).

Conceptual distinctions: ethical content—moral education— lessons of ethics

To maintain order and precision, first we should make a distinction into the following concepts: ethical content, moral education and ethics as an independent didactic unit. Ethical content and moral education are permanent elements present at schools. The former, in a partial, occasional, but topical (i.e. problem-based) form, are transferred to students as inseparably connected with the curriculum. They are mainly taught during compulsory subjects such as: Polish (also, to a lesser degree, foreign languages), citizenship education, entrepreneurship, history, and education for safety. Also, they occur as an integral component of additional subjects, such as philosophy (if the subject is taught by a given school and is not replaced with music, art or Latin) or religious education.

Within the functional aspect, ethics is a component of moral education carried out by educational institutions according to the school

educational-preventive programme, through a series of actions. The most important of those actions are lessons with the class teacher. Also, moral education is fulfilled through the classes of education for living in a family, library lessons, classes conducted in the school common room, care and upbringing classes, individual paths of student support, pedagogic activities (Ziółkowski 2016: 17–18, 51, 73, 88, 91, 109 et al.), as well as ongoing cooperation between the school and parents in analysing and solving students' educational problems. Also, after-school classes are the space in which moral education may be carried out, especially classes in philosophy or ethics, social circles, psychology or Bible (religious) clubs, school voluntary work centres, as well as film discussion clubs.

Transmitters of moral education organised or coordinated by the school also include educational campaigns such as “School with Class,” “School of Dialogue,” International Tolerance Day, World Day of Kindness and Greetings, Earth Day, World Day of Animals, Week of Happiness at School, Day of Human Rights, International Day of People with Disabilities, World Health Day, Teddy Bear Day, Day of Safe Internet, International Day of Mother Tongue, Flag Day, and many others.

Also, schools offer moral education through celebrations of memoirs or important historical and national events within the all-Polish, regional or local scale. The most important of them are the Day of National Education, the National Independence Day, the anniversary of the Constitution of 3rd May, and the School's Patron Day.

Moral education at school also occurs through encouraging children and youth for voluntary work, e.g. for supporting the School Club of the “Caritas” charity organisation, working in local hospices, participating in “NEUCA for Health” marches, helping animal shelters, taking part in the all-Polish social project “Szlachetna paczka” [“Charitable Package”], volunteering in the annual final of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity, participation in one-time and cyclical support actions that include collecting money, materials, products, plastic bottle caps or paper, which are to be used for charity, school or class purposes.

That impressive but, at the same time, incomplete and example list, can be complemented by such forms of the school's moral education as participation in the actions of honorary blood donation

(organised, e.g., by the European Foundation of a Honorary Blood Donor “Relatives”); participation in School Strike for Climate, which is getting more and more popular; involvement (often initiated by the youth themselves, which is praiseworthy) in charitable raffles, school and Christmas charity fairs, collections of food and other things, social-educational actions such as “Daffodils,” “Yellow Santas,” etc.; establishing and conducting or supporting places in which people may share food or clothes, or bookcrossing centres (free exchange of books, handbooks and magazines).

Also, moral education of students is carried out through the cooperation of schools with local environments. Students may also create and carry out social projects offered by the foundation “Zwolnieni z teorii” (“Exempt from Theory”) which helps young people develop skills needed to enter the job market.

According to §1, para. 1, of the Regulation of the Minister of Education of 14 April 1992 on the conditions and way of organising religious education in public schools (Journal of Laws 1992, issue 36, item 155), ethics is a school subject in public primary schools (upon the parents’ request) and in public secondary schools (upon the request of parents or students if they are adult). For unknown reasons (and not taking into account the obvious fact that classes in ethics include ethical and moral contents that are integrated and systematized, and not dispersed in various school subjects), the law-maker assigned such classes only to primary and secondary schools, forgetting about preschools. This is the first tangible example of dispersion perceived as curricular fragmentation leading to trivialization and marginalization of ethics in the Polish system of education.

The truth is that in Poland there is no legal act that would be directly dedicated to ethics. Regulations specifying the formal status and location of ethics in the organizational structure of education occur in the resolutions specifying the conditions and ways of organizing religious education at public preschools and schools. The word “ethics” is not mentioned in the titles of those resolutions, which seems absurd. As we can see in the above-mentioned regulation, which was based on art. 12, para. 1 and 2 of the Act of 7 September 1991 on the system of education (Journal of Laws 2019, item 1481, 1818 and 2197), the legislator focuses only on the organization of religious education in the public education system. For some reasons,

both the law-maker and the executive authority, represented by the Ministry of National Education, not only connects ethics with religion (with bonds that seem inseparable), but also subjects ethics to religion, with which the authority justifies the sense of introducing and maintaining it in the Polish school.

From 1990s, legal regulations concerning Polish education have been subject to constant changes. Since 2015 such changes have been introducing every year (sic!). The system of legal information “Legalis C.H. Beck” has recorded as many as nine changes (status on 06.08.2022) of the uniform text of the Act on the education system of 7 September 1991 (Journal of Laws 1991, No. 95, item 425). The changes occurred on:

- 16 May 1996 (Journal of Laws 1996, No. 67, item 329),
- 19 November 2004. (Journal of Laws 2004, No. 256, item 2572),
- 4 December 2015 (Journal of Laws 2015, item 2156),
- 31 October 2016 (Journal of Laws 2016, item 1943),
- 8 November 2017 (Journal of Laws 2017, item 2198),
- 5 July 2018 (Journal of Laws 2018, item 1457),
- 5 July 2019 (Journal of Laws 2019, item 1481),
- 18 June 2020 (Journal of Laws 2020, item 1327),
- 16 September 2021 (Journal of Laws 2021, item 1915).

This legal act is still valid in some aspects¹, but irrespective of this, with regard to the education system reform introduced in 2017, the Polish parliament introduced new regulations. They include the Act of 14 December 2016—Education law (Journal of Laws 2017, item 59), with particular emphasis on the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 February 2017 on the preschool education curriculum and primary school curriculum, including the curriculum for students with moderate or significant mental disability, as well as the curriculum used in first-level vocational schools, in special schools preparing students for employment, and in postsecondary schools (Journal of Laws 2017, item 356 as amended), and especially the Regulation of the Minister of Education of 8 March

1 General regulations; management of schools and public institutions; evaluation, classification and promotion of students in public schools; primary school final exam; secondary school final exam and professional exam; financial support for students; detailed regulations; penal regulations.

2022 changing the regulation on the preschool education curriculum and primary school curriculum, including the curriculum for students with moderate or significant mental disability, as well as the curriculum used in first-level vocational schools, in special schools preparing students for employment, and in postsecondary schools (Journal of Laws 2022, item 609). Although the above-mentioned act of 14 December 2016—Education law (Journal of Laws 2017, item 59), is quite new (it has been valid for six years), it has been amended four times (year after year):

- on 10 May 2018 (Journal of Laws 2018, item 996),
- on 21 May 2019 (Journal of Laws 2019, item 1148),
- on 7 May 2020 (Journal of Laws 2020, item 910),
- on 18 May 2021 (Journal of Laws 2021, item 1082).

It turns out, however, that this document in no way refers to the legal reinforcement of ethics lessons in the system of education. Such reinforcement is still subject to the earlier act on the system of education of 7 September 1991, in the version of 16 September 2021 (Journal of Laws 2021, item 1915). Article 12, para. 1 and 2 of the act, which is not as vague in terms of the legal status of ethics in the education system, as it is unclearly formulated, was not changed at all in further amendments to this act. Let us see that para. 1 of this article only generally refers to the organization of religious education in preschools, primary schools and secondary schools. There is not a single word about ethics in it. Paragraph 2, in turn, complements the previous one. It states that “the conditions and ways of carrying tasks mentioned in para. 1 by the school” are to be specified by “the Minister in charge of education in cooperation with the authorities of the Catholic Church and the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church, as well as other churches and religious associations,” through appropriate regulations. Thus, the approach to and the position of ethics in the organizational structure of the education system are determined by the normative act of a lower order.

Nothing was changed by the act of 14 December 2016—Education law (Journal of Laws 2017, item 59) in the version of 18 May 2021 (Journal of Laws 2021, item 1082). No attempt to reconstitute ethics was made. What is more, the term “ethics” appears in the document only once—in the preamble in which we can read that “respecting the Christian system of values, teaching and education

is based on the universal principles of ethics.” The sentence itself deserves a separate article. Here I will only interpret it in a general manner. Unfortunately, the sentence indicates a strongly internalized conceptual chaos (at the level of the law-maker), as well as competence gaps filled with ruthlessly copied, stereotypical convictions that belong to the social imaginarium.

If this is the case with the knowledge of ethics among decision-makers performing the function of the authorities, the position and description of ethics in the Polish law is understandable. Also, it is not a surprise that it functions in the system of education in the way it does, and that people (even teachers of ethics) perceive it this way (which seems shocking). In this context, alarming are the results of the research related to “the fulfilment of teaching ethics in Polish schools in 2006–2015” (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 15), published in 2017 by Joanna Madalińska-Michalak, Antoni J. Jeżowski and Szymon Więśław in the monograph entitled *Etyka w systemie edukacji w Polsce* [*Ethics in the Polish System of Education*]. In the book we can read that “only one in two respondents [among all the ethics teachers who participated in the research—added by P.D.] to a higher or lesser degree believed that teachers of ethics are prepared for conducting the classes” (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 139).

What is more, “almost one in three respondents have doubts concerning the quality of preparing teachers of ethics for conducting classes in this subject. They declared they have «no opinion» on this, and 18% of the research participants said that teachers of ethics are not prepared for conducting classes in this subject at school [...]” (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 140). Also, according to the research authors, “teachers in towns and cities evaluate their own preparation for the job higher than teachers in villages,” and “private school teachers are more critical towards their preparation for the job” than teachers who work in public schools (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 142).

Interestingly, teachers of ethics, who completed studies related to philosophy or ethics, i.e. those who are the most predestined to teaching the subject, evaluate their qualifications for teaching ethics “with much distance.” Only 47% of them believe they are well-prepared for teaching ethics, out of which only 11% evaluated their preparation

as very good, 15%—good, and 22%—quite good. In turn, teachers of languages, “who acquired qualifications to teach ethics through the participation in various courses,” evaluate their preparation for the job surprisingly high (67% positive assessments).² It is similar with religious education teachers (64% positive assessments) and teachers of other humanist and social subjects (60% positive assessments), with the exception of history teachers with qualifications for teaching ethics, who were the most critical of themselves, although they were still less critical than teachers who finished philosophical or ethical studies (49% positive assessments) (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 144–145).

It is noteworthy that as many as 80% of the “teachers with the lowest level of education” (with the bachelor’s degree) believe that they are very well prepared for teaching ethics. In case of teachers with higher qualifications, especially those with the doctor’s degree, there is a stronger criticism on this issue, which is why only 47% positively evaluate their preparation for the job (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 144, 151).

Except for the history teachers, the degree of other teachers’ being satisfied with the qualifications for teaching ethics at school turns out to be proportional to their approach to the need for introducing changes in the way of educating people who do such a job. Such changes are the most expected by the teachers of ethics who completed philosophical or ethical studies (40%), and the least expected by the teachers of ethics after philological studies (teachers of Polish—27%; teachers of foreign languages—19%), pedagogical studies (23%), and historical studies (22%). Among the teachers who do not really support the implementation of changes into the way of educating teachers of ethics, the largest group are theologians. In the group of teachers who completed theological studies, only 17% support the systemic reorganization of educating ethics teachers, 32% are against it, and 51% have no opinion on this (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 151).

2 Teachers of Polish who obtained the qualifications for teaching ethics are less optimistic; 52% of them say their preparation for the job is on a satisfactory level (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 144).

In the Act of 14 December 2016—Education Law (Journal of Laws 2017, item 59), in the version of 18 May 2021 (Journal of Laws 2021, as amended 1082), there is a statement that “respecting the Christian system of values, teaching and education is based on the universal principles of ethics.” Unfortunately, the statement multiplies the common and symptomatic misunderstanding and tangles itself into logical contradictions.

First, no system of values can be *a priori* based on the principles expressing any obligations as, due to the classical statement of Henryk Elzenberg, obligations are implied not by the principles but by the values that justify the principles (Elzenberg 2002b: 81–85, 88, 90). In this sense, the principles are of secondary importance, as they are derived from the values upon which they are founded.

Second, from the context we can (implicitly) deduct that the author of the statement mistakes the system of values (axiology) for the system of moral values, norms and assessments, i.e. ethics. Moreover, the author narrows the concept of axiology (reduced to the notion of ethics) to confessional axiology, and, more precisely, to Christian axiology.

Third, there is nothing like the “universal principles of ethics.” Ethics, as a specific and coherent system of values, norms and moral evaluations, is of a particular nature. The term “universal ethics” is an ambition-related relic of the past; an objectless oxymoron, an academic abstraction (Grenz 1997: 21–22; Hołowska 2010: 50–51, 57–59). It is true that ethics may attempt to be universal, but only in the sense given to it by Immanuel Kant, i.e. as an *a priori* formal system (Finnis 1983: 74; MacIntyre 1996: 472). Only in this sense we can speak, for example, about the universal use of the ethical principle of justice. However, when we are to formulate detailed solutions, which include filling that general principle with specific, life-related content, the potential universal nature of ethics disappears, yielding to context-based specification. Ethical systems, which are particular in their nature, submit universal postulates and directives, imperceptibly acquiring or purposefully not mentioning their own impassable particularity (MacIntyre 1978: 107–108, 167; 1984: 498–500; 1996: 470; 2007: 247; 2010: 64–65; Zdrenka 2003: 12, 25, 44, 115, 129, 133, 159, 163–164, 168; Gałeczki 2020: 60, 112, 425–426, 470, 559, 561–562, 563, 564, 566–567, 570). In this context, we can quote the

words of one of the most outstanding contemporary ethicists, Alasdair MacIntyre who, in the dissertation: *Whose Justice? What Rationality?* unequivocally states that “there is no place for referring to practical-rationality-as-such, or to justice-as-such, for which all rational people, due to the rationality itself, would have to argue. There is only a practical-rationality-of-this-or-that-tradition, and justice-of-this-or-that-tradition” (MacIntyre 2007: 467; see also MacIntyre 1983: 454; 1987: 10–11).

Forth, equally problematic, as previously indicated, is the statement that teaching and upbringing in Poland is based on the “universal principles of ethics,” respecting, however, the “Christian system of values.” The problem is that, apart from what was proved above in the first and second points, the assumed universality of ethical principles cannot be limited to a particular—in this case Christian (Cackowski 1993; Woleński 1993)—axiology, regardless of its arbitrary claims to universality and absoluteness.

Regulation of the Minister of Education of 14 February 2017 on the preschool education curriculum and primary school curriculum, including the curriculum for students with moderate or significant mental disability, as well as the curriculum used in first-level vocational schools, in special schools preparing students for employment, and in postsecondary schools (Journal of Laws 2017, item 356 as amended) provides a few more details concerning the issue, although it does not specify the place of ethics in the education system. Instead, the regulation mentions ethics as one of the subjects of school education. We can say that this is an attempt, based on professional scientific knowledge, to formulate the educational objectives, teaching content and conditions and ways of implementing the curriculum for ethical education.

As we can see from the above, the location of ethics as a school subject in the Polish legal system is very weak, and it is such location that determines the institutional “ordopraxy”³, i.e. the order of

3 I made this term by combining the Latin noun *ordo*—“established order,” and the old Greek *πράξις*—“action,” through the analogy to the term “orthopraxy” introduced into the post-conciliar Roman Catholic theology by Johann Baptist Metz as a diptych completion of the term “orthodoxy” (Haker 2001: 59–60; Klinger 2001; Czekalski 2013: 224–225, 227; Feliga 2014:

functioning and perception, and axiometry (hierarchical measure of values) in the social system.

In defence of the dignity of ethics: Mackinder's parallel

This reminds me of *mutatis mutandis*, a case described in 1913 in the magazine *The Geographical Teacher* by a great British geographer and one of the creators of geopolitics, Halford John Mackinder. It does not refer to ethics, but to other school subjects (geography and history), and to the British system of education, but it is also related to the issue which seems to be very important in the context of the problem of a provisional status of ethics in the Polish education system.

Although geography and history differ from each other in terms of subject and methodology, Mackinder postulates—albeit only in primary school teaching—to merge them into a combined subject called “geography and history” (Mackinder 1913: 4, 5). In contrast, with regard to university teaching, in teachers’ colleges and in secondary schools, especially in the older grades, Mackinder supports the separateness of geography and history (Mackinder 1913: 5). However, in both teaching formulas, he demands that geography synthesised with history (Potocki 2009: 5) be taught by an educator “who has studied both geography and history, and has studied them separately” (Mackinder 1913: 5).

Mackinder further argues that the perceived privileging of history in the British education system, justified by its “greater and more established dignity” (Mackinder 1913: 4), fails to match its character as a “literary subject” as compared to geography as a “scientific subject” (Mackinder 1913: 5). However, this did not prevent the founders of the British educational order in the early 20th century from treating geography as a mere illustration and an auxiliary element for teaching history (Mackinder 1913: 4–5), which stripped geography of its due dignity and autonomy as a school subject that is equally important to history. As a geographer, therefore, Mackinder made it a point of honour to defend the dignity of geography, while

174, 205, 207–213, 271; Królikowski 2018: 83; Pokrywiński 2022: 17, 145, 204–205, 207).

at the same time showing a willingness to recognise the dignity of history (Mackinder 1913: 5), thus putting an end to the systemic antagonising of the two subjects, which reduces the dignity of the former. In addition to giving geography autonomy and equal status with history, the dignity of geography is to be reinforced by the fact that it should only be taught by teachers with proper specialization (Mackinder 1913: 5).

My reference to Mackinder is merely illustrative and serves as a parallel to illustrate the positioning of religious education and ethics in the Polish education system and the position they actually occupy within it. Religious education can be compared to Mackinder's history, with its "greater and more established dignity," while ethics can be compared to educationally pauperized geography. After three decades from the return of religious education to schools, with the parallel introduction of ethics into them, and over a century after Mackinder's memorable and landmark text, the time has come to (apart from settlements and summaries appropriate to such circumstances) repeat his appeal. This time, however, such appeal should include the demand to restore the systemically, educationally and socially defiled dignity of ethics, but without attacking religious education or joining the critics who antagonise the two subjects and pit them one against the other.

Pivotal nature of ethics

The intentions of my text are clear: while recognising the dignity and autonomy of religion, I would like to defend the dignity and autonomy of ethics. I am against categorising these subjects as symmetrical, antagonistic, equivalent or substitutive respectively, for they are—just like other school subjects—fully autonomous. This is evidenced by the history, nature, aims and functions assigned to ethics and religion separately. My research objective is not merely to rehabilitate ethics and convince others that it should be equal to religion, but to show—with reference to the theses of Mackinder outlined above and the conclusion drawn from them—that, as geography is for history, ethics is for religion a fundamental discipline and not just an illustration or an ancillary element. Just as Mackinder draws our attention to the "geographical axis of history," highlighting the

determining influence of the geographical factor on the course of the universal history (Mackinder 2009: 17), I, too—with all the obvious differences—submit for discussion the thesis of the essentially pivotal character of ethics both in relation to religion and to the whole corpus of school subjects raising or referring to moral issues, as I signalled earlier.

Geography and history should definitely be brought closer together in order to explicate the influences and dependencies of social moral systems and scientific ethical theories on the geographical factor and vice versa. The parallel of the statuses of geography and ethics is surprising in view of their apparent differences, and it finds interesting continuations in more recent works by domestic authors. In 2012, in the *Geographical Review*, Andrzej Lisowski published an important article: “The Place of Social and Economic Geography in Geography and Education System” (Lisowski 2012). Everything he wrote on the historical and current complications related to the location and importance of geography in the system of education can be referred to ethics (and he was not the only author who discussed this in various publications) (Lisowski 2004; Liszewski 2004; Maik 2004, 2016: 28–30; Wójcik, Suliborski 2021: 10).

I share Lisowski’s concerns, expressed on behalf of the environment of Polish geographers, about the major threats to which geography is exposed (Lisowski 2012: 172), readdressing them, of course, to ethics. They turn out to be surprisingly congruent, although it is possible that they involve a much wider range of disciplines.

One of the most serious concerns of ethics is taking over the issues traditionally belonging to it by other disciplines, collectively referred to by Józef Pieter as “the sciences of moral phenomena” (Pieter 1967: 141).

Such sciences include: (1) psychology (Rest 1982; Flanagan 1993; Banyard, Flanagan 2006; Bloom 2015, 2017; Neill 2016; Colacicchi 2021; Vargas, Doris 2022), which is transformed into the psychology of ethics, like in the ideas of Erich Fromm (Fromm 1999), as well as ethically-oriented humanistic/existential psychology (Szasz 1967, 2001; Rogers, Stevens 1971; Maslow 1986; May 1989; Żylicz 1995); (2) psychology of morality (Ossowska 2002), due to the characteristic of which, provided by Piotr Olaf Żylicz, we obtain a full view on self-identification and approach of this discipline to ethics: “Ethics,

for moral psychology, is [...] like an elder brother in the faith. It is indispensable because it provides key categories and many universally valid reflections and judgments, while, at the same time, it is either negated or ignored by it. Psychology of morality, in its search for identity, wants to be independent and, at the same time, it wants to be perceived as an empirical science, which ethics, by definition, is not” (Żylicz 2010: 26–27). This discipline that aspires for scientific independence as compared to ethics, is complemented by (3) so-called social psychology of morality, forced by scientists such as Philip Zimbardo (Zimbardo 2008), who uses it as the foundation for the development of the psychology of evil (Zimbardo 2004), as well as by Jonathan Haidt (Haidt 2007, 2014), Elliot Aronson and Carol Tavris (Aronson, Tavris 2008), Steven Pinker (Pinker 2005, 2015), Joseph P. Forgas, Lee Jussim, and Paul Alphons Maria van Lange (Forgas, Jussim, van Lange 2016).

The range of ethical science appropriated by psychology also includes the “new ethics” created in 1949, inspired by the depth psychology by Carl Gustav Jung, and opposed to the “old” ethics. The author and promoter of the new ethics was Jung’s student, Erich Neumann (Neumann 1969).

The psychologization of ethics increasing at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries (Lubomirski 1989; Olech 2001; Rabiński 2004: 26; Krajewski 2010: 428) was also expressed in the psychoanalytic trend which was developing fast at that time, and which finally took the form of the “ethics of psychoanalysis,” in accordance with the term given to it by Jacques Lacan (Lacan 1992). Important contribution to the ethics of psychoanalysis was made by Lawrence Friedman (Friedman 1956), Thomas Stephen Szasz (Szasz 1974), Ernest Wallwork (Wallwork 1991), Don S. Browning (Browning 1997), and the above-mentioned Jacques Lacan (Lacan 1992).

The conquest of ethics by psychology also took place in the section of so-called “positive psychology,” understood directly as the science of happiness, well-being and human virtues (Seligman, Csikszentmihalyi 2000; Seligman 2002; Carr 2004; Czapiński 2004; Martin 2007; Compton, Hoffman 2020), and the psychology of emotions in the trend of emotionalism (Prinz 2007: 13–49), functioning in Poland under the unfortunate (in my opinion, too narrow

and value-laden) name of “emocjonalizm” (“emotionalism”) (Krajewski 2010). Emotionalism distinguishes an independent class of emotions, classifying them as moral emotions (Weiner 2012; Klebaniuk 2018).

The tendencies in question were very aptly, vividly and insightfully described by the American ethicist Mike W. Martin in his book: *From Morality to Mental Health*, published in 2006. In the preface to this work, we can find an extremely important remark concerning the therapeutic trend in ethics as a tendency to “approach moral issues in the categories of mental health, e.g. through pathologization of vices (alcoholism as a disease), psychologization of virtues (self-respect as self-esteem), and liberalization of attitudes (sex as good, guilt as suspect) [emphasis—P.D.]. This tendency developed throughout the whole 20th century, although its roots go back to Plato and the Stoics. At worst, it is a confused and dangerous attempt to replace morality with therapy. At its best, this tendency integrates moral and therapeutic understandings, bringing creative solutions to problems that could not have been solved in a different way” (Martin 2006: VII; translated by P.D.).

Apart from psychology, Pieter’s sciences of moral phenomena, which are more and more efficiently depriving ethics of its scientific heritage, include:

- pedagogy: within its frame, the annexation of the ethical domain mainly occurs in the area of the so-called ethical pedagogy (Kansanen 2003; Gregory 2013: 73–94), which is interchangeably named moral pedagogy (Huff, Frey 2005; Nowicka 2010);
- political science making its own, much more modest claims on ethics than other sciences (Ossowski 2008; Bevir, Blakely 2017);
- cognitive science: it changes the name of ethics into neuroethics (Churchland 2013), positive neuroscience (Greene, Morrison, Seligman 2016), or the ethics of empathy (Baron-Cohen 2014; Keysers 2017: 285–325);
- sociology, with particular reference to sociological ethics, derived from the sociological school of Émile Durkheim and more commonly encountered under the name of ethical sociology (Mariński 2006a: 16), whereas Durkheim still used

the anachronistic term “physics of morality”—*physique des mœurs* (Durkheim 1950). This inspiration gave rise to a discipline separate from ethics, which has come to be known as the sociology of morality (Ossowska 1963, 1983: 539; Piwowarski 1966, 1970; Mariański 2006a, 2006b, 2020; Abend 2008; Hitlin, Vaisey 2010; Tarczynski 2015);

- theology, like psychology, has elaborate conceptual and research tools which are focused on ethical issues. The expansiveness and efficiency of theology in this area has contributed to the emergence of several of its sub-disciplines, resulting in terminological and methodological confusion. Such confusion mainly concerns the sensitive issue expressed in the question of the relationship between moral theology and ethics. Is (to use Helmut Juros’ old, but still attractive and adequate distinction) moral theology subject to the process of ethicizing, which ultimately reduces it to theological ethics (specifically Christian ethics or, more precisely, Roman Catholic ethics), which is closer to philosophy than to the theological matrix; or does moral theology in fact completely subordinate ethics to itself, subjecting it to the process of theologization? (Juros 1980: 160–164, 169, 177, 183, 204, 220, 230, 234, 237) It will not be surprising for anyone if I mention that, during the Second Vatican Council and afterwards, the second tendency officially won in the Catholic Church (Wojtyła 1967; Inlender 1968; Styczeń 1967, 1998; Dura 1998: 175–177; Giertych 2004; Ślipko 2009: 19–25).

The existence of moral theology alongside, or preferably instead of, ethics by no means—as in the other cases discussed here—consolidates the position of ethics or enriches it, but seeks to marginalise and weaken it, not even hiding its dislike of ethics or its Besserwisser’s sense of superiority over ethics. As I have already mentioned, this approach is especially visible in the works of psychologists of morality with whom only moral theologians may compete in this regard. Here are two illustrative examples. The first one comes from the scientific article entitled “Zur moraltheologischen Methodenlehre heute” [The Methodology of Moral Theology Today] by Gustav Peter Ermecke, a German moral theologian perceived as an important representative of late neo-scholasticism in the period after the Second Vatican

Council. In a very direct manner, Ermecke writes that moral theology cannot be understood as “a bastard of Stoic ethics and the Code of Canon Law code” (Ermecke 1966: 75). The use of the word “bastard” with reference to moral theology that is rooted in Stoic ethics reflects the nature of the discussed problem in a sufficiently clear manner.

In his *Introduction to Moral Theology*, another contemporary German moral theologian, Klaus Demmer, makes the following statement that is very popular among Christian theologians: “the best elements of pagan philosophy have been taken over by Christianity in which they have been critically and selectively purified, transformed and elevated” (Demmer 1996: 13). Since ethics is a science that is philosophical *par excellence*, both in terms of its origins (Diongenes Laertios 2006: v. 18, 16–17) and in terms of its problems, argumentative techniques and methods of justifying its claims, the above-mentioned comment implies that ethics taken over by Christianity underwent “critical and selective purification, transformation and elevation,” ultimately taking the form of moral theology. It seems that this case, too, is sufficiently illustrative not to require any further explanations.

The *status quo* in question produced a reductionist combination of ethics with theology, and of morality with religion, which still persists today, not only in some scientific circles (especially among theologians), but more broadly in the entire social and state system. As a result, the stereotype of the Polish Catholic has become established in the Polish society. It is interpreted in various ways, especially in terms of its assessment in the context of the pursuit of a civil society and a republican state system with legally sanctioned separation of the Church and the state, freedom of belief, speech and religion, as well as in relation to the doctrine of ideological neutrality, political correctness, multiculturalism and tolerance standardised in the societies and countries belonging to the collective West. One often encounters the view that a religious person, only by virtue of his or her membership in a religious institution, is morally superior to people with other belief systems, in particular to non-believers.

Ethical *ersatz*

I am sorry to admit that the above-mentioned legal decisions, regulating the presence of religious education and ethics in Polish schools, on the one hand, reinforce the hegemony, arbitrariness and monopolisation of ethics by religious associations and doctrines directly in the educational system and indirectly in the society, and, on the other hand, they make ethics an exotic appendix to religion, its equivalent, or—which is the most controversial and debatable of all—its weak surrogate, a defective substitute, a cheap imitation of religion, a second-class product, or a subject (for people) of an inferior quality.

I could give countless examples of the situation outlined. I will only mention a seemingly minor detail, but one that is nevertheless highly significant. School catechesis commonly, repeatedly and openly goes beyond the framework of knowledge transfer proper to school subjects. It is possible that the widespread nature of this practice entails common and sustained social acceptance that evokes no reflection. One may have the impression that the formative function (respective mentoring/moralistic function)—in the sense similar to that given to the term by Luigi Pareyson (Pareyson 2009: 25–31, 326)—generally dominates the educational (informational-cognitive) function in religious education, while religious education itself becomes, at best, an extended arm of the socialising and controlling influence of the religious institutions supervising the school catechesis. Institutional support, close symbiosis and mutual leveraging between educational and religious organisations contribute to the legitimisation and reinforcement of practices such as, for example, obliging primary school pupils to attend school catechesis within the preparation for the reception of their First Communion outside the school. The same is true of secondary school students preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation in their home parish churches. The students are often required to participate in religious education on a compulsory basis despite their formally optional nature. I know from my personal experience that, many times, such situation caused distress to students who attended or wished to attend ethics lessons, but, because of the necessity to attend religious education lessons, had to resign from or postpone their participation in ethics lessons.

Let me remind you that the removal of the research material that historically belonged to ethics, including the terminology developed by this science, took place gradually, starting from the first transfers of ethical aspects into Christian theology, which took place in the second century AD (Pietras 2007: 17–18; Myszor 2010: 145; McGrath 2013: 2), when such theology was being shaped. In this sense, the phenomenon I have described is neither new nor particularly surprising. It is, however, a poor consolation for ethics, taking into account the fact of the constantly increasing dispersion of its terminology and issues. In my text I have mainly focused on the theoretical side of this phenomenon. An invaluable collection of information that highlights its practical aspect can be found in the above-mentioned book by Joanna Madalińska-Michalak, Antoni J. Jeżowski and Szymon Więśław: *Etyka w systemie edukacji w Polsce* [*Ethics in the Polish System of Education*]. Unfortunately, it is not very optimistic. On the contrary, it seems to be a drop that overfills the bowl in the context of the legal location and practical organisation of teaching ethics in the Polish education system, which, in all other aspects, still leaves a lot to be desired.

The reform announced by the Ministry of Education and Science at the beginning of 2022 is to make ethics a compulsory subject to be taught during two lessons per week (with the exception of grades 1–3 of primary school and preschools), starting successively from 1 September 2023 and ending on 1 September 2027. The question as to whether the situation of ethics will be improved due to such a reform remains open. I am, however, already concerned about the fact that the announced legislative and organisational changes⁴ want to continue what constitutes the original sin of educational legislation in Poland, i.e. the perception of ethics and religious education

4 The announced changes are to include the following education laws: Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 3 April 2019 on the curriculum for public schools (Journal of Laws 2019, as amended 639); Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 28 May 2020 on the conditions and way of organizing religious education lessons in public preschools and schools (Journal of Laws 2020, item 983); Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 11 September 2002 concerning assessing, classifying and promoting students in public schools (Journal of Laws 2002, No. 155, item 1289) (Rzymkowski 2022).

as alternatives (“alternativization” of them)⁵, which is unfavourable and counter-productive to both of them, as it places them in opposition to each other (Madalińska-Michalak, Jeżowski, Więśław 2017: 35–39). It is because, according to such changes, ethics is to become a compulsory subject, but only in one case: if a student does not participate in religious education classes (Rzymkowski 2022: 2).

The postponed deadline for the introduction of changes in teaching ethics is explained by the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Education and Science, Tomasz Rzymkowski, by the necessity to provide appropriate teaching staff (Rzymkowski 2022: 3). For this reason, the Minister of Education and Science, Przemysław Czarnek, pursuant to Article 464 (1) of the Act of 20 July 2018: Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws 2020, item 85) commissioned seven higher education institutions in Poland to carry out postgraduate studies in ethics for teachers (Rzymkowski 2022: 3). The selection of the institutions that received such a commission resulted in numerous controversies, which were discussed in the public debate. With two exceptions (the University of Szczecin and the University of Wrocław), the list of institutions selected by the Ministry of Education and Science included only Roman Catholic universities: Jesuit University Ignatianum in Kraków, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, the Academy of Social and Media Culture in Toruń and the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków.

The critics of the ministerial idea did not mean to undermine the scientific quality of the Church’s universities. The only problem is that ethics has again become the subject of administrative-environmental games, falling prey to religious institutions, whose possessive attitude to ethics has already been outlined in this article. It should not be forgotten, however, that postgraduate courses in ethics, conferring teaching qualifications, had already been carried out by state universities with renowned ethics centres, such as the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin⁶ or the Nicolaus Copernicus

5 The term “alternativization” in the scientific discourse is used, inter alia, by literary scholar Natalia Lemann, PhD with habilitation, Professor of the University of Łódź (Lemann 2019: 108, 184, 267, 370, 394).

6 See: <https://www.umcs.pl/pl/wyszukiwarka-studiow,118,etyka,10451.htm?token=5b78032ef5cdd7ff2f97eba52e0f686e> [access: 12.04.2022.].

University in Toruń.⁷ Also, on 1 March 2022, the Pedagogical University of Kraków, named after the Commission of National Education, opened three-semester postgraduate studies: “Ethics for teachers.”⁸ Such studies, in the e-learning form, named: “Teaching ethics and philosophy,” are also offered by the Wrocław Higher Vocational School.⁹

One of the most eminent Polish axiologists, ethicists and philosophers of culture, Henryk Elzenberg, co-founder of the Toruń school of axiology and ethics, wrote an intimate journal which was originally published in Kraków in 1963 by the Znak Publishing House. The diary was being written over several decades, and it was entitled *The Problem with Existence*. In the diary, the author included a simple yet extremely adequate thought, according to which “Ethics is a science concerning being brave towards existence” (Elzenberg 2002a: note dated 23.08.1922.). The idea of ethics as a fight is understandable and noble, but the question is: what is the fight about? Is it, as it should be, a fight for the repair of morality, or do we first have to fight for its very legitimisation in the educational space of the Polish school?

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7 See: https://etyka.umk.pl/pages/main_page/ [access: 12.04.2022].

8 See: <https://ifis.up.krakow.pl/2022/01/14/etyka-dla-nauczycieli-nowe-studia-podyplomowe/>, <https://studiapodyplomowe.up.krakow.pl/direction/etyka-dla-nauczycieli/> [access: 12.04.2022.].

9 See: https://studia-pedagogiczne.pl/kursy/128/studia/podyplomowe/nauczanie-etyki-i-filozofii-w-szkolach-podstawowych-i-ponadpodstawowych?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIy9GjtNe_-QIVA7ayCh2cBAEBEAAAYASAAE-gI6A_D_BwE [access: 12.04.2022.].

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Piotr Domeracki
 Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń
 Institute of Philosophy
 e-mail: domp@umk.pl

Katarzyna Szymczyk
ORCID: 0000-0001-6768-7319
Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce

Ethics and Pedagogy: The Pedagogical Thought of Jacek Woroniecki in Relation to Contemporary Education

ABSTRACT

The article addresses the pedagogical achievements of Jacek Woroniecki. Reference is made to his works, in which he made ethics and the moral aspect the basic manifestation of educational activity. Guided by a concern for the proper moral level of people in all manifestations of their lives, Woroniecki created a body of work and thinking from which we can draw, regardless of the current conditions. The reflections resulting from them, prompting the reader to build morally good relationships between educators and pupil, make the subjectivity of a human being the basic paradigm of education, which is so important and inalienable in today's reality as well.

The subject of this article is therefore the topicality of Woroniecki's views in relation to the contemporary space of educational influence. It points to the very important aspect of the integrity of ethics and pedagogy, which the thinker raises to constitute a pillar of his pedagogy, or more precisely, of aretology, a synthesis of the humanism of Greek *paideia* and Christian pedagogy. A separate section is devoted to epistemological references to the idea of *paedagogia perennis*, pointing to the cognitive inseparability of philosophy and pedagogy and—in relation to pedagogical practice—of upbringing

KEYWORDS

pedagogy, education, virtue ethics, virtue theory, moral education, Jacek Woroniecki

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and education. Taking into consideration the need for contemporary educators to constantly search for new educational paths, to take sometimes difficult directions in their professional practice, Woroniecki's classic thought in the world of relativized values may turn out to be "the path leading man to moral maturity." Woroniecki's achievements in this respect definitely have a great, timeless pedagogical value.

Introduction

The essence of pedagogy is
to teach the student how to "want"—how to properly want.
(Woroniecki 1961a: 196)

Searching for the idea of *paedagogiae perennis* in the contemporary model of education, which is the objective of this article, is to encourage the readers to receive the thought of Jacek Woroniecki, one of the classics of Polish pedagogical ethics, irrespective of the historical context of his works. The following considerations constitute an attempt to present the universal nature of the Dominican priest's theory due to its educational meaning. The cognitive realism emerging from Woroniecki's thought, which makes the pedagogy of virtues the foundation of teaching and upbringing, may encourage the readers to reflect on the current educational reality.

At present, due to the transformation of social life, the scientific and technological progress, as well as consequences of those processes in a human being's work and environment, the necessity for changes in education is often discussed, as schools are to prepare a young person for functioning in the world full of new civilization challenges. Such reflections have, for example, been included in educational strategies of contemporary international educational reports (Klim-Klimaszewska 2011; Komisja Europejska 1997). Searching for solutions results in the adoption of the methodology called "*rezolutyka*" [*resolutique*] (Botkin, Elmandjra, Mazlitza 1982) as the only effective strategy of solving contemporary problems. The process of education and upbringing can no longer boil down to providing students with knowledge. It should also provide them with a holistic view of the world. Some pedagogues postulate the idea of involvement into Christian humanism based on human solidarity, as well as

affirmation of family, group and territorial identity. The foundation of these aims is the call for valorizing the ethical and cultural aspect of education. Also, in 2019, pope Francis suggested that the educational curriculum should be filled with the idea and rhetoric of new humanism (Ojciec Święty Franciszek 2020). In the opinion of the pope, the contemporary world needs education that makes it possible to provide the space for the “culture of a meeting” characterized by open and true relationships among people. Education perceived in this way is to be based on four pillars: “study to know, to act, to live together, and, first and foremost, to be” (Delors 1998). Thus, the holistic approach to education is to be focused on a person’s development, on their “flourishing of *be*,” in the whole richness of their personality and in various forms of expression and involvement in building the individual identity. Such education is to give life individual meaning and functioning in the subjective standard (Klim-Klimaszewska 2011: 9).

As the basic assumption of personalistic pedagogy, subjectivity in education is expressed in a free response to truth, in love and in supporting the student in the development of his/her personality (Chudy 2007: 27). Also, freedom in education is independence, deciding about oneself and responsibility for one’s own development, including education. Such self-education is an inseparable determinant of subjective education, becoming its synonym. A similar interpretation of self-education was already made in the first half of the 20th century by Jacek (Adam) Woroniecki (1878–1949) who said that “education is, in fact, self-education” (Woroniecki 1961c: 24).

The universal nature of Woroniecki’s ideas with reference to contemporary educational and upbringing reality makes his pedagogy valid in each time. Thus, within the last few years, his pedagogical texts have become of great cognitive and research interest to many people interested in the topic. Woroniecki’s works are republished¹, and new texts on his educational ideas are written. Particularly

1 In particular, it is worth mentioning the new, three-volume edition of Woroniecki’s fundamental work: *Katolicka etyka wychowawcza* [*Catholic Educational Ethics*] (Fundacja Servire Veritati Instytut Edukacji Narodowej, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2014; earlier edition in 2013). The full list of Woroniecki’s publications can be found in: Mazur, Kiereś, Skrzyniarz, Płazińska 2019; Bareła 1959; Filipiak 2000: 277–297; Majewska 2006: 157–174.

valuable are those focused on aretological pedagogy in which the author gave virtues an educational meaning (Krasnodębski 2009b: 29–30; Boużyk 2015: 221–240). Thus, it is worth reaching for their inspiration for didactic or educational work and reading them anew (Krasnodębski 2009a: 127). The fact that the teachings proclaimed almost a hundred years ago are still valid today can be confirmed by the words of Mieczysław Albert Krąpiec: “Woroniecki’s work presents the everlasting truth about a human being, their lives and related moral problems” (Krąpiec 2000: VIII).

Ethics and pedagogy

Woroniecki’s pedagogy is based on existential and epistemic realism, and it proclaims the necessity for integral and universal education and upbringing of a human being. That is why, in his opinion, pedagogy cannot be separated from philosophical anthropology and ethics which outline the image of who a person is and what moral good is, and thus determine the objective of pedagogy. This determines the complexity and multithreaded nature of our existence, but it also shapes modern pedagogical dilemmas. Therefore, if we are to become the continuators of Woroniecki’s thought, “we must discover the complexity of the space in which a person is being upgraded,” as Wanda Kamińska says (Kamińska 2001: 138). This will be possible due to the knowledge of other sciences, i.e. contemporary philosophical anthropology, ethics, sociology, cultural studies or psychology. Such knowledge makes pedagogy an interdisciplinary science. Woroniecki talked about this many times, proving that despite the separateness of pedagogy as a science, its full discovery may only occur if we use ethical and psychological reflection. “It is those spheres of intellectual reflection, so complex and consistent in their searches, that formulate today’s widely understood *status quo* of pedagogy” (Kamińska 2001: 138). This confirms the awareness of the signs of the time and reflection on trends maintained in culture and philosophy, and, in consequence, also in science and social life. Woroniecki also had this knowledge while formulating his pedagogical thought. This awareness led him to suggest the common building of the *paedagogiae perennis* idea, and this is what we should try to implement as modern educators.

Contemporary education also searches for many new paths. According to Elżbieta Wolicka, “pluralism typical of the modern landscape of knowledge is not an obstacle in aiming at the idea of common philosophizing” (Wolicka 1997: 118–119), What is more, such multitude may result in the right conclusions that may lead us to the area of *philosophiae perennis*, and then—*paedagogiae perennis*” (Kamińska 2001: 143).

It is characteristic that the pedagogy of Woroniecki has the features of “practical ethics,” i.e. a part of philosophy the task of which is to recreate a human being from within (Woroniecki 2013: 329). Woroniecki evaluates ethics in the context of its educational usefulness. In his opinion,

education is one of important aspects of ethics and determinants of its value; ethics is only good and true [...] if it not only teaches about good and bad acts, but also about attitudes towards them, and about virtues and vices; about how to attain virtues and how to avoid and become free from vices (Woroniecki 2013: 329).

Woroniecki’s reflections on ethics are built around the moral subject, and they are not focused on the correctness of applying abstract principles, which makes his considerations compliant with those of modern ethicists who refer to virtue as the basic moral category. Woroniecki’s ethics is centered around a human being, and not around a collection of norms and laws. The same attitude is shown by contemporary supporters of virtue ethics who are against formulating universal moral principles as the basic criteria of moral valuation. They assume that moral subjects and decisions or situation choices are so individual and complex that they cannot be subject to the same rules (MacIntyre 1996). In this regard, the only determinants respected by the ethicists of virtues are so-called principles of virtue (e.g. the principle of being honest, loyal, fair) which are not so universal and abstract as those suggested by the ethicists of principles (Szutta 2013).

Since Woroniecki placed a person in the center of his attention, in his ethics he approached the contemporary paradigm of pedagogy, i.e. paedocentrism. At the same time, he pointed to the interdependency of those sciences. In his approach, without axiology there is no auxology in upbringing and education. He suggested returning to the interpretation of these sciences as identical, as in pedagogical

activity such perception seems to be a necessary warrant and basis of aiming at the holistic search for a person's educational structure.² Woroniecki emphasized this directly at the beginning of *Katolicka etyka wychowawcza*:

Giving my work [...] the title: *Katolicka etyka wychowawcza*, I wanted to strongly emphasize what constitutes its main thought, i.e. the inseparable connection between ethics and pedagogy that exists in the Catholic doctrine. Pedagogy, as a separate science with its own inner unity, does not exist; it is—in terms of education—one of the main constituents of ethics, and for a moralist there is nothing more important than bearing in mind this organic connection that is between them (Woroniecki 2013: 7).

What Woroniecki finds important is that in the connection between those two sciences the content is important, and not only the form. At the moment, theoreticians of education who deal with the relationship between pedagogy and ethics, usually emphasize their close connection (e.g.: Ablewicz 2003; Brighouse 2009; Cichoń 1996; Homplewicz 1996; Leś 2017; Morszczyńska 2009; Ostrowska 2006). According to these authors, pedagogy is an axiological-normative science which, in the descriptive and explanatory layer, deals with educational facts, but in normative categories, i.e. in what these facts should be like: “it is not a science *sensu stricto* (a natural science), but a normative system based on philosophical premises (especially on philosophical anthropology)” (Leś 2017: 32).

Similarly, Woroniecki's pedagogy, which perceives a human being as a central point of educational and upbringing influences, carries out tasks provided by philosophy. In his idea, “*paideia*, which draws on the output of Christian thought and the classical Greek philosophy, combines an individual and the society; creative development and respect for universal norms, into a harmonious whole”

2 In his considerations, Woroniecki pointed to negative consequences of not interpreting ethics and pedagogy as sciences standing together to achieve the common aim, i.e. integral education. Their separation may lead to pseudo-educational influences on a human being's personality. “We have already emphasized that separation of ethics and pedagogy, which started in the 16th century, had bad influence on both them. Now it is time to consider this issue and to discuss, *ex professo*, that component of our moral behaviour that is to provide it with its steadiness and effectiveness, i.e. to work out the general outline of a person's educational structure” (Woroniecki 2013: 329).

(Gałkowski 1998: 118). At the same time, Woroniecki suggests how we should perceive the ideals of education. He describes them as follows: „ideals are signposts, and signposts show how to reach destination” (Woroniecki 2013: 65). Thus, the objective of education is giving the student the strength of will due to which he/she will be able to fulfill the objective aims of his/her life. The essence of pedagogy is to teach the student how to “want”—how to want something in a proper manner (Woroniecki 1961a: 196), i.e. to make his/her will strong enough to choose objective good, i.e. “truth in good.” Therefore, such pedagogy is a science that is practical and oriented at life (Woroniecki 1961c: 11), because, in everyday life a person needs food, but also wisdom, prudence, moderation, justice, and patience. For Woroniecki, education also has a religious dimension because a person’s objective includes the supernatural order (Woroniecki 1961b: 108–152; Woroniecki 1930). Woroniecki’s works fall within the scope of Catholic pedagogy which we perceive as a scientific system of teaching and upbringing that is compliant with Christian theology and philosophy, and that is “closely connected with them and formulating its principles from educational experience viewed in their light” (Woroniecki 1961c: 12–13; cf. Albański 2001: 147–148).

Woroniecki’s educational concept assumes integral upbringing and education. He offers that concept to everyone who is subject to these processes. Also, the concept is related to the idea of upbringing teaching because

harmonious [...] cooperation between upbringing and education is absolutely necessary. Here is the weak side of pedagogy of the last centuries in almost all intellectual trends: teaching of the mind was perceived as crucial, and upbringing, with its developmental laws, became less important (Woroniecki 2013: 344–346).

This is pedagogy which emphasizes the importance of building a personal relationship between the teacher and the student. It includes the postulate of personal and social improvement of people within the scope of moral competences.

“Truth in good”—education in the cotemporary world

Integral pedagogy is concerned with a person’s development and moral shaping of his/her will and character (Woroniecki 1961c: 17; Gałkowski 2003: 57–83). That is why, Woroniecki believes that moral development is the basic warrant of a human being’s inner freedom, and the above-mentioned moral competences, closely connected with doing good, are important for the shape of social contacts (Boużyk 2016b: 236). For Woroniecki good was the superior value in building all interpersonal relationships, and it was the foundation of educational influences. The principle of a person of “beautiful good” (gr.—*kalos kagathos*), which the author introduced into the reality of social life in the interwar period, must be transferred by contemporary pedagogues into the reality of modern education and culture. Good perceived in this way makes it possible for us to go beyond the biological dimension of human existence, both in individual and social dimension. Such an idea has also been promoted by other thinkers. John Paul II said that “all man’s ‘having’ is important for culture, is a factor creative of culture, only to the extent to which man, through his ‘having,’ can at the same time ‘be’ more fully as a man, become more fully a man in all the dimensions of his existence” (John Paul II 1997: 270). Doing good and being good in the community dimension builds social unity and bonds, creating the intergenerational civilization output irrespective of the time in which we are to exist. Irrespective of the fact that tradition, including educational one, which is being formed in this way, constantly evolves, such tradition is maintained and passed from generation to generation, which makes a person rooted in their community life (Kuraciński 2005: 421). This spiritual dimension of education and upbringing in Woroniecki’s pedagogy is particularly valid nowadays. Zofia Zdybicka also claims that “first of all, spiritual culture, which includes four basic and interconnected areas: cognition (education), morality, art and religion, where cognition plays the fundamental role” (Zdybicka 1995: 76), is one of the key dimensions of individual identity. And any limitations in a person’s self-creation and fulfillment of his/her cognitive abilities and spiritual potentiality, restrict the cultural humanitarianism.

In the present reality of mass culture the form and content of which often alienate a person from the circle of values that belong to classical culture that prefers the ideal of a man, but, at the same time, requires effort, reasonable will and creative involvement in self-fulfillment, people are often led to axiological emptiness and loss of the connection with social reality. Through the visual transfer of contents, which does not require increased intellectual effort and is satisfied with shallow perception, popular culture builds individual consciousness which functions accordingly, i.e. on a low level. Such culture makes individuals isolated and lonely, or even symbolically imprisoned. It makes a man a recipient only, which forces him to passive perception. As a result, creative searches and social interactions are scarce, which makes an individual excluded from the culture-forming process and may eventually lead to cultural reductionism and human gap (Botkin, Elmandjra, Mazlitza 1982). And, irrespective of the fact that each cultural sign “comes from a human being,” “social alienation and enslavement in the artifact of virtual reality makes it impossible to achieve real cultural creativity perceived as transforming one’s own nature in the process of its intellectualization” (Krapiec 1982: 121). This phenomenon is accompanied by eliminating universal and permanent moral foundations, as well as “rationalism void of axiology and religious uncertainty” (Sztompka 1997: 11).

While defining modern society, Maria Bouzyk enumerates its features, such as individualism, as well as richness of worldview differences, professional and educational interests or lifestyles, and so-called social mobility. At the same time, the author emphasizes that “these determinants of modernism need connection with the field of moral values, which is not only confirmed by contemporary pedagogues, but also by ethicists, including ethicists of virtue” (Bouzyk 2016b: 236; see also: Śleziński 2016; Szewczak 2020; Nowak, Magier, Szewczak 2010: 7–15).

It is the same with Woroniecki, who, referring to Thomism in his ethics, acknowledged the existence of objective moral principles, and, in pedagogy, particularly appreciated the role of faith in the internal formation of a human being (Woroniecki 2002). Through faith, one can make an educational effort in order to protect the good of a person, using the suggestions of virtue ethics, i.e. the ethics of character, which is today perceived as one of the most important ethical

theories (Szutta 2013; Boużyk 2016b: 232–234). Especially now, in the modern educational space, which is so closely connected with technological progress that often implies ambivalence of values, this theory must be analyzed by today’s pedagogues. Woroniecki, by giving pedagogical meaning to the theory of virtues and by calling it the pedagogy of virtues, in a way worked out a remedy for the current cognitive and moral relativism, and especially for the decline of the authority of truth (Krasnodębski 2009b: 30, 57). By calling a man’s education an act of improvement through virtues, Woroniecki, at the same time, emphasized that it cannot be a process of ideologization or manipulation, or a form of training that takes the form of pseudo-upbringing (Woroniecki 1947: 28–36, 165–174; see Andrzejuk 2000). His ethics, anthropology and pedagogy are full of the concern for making a person able to rule oneself and people he/she takes care of (Skrzydlewski 2020; Andrzejuk 2000). Thus, education, “that difficult, but interesting work on forming characters [...], should always follow one factor with which other fields of human activity fail to deal with such an intensity, i.e. with the student’s free will” (Woroniecki 1961a: 195–196). That is why, Woroniecki defines will as the power of spiritual desire, and the proper exercising of power over the pupil is the subject of his considerations (Woroniecki 1961d: 59–92). In traditional pedagogy, education of a human being was strictly connected with exercising power over him/her. However, Woroniecki perceives such education as a form of humiliation, injustice and great evil, and when it actually takes place, this is based on a utilitarian compromise or violence, blackmail or dominance. In this case, power is an immoral phenomenon that can even take the form of self-restriction. Woroniecki notices that anthropological individualism would like to change all kinds of power into a spontaneous act of free, causeless expression, in which the first and most precious value is authenticity and involvement, selflessness and autonomy (Skrzydlewski 2020). In a traditional approach, power is in conflict with voluntary achievement of an aim (good) because “it is to take place not only reasonably, but also freely; because the aim must be wanted and loved by the one who does something for it” (Woroniecki 1947: 165–174).

What is more, individualism and egotism, which are so strongly present in pedagogy and culture, and which force a man to do good for himself and his own freedom of action, in the very existence of

power of one person over another see a kind of enslavement or violence (Skrzydlewski 2020: 138–139). Thus, according to Woroniecki, what is necessary in the process of education is the selection of “truth in good” and doing good, which may only take place through mastering the intellect and the will. This requires constant effort to choose what is true and good (Woroniecki 1999: 363).

Aretological pedagogy as a path to moral maturity

In the opinion of Woroniecki, the existence of moral order is a necessary condition for justifying the purposefulness of the process of upbringing and education. “Who disagrees with that superiority [of the moral law], loses any logical bases for judging people and directing them; the whole social order collapses, and even the ability to raise new generation declines” (Woroniecki 2013: 294).

In the modern search for the best educational directions, the need to return to valuations such as Aristotelian ones, is emphasized (Szewczak 2020: 99). In this approach, aretological pedagogy of Woroniecki may be very helpful. In the context of education, this concept defends the absolute nature of good. By referring to the assumptions of such pedagogy, we can improve our knowledge of the moral condition of the contemporary society and recognize the mechanisms of human behaviors in various situations of life. Woroniecki interprets these mechanisms as “enabling powers responsible for desire—both related to senses (emotions) and to the intellect (will)—to act” (Woroniecki 2013: 344–346). He gives those powers a nature of internal abilities to act, calling them virtues. For Woroniecki, a virtue is a morally positive ability. In his works, Woroniecki uses the words “virtue” and “ability” interchangeably, which modern pedagogues find acceptable as these notions are identical from the perspective of moral education (Gałkowski 1998).

The system of virtues adopted by Woroniecki combines cardinal virtues, elaborated by Plato, with theological virtues. It is related to all human powers. Each power is supported by a cardinal virtue that enables that power to act. The superior cardinal virtue, i.e. prudence, which is described as *auriga virtutum*, is perceived by Woroniecki as particularly important in the educational system. Prudence is, “in a way, part of each of the other virtues” (Woroniecki 1923: 235; see:

Polak 2007: 82–90; Szewczak 2020: 103–106) and models the whole behavior of a human being. It makes it possible to maintain the autonomy of the intellect in choosing resources to achieve the proper aim. However, the complexity of prudence is a great challenge for the participants of the educational process. The teacher should focus his/her actions on the intellect and will of the student while shaping the real attitude towards the reality among the youngest ones. Woroniecki called the latter skill perceptiveness (Szewczak 2020: 105). This issue may be analyzed in the context of today’s information society created by the modern mass media. In the world in which the difference between reality and fiction is blurred, perceptiveness understood as the awareness of perceiving and receiving the environment in which a person functions makes it possible for them to make good choices. Thus, abilities require moral and intellectual effort from us. This belief in combining knowledge and action is typical of Woroniecki’s approach (Gałkowski 2000: 83–84; Boużyk 2016a: 359). A good use of power was to result from the will and the intellect. However, in order to be able to regulate one’s own behavior, we cannot neglect moral virtues even for a minute. Woroniecki emphasizes that

without prudence, persistence, moderation and honesty we cannot do anything right, so these features should be active in each moment of our life. Where they are not present, sooner or later vices appear that will exert their destructive influence on the course of moral behavior. Taking into account the internal solidarity which connects all virtues, the lack of one of them [...] exerts destructive influence on other virtues, as each of them is highly dependent on the moral development of the others (Woroniecki 2013: 342–343).

Such unity and inseparability of all virtues, which excludes the development of moral vices, is characteristic of Woroniecki’s ethics and *paideia*, forming the “everlasting theory of education called *paedagogia perennis*” (Krasnodębski 2009b: 31). Thus, the basis for the unity of a man’s virtues is his existential unity (Krapiec 1991: 229). The achievement of this status through the acquisition of abilities by the student results in that he/she attains independence and intellectual-moral autonomy. For Woroniecki, making it possible for the student to decide about themselves in abilities, determines the way of understanding the process of education and upbringing (Woroniecki 2013: 319). For a philosopher, combining those two dimensions

of education on the level of theoretical considerations and practical instructions is necessary in “leading a person towards maturity” (Boużyk 2015: 226). On the path to this stage we need

wisdom, and not only knowledge or erudition concerning a human being and his/her education. Wisdom, which enables us to be open to the person we meet and make personal relationships with him/her. What is needed is the cooperation between the educator and the student, i.e. their mutual relationship (Krasnodębski 2009b: 42).

Within the scope of pedagogical relationships that were built, the intensity of interactions occurring in this process depends on the personality of the teacher (Albański 2001: 150). Among many traits of a teacher Woroniecki enumerates patience, joy, good, and persistence. The latter is usually associated with patience. It makes one undertake difficult tasks and sacrifice to achieve a goal in future. Persistence falls within the category of the virtue of fortitude because it controls anger resulting from one’s failures and defeats. Thus, this is a virtue that includes “long sightedness and the ability to wait, and, as such, it takes the form of a personal relationship of hope that is a relationship of persevering in good” (Woroniecki 1961a: 189–200). For each teacher, the student’s good is a superior value in formulating educational and upbringing objectives irrespective of the time in which they both live.

Summary

Woroniecki wants to educate a person in a holistic manner, towards one goal, i.e. good. He perceives good itself in the Aristotelian manner, i.e. as a personal optimum. Just like in the thought of the ancient thinker, moral maturity, which is the goal of educational efforts, in this case means a living model of a good and wise man. Thus, Woroniecki’s ethics is of empirical nature, contrary to the ethics of Socrates or Plato for whom it is intellectual or, actually, deductive. In the opinion of the Dominican thinker, pedagogy, as part of aretology, should aim at good understood in a realistic manner, i.e. good which is possible to attain. In the pedagogical approach, Woroniecki’s concept of virtues became a signpost; a form of self-improvement; an everlasting theory of education (*paedagogia perennis*). However, in

the contemporary reality, restoration of the proper meaning of good and virtue as normative categories is not an easy task. Woroniecki's "moral order," which is the basis of education and upbringing, seems to be a concept that is a response to the modern crisis of education caused by, i.a. ambivalent perception of the world of values. However, the adoption of such model of education would require changing the function of the contemporary school. Separating education from upbringing and emphasizing the former in the system of education are, according to the Dominican priest, the greatest obstacles in building *paideia*. The virtue pedagogy is volitional, and its task is to arouse the person's desire for conscious being and their "wanting," i.e. aiming at self-education. However, this task is only possible in a school which brings the student up, i.e. a school focused, in the first place, on the integrally perceived good of a human being.

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Katarzyna Szymczyk
 Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce
 Institute of Pedagogy
 e-mail: katarzyna.szymczyk@ujk.edu.pl

Maciej Jemioł
ORCID: 0000-0003-3627-9392
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow

Narrative Structures in Education from an Ethical Perspective

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to reflect on how many ethical problems concerning education relate to the narrative structures that can be found in the education process. These considerations, rooted in the works of Michael Oakeshott, Erik H. Erikson, Richard Pring, and Arthur C. Danto, among others, refer primarily to three kinds of narratives: instrumental, objective, and subjective. Instrumental narratives, which are used by teachers in didactic processes (e.g., fables or anecdotes), are discussed here in the context of the problem of representing marginalized groups in the school system. Objective narratives, about the outside world and its social institutions, are related to the moral rule of Erikson, which is that one should do to another that which will advance the other's growth, even as it advances one's own. Subjective narrations, which teachers as well as learners tell to themselves, are shown here in combination with the need for the moral education of youths. In all of these examples, we see narrative structures as a good formal point of reference for a discussion of the moral problems in education.

KEYWORDS

narrative, narrative structures, education, ethics of education, fables

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Introduction

It seems that, at the very beginning of our considerations, it is easy to yield to the illusion that education and narrative should be treated as areas that belong to two totally different cultural areas. The first one certainly arouses associations with various formal institutions (school, university, etc.), with codification, or even with normativism. It is regulated by the law and managed by a superior as it is ruled by different systems. Even apart from those legalistic associations, in contexts that are much less regulated by modern detailed laws, education still appears as something serious, focused on transferring knowledge, and determined by a rigid dynamics of the roles of a student and teacher. Narrative, in turn, although limited by a similar dynamics of roles (narrator and recipient), is much more elusive, informal and pluralized. It takes very different forms; it is a phenomenon in culture, a process of telling stories, a free product of human activity or creativity. Basing only on these simple, initial observations, we can notice that, due to the lack of a better definition, cultural space that is characteristic of education is “hard” space typical of law, social agreement or regulated human relationships. Narrative, in turn, can be located in “soft” space that escapes classification and leaves us a lot of freedom. This division of culture into the “hard” and “soft” sphere is compliant with the modern intellectual tendency to postulate similar dualisms¹, but it does not mean that it fails to reflect the nature of the thing properly. It does not matter if it actually is so; what is important is the fact that using this metaphor we can clearly see how education and narrative seem separated from each other.

However, some researchers claim that we can find something that exists at the intersection of those two cultural spheres in which we have located those two phenomena. Those researchers believe that there is something that connects education and narrative. They present such an approach to “hard” sphere of education that allows them to consider it from the “soft” perspective of narrative. In the article

1 It seems that conceptualization of phenomena from the social, cultural and other non-physical domains, such as law, science or even facts following the dualism “hard ≠ soft” was made popular in the second half of the 20th century along with the common adoption of the division into *hard and soft skills*. In 1943, Frederic Charles Bartlett (1946: 145), pioneer of cultural psychology, was the first to use it with reference to culture as such.

entitled “Narrative and Education,” F. Michael Connelly and D. Jean Clandinin go beyond the traditional ways of institutional interpretation of education and search for it, as they say, within the “horizons,” i.e. touching experiences of our lives; in our own narratives about ourselves “that were hard to [...] ignore or reduce” (Connelly, Clandinin 1995: 75).² While doing this, they reach for the considerations of the philosophers of education, such as Michael Oakeshott, but also for the writings of experts in psychology, e.g. Erik H. Erikson. Such authors are much focused on a person’s inner life and the way they experience life.³ An approach that is a little more technical and less related to philosophy is presented by other researchers, such as Hunter McEwan or Ivor Goodson who concentrate on the methodological issue of *narrative inquiry* (Fenstermacher 1997: 120). Although their research is focused on the practical application of narrative, it touches the very essence of the problem of the relationship between narrative multifacetedness and our everyday efforts made in the area of education.

It is that perspective of the narrative approach to education, represented by the above-mentioned thinkers and having, as it seems, strong justification in the books they wrote on this topic, that will be applied in this brief text in which I would like to focus on moral problems related to education. Such problems actually exist because, as Richard Pring claimed in a very convincing manner (2001: 101–112), all educational practice involves actions related to moral issues. As such, in various contexts in which it functions, such practice is an interesting subject for ethics, which is why I would like to present several remarks that explore its morality within the space in which it is connected with narrative. There is no doubt that one of the issues taken into account by a researcher analyzing this space is the issue of the truthfulness of the narrative mentioned by authors such as Walter Doyle or Denis Phillips (Fenstermacher 1997: 120). However, since it refers to more complex epistemic issues and it has already

2 Translation of quotations used in this text (unless otherwise stated)—M.J.

3 As emphasized by Terry Nardin (2020) in his text about him, Oakeshott is first of all famous for his writings on political and moral life. Erikson, in turn (1998) paid a lot of attention to the psychoanalytic theory of a man’s psychosocial development, without omitting the issue of the historical nature of human life.

been analyzed in many texts, in this paper we will discuss other, more interesting questions related to contemporary moral dilemmas.

Obviously, ethics and narrative are extremely complex phenomena, so what is necessary from the very beginning is a more precise approach to what is being discussed here. Thus, in this paper ethics will be perceived in a broad, pre-theoretical manner, as a reflection on moral problems, i.e. problems that are connected with the rules of our actions and their evaluation according to different systems of values. A reference to specific ethical systems is not necessary, because the considerations do not include solving problems, but problems as such, as well as their understanding and formulating. In the text, I will particularly quote four exemplary ethical problems related to education which are also much discussed in the books on the subject: representation (Hurley 2005), coherence and authenticity (Danto 1985; Pring 2001), and the origin of moral education (Connelly, Clandinin 1995). While discussing them, education will be treated as a context within which these problems occur and to which they refer, and as a sphere of moral actions, both on the part of a teacher and a student. Since the above-mentioned problems may occur on each stage of formal education, as well as in non-institutional educational situations, we have to take into account the broadest possible scope although, in case of certain problems, we will also make references to specific stages of education in which these problems are particularly clear (e.g. early school didactics or education of adolescents). Finally, the expression “narrative structures” refers to a specific theoretical frame or research perspective within which we can distinguish narrativity as a particular feature of reality produced by a human being and a key to its understanding. The point of reference for understanding narrative will particularly include the ideas of Arthur C. Danto (1985).

Oakeshott used to claim that:

[...] none of us is born as a human being; each of us is what he/she has learnt to be. This means that a person is what they have learnt to perceive, think and do, and that differences among human beings are differences in what those beings have learnt in their lives. [...] this connection between learning and being human means that each of us is our own “story” played by ourselves; and that the expression “human nature” is only something we use to denote the form of commitment which is common to us and impossible to reject: to become through learning (Oakeshott 2001: 6).

There is no doubt that this reflection, which is typical of a thinker fascinated with the concept of human life as a private “history,” was based on a deep belief in a forming role of education that defines not only what each student will know as a future adult, but also the way in which he/she will think, and, as a result, it defines what he/she will become. This belief can also be referred to narrative structures which accompany us in education.

Let us now think about the basic ways in which narrative can occur in the processes described by Oakeshott. There are at least three of such basic ways; perhaps more. In education, and in learning in general, we can certainly distinguish subjective narratives, i.e. narratives that refer both to students and teachers. These are narratives within which the way of understanding ourselves, and what we are able to say about ourselves and our life, is shaped. They are particularly interesting for psychologists, such as Erikson, if we only assume that they can influence human life understood as a psychological process, or that they are the basis for that process, as suggested in the theory of narrative identity. Another kind of narratives within education includes objective narratives. They refer to the external world and its rules, to the way in which society functions, and to what is perceived as a valid norm. Obviously, we can only speak like this if we adopt the assumptions of the continually popular metaphor of “culture as a text.” In the light of this metaphor, school is the same cultural space as work places or mass media, and it often duplicates the same narratives. What makes school different is the narrative sub-class related to itself: the narrative on what education is, what it should serve, how it should be carried out, etc. Finally, the third kind of narrative includes narratives used in an instrumental manner. This includes stories, anecdotes, or even thought experiments used by teachers in their work. The advantage of implementing a story into a fictional (or even factual, but properly contextualized) lesson is that it makes listeners potentially strongly interested in the lesson, which also has certain consequences. In the next part of the article, I will present examples of four ethical problems related to education and the way in which each of them can be approached in a narrative perspective—with reference to subjective, objective and instrumental narratives, starting from the latter. The objective of this text is to

indicate, based on those four selected examples, that at least some ethical problems can be analyzed from the narrative perspective.

Instrumental narratives and the problem of openness to representation

The didactic function of a story has been known and appreciated since ancient times, or even earlier. One of the ancient authors who were aware of it was Aesop, author of fables. The stories he wrote were seemingly simple, but, as indicated by Leslie Kurke (2011: 125–158), using them, Aesop was able to oppose the existing, pre-philosophical model of knowledge. According to Kurke, what Aesop did was “political counselling through fables” (2011: 156). His activity was certainly directed towards adults and it was more similar to a rhetorical discourse or public debate typical of the ancient Greece than to didactics as such. Indeed, Aesop sometimes criticized and parodied adopted didactical practices (Kurke 2011: 202–238). This, however, does not change the fact that his works became the basis for the creation of a fable as a kind of narrative that was later perceived as dedicated to children and used to give them important lessons of life⁴, and that also had a complicated cultural history in Europe.

There is a good reason why I am writing about instrumental narratives, starting from fables, which are special examples of them. Not only do they accompany us from the beginning of our civilization and they are used as an educational tool (not only in the formal educational process), but they also carry a clearly moral message. Examples can be found very close to us. Young generations of the 20th and 21st centuries are well familiar with fables teaching them about the value of friendship, love or being good to others. This results, *inter alia*, from the effort of cartoon producers, such as Walt Disney Company, which was making such movies for children in 40s and 50s of the 20th century, and from the ideas of other film producers that developed

4 It is worth mentioning the fact that, writing the history of children’s literature, Seth Lerer (2008: 35–56) did not hesitate to reach for Aesop’s fables. As Lerer emphasized himself, it was not only due to the original nature of those texts, but due to the way in which they were interpreted later—already in the times of Plato.

that idea in 90s. Continuous popularity of cartoons, subsequent editions of classical fairy tales by the Grimm brothers, film and game adaptations of such stories, and the fact that they are still directed to children—all these factors show how strongly education, especially moral one, is connected (also in case of the youngest pupils) with instrumentally used narratives. Today we live in the times when teachers are actively encouraged to using proper anecdotes directed to their listeners (Sajduk 2015: 58), and many teachers strive to draw young people's attention with modern communication devices, such as YouTube videos or video games, which are still rooted in the ancient art of telling stories. Thus, we have to be aware of possible consequences, including ethical ones, of reaching for narratives in educational activities.

The issue of the kind of stories that are adequate for children in particular age groups has always been the subject of discussion of teachers, but also authors of entertainment products, lawmakers, journalists, and even citizens concerned for children's good.⁵ It is very good that such discussions occur, as children have to be protected against possibly harmful content, which is reflected not only in many ethical systems, but also in international legal regulations (Lievens, Valcke, Stevens 2015). However, it is also worth discussing other issues than the age at which children should be allowed to watch, e.g. erotic scenes. These are aspects related to film contents, but we should also focus on formal aspects which refer to narrative structures occurring in fables and other stories for children, as well as to the way in which such structures are implemented.

Didactic stories used in the context of institutional education (fairy tales, fables, humorous stories) are not and should not be neutral in what messages they convey. On the contrary: like all that is of educational nature (I am again reaching for Pring, but also, partially, for Oakeshott), we use such stories to exert a specific influence on the listeners. Their very persuasive nature is reflected in the form they

5 The activity of the latter can be noticed, e.g. in the website dedicated to parents and teachers: "Common Sense Media" (<https://www.commonsense-media.org/>, access: 03.04.2022) where people publish film reviews in which they recommend films adequate to specific age groups and give advice related to possibly harmful content of those films, such as violence, vulgar language or sex scenes.

adopt because they are narratives that aim at a specific conclusion, i.e. the moral. That is why, they function within a narrative structure that can be described as “open” at the beginning and, at the same time, “closed” at the end. At the beginning it opens to the widest possible group of recipients, e.g. through the main character with whom the recipient may easily identify, and at the end it closes the pool of available interpretations, imposing a certain lesson on the recipient who had been engaged in the story. Such imposition of the lesson does not have to consist in providing an off-hand punchline that contains one well-turned moral, such as, e.g. “a friend in need is a friend indeed,” because, as a matter of fact, the same effect can be achieved through any other narrative tools due to which the recipient becomes aware of the fact that what seemed a neutral story to him/her actually referred to what the moral is about. Thus, the structure is as follows: at the beginning, all the recipients are encouraged to get engaged in the story (to listen to it); then the action of the story unfolds, and finally the narrative ends in one specific point (the punchline) which the recipients reach along with the narrator.

What is particularly important here is not the ordering function of the narrative structure, which will be later analyzed on other examples, but its engaging function. According to Sławomir Chrost:

[...] a child identifies himself/herself with a specific character, accompanies the character in his/her quest, feels the character’s emotions, such as joy, sorrow, or pain, fights with the enemies, and takes up challenges, transferring the child’s own experiences, emotions and needs into the world of fables. Due to such identification, the child is made familiar with a whole range of emotions, feelings and attitudes. He/she learns socially acceptable behaviors, as well as those which are unacceptable (Chrost 2016: 62).

This creates a very interesting ethical space, starting from the very structure, and not from the content of the story that is being told. Such a space appears at the very beginning, and it originates from the openness of the act of transferring a narrative. It is such openness that generates a moral challenge, as it actually constitutes a non-neutral postulate which requires equal and total fulfilment.

According to the silent assumption, the story that is being told actually opens equally to each recipient (in this case: to each student). However, is it really so in reality? Let us consider the above-mentioned

animated adaptations of fairy tales from the Walt Disney Company. They are popular around the world due to international distribution, numerous professional locations and multi-channel marketing managed by foreign branches of the Walt Disney Company. It might seem that their films are models of narratives directed to all children, so they are good didactic tools, especially in early school pedagogy. The truth is, however, that Disney films are controversial for modern pedagogues. Dorothy L. Hurley (2005: 221–232) presents an important opinion on this subject, as she claims that in those films we can come across clear binary color coding, such as the dichotomy: “black/white” and “good/evil,” which does not make it difficult for children whose skin is not white to understand the story, but makes it hard for them to identify with the story and use it to build their own, positive identity. Seemingly open narrative structure is, in fact, closed to some recipients due to harmful stereotypes which it (consciously or not) duplicates. And I wish to emphasize that this is not a problem related to the content of such animated movies, or only to their content, but, as I have already mentioned, it reaches to the very core of those stories, i.e. to the narrative structure that dictates their course.

In this way, it is from the side of the analysis of narrative structures that we reach to the problem of representation known in modern research on the media. This problem has been many times formulated in the context of non-white, non-heteronormative or non-cissexual people, although, in the educational space, especially in more uniform communities, it rather refers to children with different skills or interests. Let us notice that in the above considerations we derived the real need for varied representation in didactic narratives (the requirement that they must be open to everyone) not from the current political and social discourse the strong ideologization of which makes the topic difficult, but from the very definition of didactic narrative, from a very simple structure within which it must function.

There is no doubt that ignoring some students in the didactic process due to a feature of their appearance or character, even in such a seemingly trivial and harmless manner as telling a story that is not addressed to them, is something unethical in the teaching practice. This fact, however, indicates not only the necessity to carefully and sensitively choose the presented narratives, but also the moral obligation to apply those narratives. It is because, if the teacher’s task is

to not only transfer knowledge, but also constitute a moral model for students, one of necessary elements of education includes the need for a student to identify with the teacher, i.e., to some extent, see the teacher as someone the young person would like to be in future.⁶ However, if there are too many differences between a teacher and a student, which often happens in multicultural communities, such direct identification may be very difficult. One of the ways to prevent it is, as suggested by Dan Goldhaber, Roddy Theobald and Christopher Tien (2019: 25–30), is making the team of teachers in a given school as varied as the group of students. But if this is impossible, we still have stories about characters that are different than teachers yet representing the same moral discipline and being a valuable pattern to follow. Such characters especially include universal characters, such as anthropomorphic animals known from some information campaigns directed to children. In this way, the history of didactic fables makes a circle, once again coming back to the ideas popular at the time of Aesop.

Objective narratives and the problem of coherence and authenticity

Let us now move to considerations on objective narratives enlightened by the following quotation from Erikson:

[...] I would perceive adolescence [...] as a person's stage of life that is open, both from the cognitive side and from the emotional side, to new ideological imageries that are able to order fantasy and energy of the new generation. Depending on the historical moment, they will either strengthen or oppose the existing order, or they will promise the youth a future, more radical or more traditional, reality through which they may help them overcome uncertainty related to identity (Erikson 1998: 86).

Narratives on what the world and the society actually are, are given to us in didactic processes already at very early stages of life, but Erikson rightly notes that what he calls “ideological imageries,”

6 Pring emphasized that a teacher's role includes “introduction of (usually) young people into the valuable way of perceiving the world, experiencing the world, and approaching others in a more human and empathic manner” (Pring 2001: 106), i.e., in other words, a teacher is to be a model of someone who looks at the world in such a way.

which in practice often takes a narrative form, becomes a key phenomenon a little later, i.e. in adolescence. Moreover, he comes to the right conclusion that it is during adolescence, which, for a young person, is the time of shaping identity (Erikson 1998: 67–70), when ethical space is created in which people responsible for transferring those “imageries” to the youth must act “with a strong sense of morality and concern for the ethical aspect” (Erikson 1998: 86). He even formulates the general ethical principle which, in his opinion, is adequate to this situation. It says: “Do to another what will advance the other’s growth to the same extent as it will advance our own growth” (Erikson 1998: 86).⁷ It is worth asking whether (and if at all) this principle of Erikson can be analyzed through the reference to narrative structures ruling objective narratives in didactic processes, and what ethical problems are connected with such a principle.

Let us start from the role of giving a certain structure to such narratives, i.e. the ordering role, if we are to follow Erikson’s thought (1998: 86). One of the basic features of a story is that from the seeming chaos, which human experience often is, it elicits a certain order, a series of reasons and consequences, a structure consisting of agents and events in which they participate. Danto, who was aware of this, in his considerations on the role of narrative in history as a science (and in historical practice), emphasized that “what people usually want and expect when asking for explanation is just telling a real story,” and—at the same time—“when we ask someone for explanation, the person will automatically start to tell us a story” (Danto 1985: 233). Nevertheless, taking into account that basic need for explaining or ordering, which narratives are to satisfy in us, we cannot simply assume that, in the situation we are discussing, narrative structures guarantee the equal importance of students and teachers required by Erikson, and that teachers use such structures to make students perceive the world in a way that is as ordered as theirs. It is because the adoption of such an assumption would make us fall into the vicious circle (the *petitio principii* mistake). However, we can further explore the thought of Danto who adopts the explanatory role of narrative

7 In this place, Erikson refers to his own considerations presented in the lecture on the golden ethical rule (Erikson 1994: 185–188), while in *The Life Cycle Completed*, he provides a slightly different formulation of this rule and he uses it in a more direct manner in the context of education.

as given due to the nature of the *explanandum* itself which he sees in the changeability of things.

“When we ask for the explanation of an event [of historical nature—M.J.], we actually refer to a change,” writes Danto (1985: 346). Such a change, which is inherent to explanatory narratives, is analyzed by him in relation to two particular points of reference: beginning and end, which already suggests a structure. If the structure is possible to be extrapolated outside historical sciences, and the initial remarks by Danto suggest that this is so, it turns out that the very process of explaining the world, which is the root of any education, is of narrative nature. This situation creates at least two clear structural requirements for objective narratives which, at the same time, are of ethical nature (just like in the case of previously noted requirement for the openness of instrumental narratives).

The first requirement, which is the most clearly visible, is the requirement for coherence. If it is true that explaining the world in the process of education consists in telling stories about changes that occur in it, such stories must be coherent with one another and they must present a uniform image of the world. Otherwise, any structure ceases to be possible, because it becomes conflicted with itself. In practice, this leads to the conclusion that in didactics coherence is very important as, in the light of the above considerations, it warrants that the educational process will be constructive and not disruptive for a young person. Let us take an example from the surrounding reality: at the moment much is being spoken about so-called “patriotic education” which seems to be promoted by the present government (Stec 2018), and which can certainly be treated as a good example of an objective narrative. It is because this concept assumes a specific image, not only of social and cultural phenomena (nation, citizen, etc.), but also education itself and what it is to serve (shaping attitudes, developing patriotism, promoting values, etc.). However, this topic is highly controversial, as such an approach to education is opposed by some environments presenting different opinions, promoting their own, alternative vision of the world and way of teaching (Podgórska 2021). Without judging which side of the controversy is right, let us see how this situation looks like from the structural side of those two narratives. The lack of coherence results in a conflict that has a great influence on educating millions of children in Polish

schools where they experience a disruptive lack of consistency in the way in which the world is explained to them.

Let us note, however, that although this situation is harmful for the very structure of narrative, and, because of this, it is morally controversial, the other extreme constitutes an equal threat. It should be emphasized that coherence does not mean dictatorship. The previous age of terrible wars and postmodern reflection that appeared later made us particularly sensitive to the threats of the so-called “great narratives” or “metanarratives,” as Jean-François Lyotard (Aylesworth 2015: 2) called them, i.e. objective narratives with total ambitions. In this case, practice and difficult historical experiences teach us that, although narrative structures are not only inevitable, but often beneficial (as I am trying to prove in this text), we cannot trust them without any restrictions. That is why, we need objective narratives that will be coherent and free from total ambitions, emphasizing the complexity and pluralistic nature of the world which is so changeable. However, the question of how we should use such narratives has to remain unanswered, because it is more content-related than formal, and solving it is a matter of careful and sensitive social-political debate rather than of theoretical speculations. Anyway, moral responsibility of those who manage education is choosing such objective narratives that will not be dictatorial or highly controversial for the society.

There is also another requirement (apart from coherence) which should be mentioned here, and it refers to authenticity. In the process of education, it does not seem enough to provide the young generation with objective narratives being a coherent explanation of changes taking place in the world. What is also needed is that such explanation is authentically adopted by teachers themselves, i.e. that it is perceived by them as an explanation that adequately reflects the nature of things. This requirement is also structural, although it may seem counterintuitive. Once again, we are returning to the engaging role that those narratives have to play. Danto also writes about it, claiming that “one of the key objectives to achieve within a narrative is preparing the scene for the course of events that will lead us until the end” (Danto 1985: 248). Thus, he emphasizes that if we are to perceive a given narrative as truly explanatory, it has to, in its very beginning, contain, in the form of an ovule, some assumptions

concerning the end. In Danto's thought (1985: 248) this is clearly related to the fact that he understands change as something that aims from the original state to the final state, but it is also clearly connected with the dualism of the roles of a narrator and recipient. Explanatory narrative is not, even purely structurally speaking, just a technical process or a transfer of some kind of knowledge from one place to another. On the contrary: it is something that a narrator gives to the recipient, taking responsibility for the narrative process already at the moment of its initiation. In this way, the narrative becomes a game of a non-zero stake (understood in an abstract manner) in which the narrator is engaged and in which that non-zero stake is particularly important as it is not void of ethical nature. The authenticity of complying with the explanations that are given warrants that such a stake is, in case of objective narratives, at least morally good, i.e. it consists in aiming at transferring knowledge and values which one believes are true, and not in manipulating students in order to change them into the obedient mass that is easy to use for a particular purpose.

Therefore, once again, from the side of narrative structures, we reach the issue that has been historically approached from many other, more casual perspectives. It seems that this reminds us of the above-mentioned belief of Pring (2001: 105–106) who claimed that a teacher is not the one who transfers some sets of information or data to his students, but the one who introduces them into a kind of *modus vivendi*, into a moral and social order, which he himself follows and into which, similarly to his present students, he had been introduced by his teacher in the past. The conclusion is that if, in teaching young generations, we cannot avoid transferring certain narratives to them, we should at least use those narratives that we actually believe in. We should not think that such narratives can be designed in advance like a technical product. They must be something we truly comply with; otherwise, we will not be able to guarantee the narrative stake of such an action.

Considering those two ethical requirements, i.e., coherence and authenticity, we can now attempt to return to the general rule of Erikson, i.e. to the principle: "do to another what will advance the other's growth to the same extent as it will advance our own growth." There is not an easy answer to the question of to which extent Erikson's principle is compliant with the structural features of objective

narratives, because, after a closer look at them, it is hard to postulate that the principle results from them directly. However, and this should be particularly emphasized, such narratives do not contradict that rule. On the contrary: there is a clear consistency between them. The requirement for coherence seems, in a form, to be reflected in Erikson's emphasis on personal development (aiming at constructiveness, and not disruptiveness in education), and the requirement for authenticity very strongly resonates in his belief that both the student and the teacher participate in the same reality the concern for which must be their common and unanimous effort.

Subjective narratives and the origin of moral education

Before I move to summarizing this text, I have to mention the issue of subjective narratives although this issue has already been discussed in detail in the texts I have quoted here. Subjective narratives are much discussed by Oakeshott, Erikson, McEwan, Goodson, and especially Connelly and Clandinin. The latter authors, in the conclusions of their considerations in the article entitled "Narrative and Education," asked the following question: "How can we prepare for a meeting with our students in order to hope and be certain that, in future, they will perceive the meeting in a narrative way as an educational experience?" (Connelly, Clandinin 1995: 84). This is a particularly difficult question for each person interested in the narrative aspect of education, but also for each teacher. Although it is hard to answer it briefly, we may at least suggest into which direction our quests for the reply should turn.

In their question, Connelly and Clandinin use the category of *narrating by yourself*, which suggests that subjective narratives, which are stories told by ourselves and to ourselves about our own lives, are—in their opinion—something very common and important. They believe that human life is something "composed of many narrative unities" (Connelly, Clandinin 1995: 82). They draw such a conclusion concerning the subjective reality after careful reading of Oakeshott and his reflections on a human being perceived as an individual who creates his/her personal story, and of Erikson who saw a human being as a creator of the process of their own life (Connelly, Clandinin 1995: 77). Thus, both of those opinions emphasize

the value of self-reflection which is something we cannot avoid. Due to such self-reflection, we can identify an order in our life, which is so needed for the sense of identity, and which we can achieve through narratives. That is why, what Connelly and Clandinin actually ask about, is how we can help the students to find that order in the personal meeting with the narratives.

This issue is highly subjective, which is why it is hard to speak about any generalizations here. It seems that everyone has his/her own order of life to find. That is why, Oakeshott (2001: 4–6) so strongly emphasizes our autonomy and the fact that we cannot reject responsibility for our words and acts which, in turn, are a consequence of the way in which we learnt them. However, our radical freedom, which means that “in oneself, everyone is whom he/she is for themselves” (Oakeshott 2001: 4), does not mean that there are no rules and structures. On the contrary, it is freedom that makes us realize that not all of our actions are right and that it is possible for us to make bad choices and to perceive the world and ourselves in a wrong manner. In other words, it is our freedom that makes ethics possible.

Connelly and Clandinin agree that the above opinion of Oakeshott is not revelatory. They add that subjective narratives are what happens *post fatum*, so they may only refer to past events. This is a structural feature of those narratives—the fact that they are a consequence or a resultant of our previous actions, i.e. the actions on which we no longer have an influence, and that is why we can try to order them in our heads. Thus, the very structure of subjective narratives suggests that they appear after ethics, and, to be more precise, after what constitutes the possibility of the occurrence of an ethical reflection, i.e. after good or bad actions we had taken up (Connelly, Clandinin 1995).

However, not only do those actions constitute an ethical reflection, but they also demand it. Perhaps this is the role of subjective narratives in educating young people; perhaps they are to constitute a reply to the requirement of our freedom the acts of which demand ethical (self)reflection. If the very structures of those narratives so clearly match the need for explaining and justifying our actions in the ethical aspect, no wonder that many thinkers, such as the above-mentioned Pring, so frequently emphasize that a teacher is

not just a repository of knowledge poured into students' minds. "The educational experience" about which Connelly and Clandinin write, i.e. the meeting of two people being a constructive event, occurs provided that the teacher makes the effort to order the student's life on the moral level. Although—as I have already noted—the teacher does not have to do this using instrumental or objective narratives, he/she is always obliged by the narrative structure of subjective narratives which make him/her a person facing another human being. This is what the role of a teacher consists in.

In many respects, the dynamics of the relationship between a student and a teacher reminds that of a narrator and recipient, while in many other aspects it is radically different. It is true that a teacher is a narrator in instrumental narratives, but in objective narratives a teacher is just a person who transfers the content narrated by the society or culture. Finally, in subjective narratives a narrator is also the student who searches for the moral meaning in his/her life. From the perspective of a narrator, combination of those three cases arouses more questions than answers, but it very clearly reveals many roles which, in the educational process, have to be played by a teacher: he/she has to be the source of knowledge, a story teller, a representative of the adult world, a person who brings children up and introduces them into the mysteries of life, and, finally, someone who is morally responsible for the narratives he/she provides to the students.

Narrative structures in education as a formal point of reference

Therefore, as we can see, in case of at least certain moral issues related to education, such as representation and identification of various groups of students, coherence and authenticity of views provided to them by teachers, and the origin of the moral nature of the very process of education, considerations from the perspective of narrative structures may give us a precious material for reflection. If we take into account the very urgent issue of providing students who, in many ways, are very diversified, with conditions for becoming engaged in the educational reality, we will notice that this is difficult because education (especially through instrumental narratives) must, already in its beginning, be open to everyone. When we think of the need to make what teachers tell the students internally coherent

and authentically experienced, we will notice that this is so due to the features of cultural and social subjective narratives understood as processes. Finally, when we refer to the question of what makes education as such a moral action, we will also realize that this topic is clearly connected with the ordering function subjective narratives perform in our lives. Thus, it turns out that (numerous) moral problems related to education can be formulated, i.e. become meaningful when we look at them from the perspective of narrative structures present in our culture and social life. Perhaps such an approach to them suggests certain ways to solve those problems, which is so much needed in our times.

To sum this text up, once again I would like to emphasize one general conclusion that can be drawn from the above, more detailed considerations. The conclusion is as follows: a lot of well-known ethical problems related to educational processes (representation, authenticity of teaching, moral responsibility) can be formulated in the perspective of narrative structures used in those educational processes. Usually, in ethical discussions concerning education of young generations, these problems are taken up in very different, more occasional circumstances, such as political debates, problems of social inequalities, worldview differences and different philosophical approaches, i.e. in the contexts that are more closely connected with the content of the solutions to those problems than with their form. In this way, the discussion on such topics seems to be more vivid and up-to-date, but it also makes the debate more controversial and polarized. That is why, it seems that we should return to those perspectives that enable us to understand the ethical complexities of education through referring to its formal aspects. It is true that the same ethical problem can be solved from many different perspectives and that each of them increases our ability to understand it, but formal perspectives play a special role here, marking the area of interpretation for content perspectives. As indicated in the considerations included in this text, one of such formal perspectives is the perspective of narrative structures that can be broadly applied in this matter, which was confirmed by several above examples. That is why, narratives and narrative structures may constitute a good point of reference whenever we speak about ethical problems connected with education.

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Maciej Jemioł
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow
Institute of Philosophy
e-mail: maciej.jemiol.academia@gmail.com

Dominika Dziurosz-Serafinowicz
ORCID: 0000-0002-1084-1044
Uniwersytet Gdański

Wartość słowa. Etyczne znaczenie dialogu ustrukturyzowanego relacją pytanie—odpowiedź w filozofii Józefa Tischnera

ABSTRAKT

Rolę słowa podkreśla wielu etyków i filozofów. Istotnym wymiarem analizy słowa wykorzystywanego w relacjach międzyludzkich jest jego wartość. Od wartości słów zależy etyka, ponieważ bez szczyrych słów nie można prowadzić prawdziwego dialogu, a także budować społeczności opartej na zaufaniu. W niniejszym artykule autorka stara się ukazać, że w takich ramach filozoficznych główną rolę odgrywa relacja pytanie—odpowiedź, która jest podstawową strukturą dialogu. Szczególną uwagę znaczeniu zadawania pytań poświęcił polski filozof i ksiądz Józef Tischner, który w pytaniu widział rodzaj prośby w świecie duchowej biedy, która wymaga etycznej odpowiedzi. Autorka przedstawia również jego oryginalną filozofię dramatu, zwłaszcza w odniesieniu do wyrażanego przez niego poglądu na dialogiczną relację między osobami, a następnie relacje wewnątrz różnych grup – od wielkich społeczeństw i narodów po małe wspólnoty. W artykule ukazano także etyczne, aksjologiczne i antropologiczne znaczenie dialogu, a także jego agatologiczny i ontologiczny charakter, który jest ustrukturyzowany relacją pytanie—odpowiedź, stanowiącą podstawę pogłębionej komunikacji.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

filozofia dialogu, Józef Tischner, personalizm, etyka słowa, etyczny wymiar dialogu

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Wprowadzenie

Zarys etycznego problemu używania słów

Poszukując z etycznej perspektywy wartości i znaczenia słowa, należy zadać kilka istotnych pytań: Jaka jest wartość słowa? Jak cenne są słowa w dzisiejszym świecie? Czy słowa mają jakieś znaczenie? Czy możemy ufać słowom? Czy możemy w nie wierzyć? Czy powinniśmy na nich polegać? Wartość słowa jest zakorzeniona w Biblii, o czym mówi prolog Ewangelii św. Jana: „Na początku było Słowo, a Słowo było u Boga, i Bogiem było Słowo” (J 1,1). Mając także na uwadze Peirce’owską myśl, że „znak, czyli representamen, to coś, co oznacza dla kogoś coś pod jakimś względem lub w jakimś charakterze” (Peirce 1955: 99), warto zapytać o świat, który stoi za słowami. Podajmy prosty przykład: Jeśli mówisz mi, że jutro spotkamy się o godz. 7 rano – w jakim stopniu oznacza to, że chcesz się ze mną spotkać jutro o 7 rano? Jaki świat stoi za naszymi słowami: Czy jest to nadal świat, który jest reprezentowany przez te słowa? Jak głęboko – lub też jak płytko – słowa są dziś wypełnione deklarowanym znaczeniem? Jak bardzo potrafią one być puste?

Podchodząc do tych kwestii z klasycznego punktu widzenia, zauważamy, że problem ten jest mocno związany z semantyczną analizą języka, ale w rzeczywistości wykracza daleko poza ramy epistemiczne. Istnieje również etyczny wymiar tego problemu, który podkreśla autentyczność i brak kłamstwa w wypowiedianych słowach. Teoretycznie za konkretnym słowem, które ktoś wypowiada, może stać wszystko. Niestety, nie istnieje jednak żaden dający się udowodnić i konieczny związek między słowem a światem. Arystotelesowsko-tomistyczne *adaequatio rei et intellectum*, które należałoby wzbogacić o *et verbum*, jest raczej imperatywem etycznym niż koniecznością ontologiczną. Chodzi o to, że np. jeśli ci powiem, że cię kocham, to równie dobrze mogę powiedzieć, że jesteś dla mnie wszystkim, mimo że po prostu nic do ciebie nie czuję. Ta druga opcja byłaby oczywiście kłamstwem, ponieważ za moimi słowami o miłości nie kryje się żadne miłosne nastawienie do ciebie. Innymi słowy, za słowami może stać wszystko, nic, albo dokładnie to, co słowa mają reprezentować. Ta trzecia opcja jest najbardziej etyczna, gwarantuje ona zarówno najszczerze słowo, jak i najbardziej przejrzysty świat,

co Konfucjusz wyjaśnia w swojej koncepcji *zhèngmíng* (dosłownie „prostowanie pojęć”):

Gdy protokół nie jest ustanowiony poprawnie, nie przyjmuje się tego, co powiedziane; kiedy powiedziane nie jest akceptowane, sprawy nie są załatwiane; kiedy sprawy nie są załatwiane, obyczaje i muzyka nie kwitną, wyroki i kary nie są wykonywane; kiedy wyroki i kary nie są wykonywane, ludzie dziczeją. Tedy jeśli zostanie ustanowiony protokół, człek szlachetny może zacząć mówić, a co powiedziane, będzie uczynione. Co człek szlachetny mówi, mówi poważnie (Konfucjusz, *Dialogi konfucjańskie*, XIII, 3).

Według wielu etyków i pedagogów odpowiednio i poprawne słowo stanowi *conditio sine qua non* pokojowej i racjonalnej wspólnoty, co więcej – harmonijnego społeczeństwa zbudowanego na zaufaniu. Zaufanie jest możliwe tylko wtedy, gdy słowa, które przekazujemy, nie zawodzą. Budowanie zdrowej wspólnoty (każdego rodzaju: grupy szkolnej, organizacji społecznych, szkół itp.) jest ściśle powiązane z komunikacją. Szczególnie w ramach edukacji etycznej należy mieć świadomość siły słów i ich roli w kształtowaniu dobrych bądź też złych relacji międzyludzkich. Idea ta jest bardzo żywa w oryginalnej polskiej filozofii dramatu stworzonej przez Józefa Tischnera (1931–2000), katolickiego księdza, filozofa i wykładowcy. W niniejszym artykule chciałbym przedstawić jego spojrzenie na słowo, które w jego oryginalnej filozofii dramatu opiera się zasadniczo na dialogu skonstruowanym wokół relacji: pytanie–odpowiedź.

Pogląd Józefa Tischnera na słowo: Wstępny klucz do dialogu i zrozumienia struktury: pytanie–odpowiedź

Filozofia Tischnera jest inspirowana wieloma tradycjami filozoficznymi, w tym personalizmem, filozofią dialogu, egzystencjalizmem, tomizmem i fenomenologią. To dlatego jego autorska filozofia dramatu jest tak bardzo bogata i katolicka w swoich inspiracjach. Nie analizuje on człowieka jako bytu osamotnionego, ale jako osobę dramatyczną, która spotyka innego i poprzez dialog tworzy różne relacje interpersonalne. W naszej interpretacji poglądów Tischnera człowiek jest zasadniczo egzystencjalnie usytuowany w sytuacji dramatu, gdyż dialog opiera się na zadawaniu pytania i udzielaniu odpowiedzi. Moje pytanie rodzi się z prawdziwej biedy i potrzeby odpowiedzi, dlatego za słowem, które przychodzi w odpowiedzi na

moje pytanie, nie może stać nic poza prawdą. W przeciwnym razie na pytającego spada wielkie cierpienie. Takie moralnie zabarwione spojrzenie na słowo jest konsekwencją postulowanego związku między prawdziwością słów a szczęśliwą wspólnotą, czego związek przyczynowy opiera się na szczerości zadawanego pytania i możliwości uzyskania adekwatnej odpowiedzi. Tylko wtedy, gdy autentycznie mnie o coś prosisz, mogę ci szczerze odpowiedzieć. Tylko wtedy, gdy ja szczerze odpowiadam na twoje pytanie, ty możesz usłyszeć słowa, które są godne zaufania. To z kolei buduje nasz dialog interpersonalny, który decyduje o charakterze wspólnoty.

Można podać przykład: Jeśli wołasz o pomoc, moja odpowiedź na twoje wezwanie jest właściwa tylko wtedy, gdy ty potrzebujesz pomocy; moja pomoc może być dobra, zarówno dla ciebie, jak i dla mnie. W przeciwnym razie – jeśli twoja prośba o pomoc nie jest naprawdę znacząca – ja, z moją szczerą odpowiedzią, wkraczam w świat fałszu i moje działania stają się puste. Gdybym się dowiedziała, że nie potrzebujesz mojej pomocy, znalazłabym się w bezsensownym świecie kłamstw, co zniszczyłoby moją duszę. Co więcej, jeśli będziesz zachowywał się w ten sposób wiele razy, to w pewnym momencie nie będę ufała twoim słowom. Nie można zbudować relacji opartej na zaufaniu, jeśli jedna ze stron dialogu nie jest szczerą.

Co więcej, kiedy ktoś inny woła o pomoc – a naprawdę jej potrzebuje – ja odmówię odpowiedzi, ponieważ na podstawie moich doświadczeń będę podejrzewała, że za tymi słowami nie kryje się prawdziwe wołanie. W tym wypadku daję pustą odpowiedź na twoją prawdziwą prośbę, a ty pozostaniesz wtedy osamotniony w swoim wołaniu w świecie pustki i beznadziei. Również w tym wypadku nie można stworzyć relacji opartej na zaufaniu. Na następnym poziomie naszego dialogu problem może znów się pojawić, ponieważ nawet jeśli odpowiem zgodnie z prawdą na twoją szczerą prośbę, ty nie będziesz potrafił wysłuchać moich słów i postawisz mnie w moralnie trudnej sytuacji. Cała moja energia poświęcona na wysłuchanie twojej prośby, rozważenie zasadności mojej odpowiedzi i sama szczerą odpowiedzią – wszystko to zostanie zmarnowane, jeśli nie docenisz mojej odpowiedzi. Ta potencjalna porażka w dialogu może mieć miejsce na każdym poziomie. To rozczarowanie w relacji pytanie–odpowiedź może się pogłębiać bez końca. Wreszcie słowa niosące kłamstwo generują cierpienie w relacjach międzyludzkich, co utrudnia budowanie

harmonijnej wspólnoty. Jednym z realnych przykładów takiego historycznego kłamstwa była brama obozu zagłady Auschwitz, na której widniał napis *Arbeit macht frei*. Ten manifest skierowany przez nazistów do więźniów ich „oboju pracy” odnosił się wprost do przeciwnego świata – nie do obiecanego świata wolności, ale do świata całkowitego zniewolenia. Ludzie w czasie II wojny światowej, którzy prosili o przywrócenie im wolnego życia, otrzymali coś przeciwnego – więzienie i śmierć – wbrew wypowiedzanym do nich słowom.

To drastyczne i makabryczne kłamstwo pokazuje, jak głęboko szkodliwe i złe może być kłamstwo. Niszczycielską moc kłamstwa widać nie tylko w historii, ale także w wielu tradycjach religijnych. Oprócz wspomnianego już konfucjanizmu, podobny etyczny zakaz kłamstwa znajdujemy w judaizmie: „Nie będziesz rozgłaszał fałszywych wieści” (Wj 23,1). Podobnie w świecie arabskim Allah mówi: „I będziesz mówił do ludzi dobre słowa”. W ramach buddyzmu istnieją cztery rodzaje poprawnej mowy, z których jednym są słowa prawdy, które muszą być prawdziwe, szczere i nieobłudne. Oczywiście, przyjmując Dekalog, chrześcijaństwo zawsze potępiało także fałszywe doniesienia. Również w obrębie chrześcijańskiej tradycji duchowej powstała oryginalna filozofia, która cechuje się najwyższą troską o słowo: filozofia dramatu Józefa Tischnera. Ten polski myśliciel nie jest jednak samotną wyspą na filozoficznym oceanie. Współcześnie wielu polskich filozofów i językoznawców analizuje wartość słowa w duchu Tischnerowskiej filozofii dialogu, a dla niektórych filozofów relacja pytanie–odpowiedź posiada najwyższe filozoficzne znaczenie. Dlatego też nieunikniona wydaje się analiza myśli Tischnera podejmowana z perspektywy innych twórców. Wreszcie, podchodząc krytycznie do Tischnerowskiego rozumienia dialogu i jego znaczenia, powinniśmy mieć świadomość, że do analizy słów możemy podchodzić na wiele różnych sposobów: od skrajnego traktowania słów jako niewyróżniających się strumieni dźwięków – podobnych do szumu wiatru czy śpiewu ptaków (jak wtedy, gdy słyszymy język, którym nie umiemy się posługiwać) – poprzez uznawanie słów za znaki, które będą bardziej lub mniej adekwatnie przedstawiać jakiś świat, do traktowania słów bardzo poważnie, przypisując im moc przekazywania nam tego, co mamy robić, jak w przypadku rozkazu kapitana czy wyroku sędziego. Wypowiedane słowo może być traktowane bardzo niepoważnie, znacząco lub absolutnie

poważnie. Wartość słów wydaje się zależeć od naszej woli wypowiedziania i traktowania ich w sposób sensowny.

Nasza analiza Tischnerowskiej filozofii dramatu pokazuje, że budująca dialog relacja pytanie–odpowiedź ma głębokie znaczenie etyczne. Nie chodzi tu tylko o to, że pytając mamy nadzieję na uzyskanie poprawnej czy prawdziwej odpowiedzi; chodzi raczej o to, że skoro ten, kto pyta, ma otrzymać odpowiedź, to ten, kto odpowiada, staje się odpowiedzialny za odpowiedź. Jeśli ktoś jest zatem odpowiedzialny za odpowiedź, można go oceniać z moralnego punktu widzenia. Rozwijając poniżej tę myśl, przedstawimy kluczowe pojęcia Tischnerowskiej filozofii dialogu i dramatu. Jak zobaczymy, pojęcia te zanurzone są w specyficznym słownictwie filozofii dramatu. Będziemy je zatem wyjaśniać, odwołując się do kilku różnych tradycji filozoficznych.

Filozofia Józefa Tischnera

Wprowadzenie

Józef Tischner wychował się we wsi Łopuszna w górach południowej Polski. Studiował na Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim w Krakowie u Romana Ingardena, był profesorem filozofii w Papieskiej Akademii Teologicznej w Krakowie. Pozostawał związany z ruchem „Solidarności”, krytykował marksizm i komunizm. Stworzył oryginalną filozofię dramatu, zanurzoną w filozofii dialogu i egzystencjalizmie.

Aby zrozumieć jego całkowicie nowe spojrzenie na metaforę dramatu, jako na sposób rozumienia ludzkiej egzystencji, trzeba przede wszystkim pamiętać, że filozofia Tischnera wpisuje się w paradygmat dialogiczny w filozofii, o czym choćby świadczy jego stwierdzenie: „Etyką jest to, co się dzieje między nami. Gdyby między nami nie było jakiejś tajemniczej więzi dialogicznej, nie byłoby etyki” (Tischner 2012: 263). Tym samym istotne jest dla niego, że dialog stanowi podstawę etyki.

Jarosław Jagiełło, jeden z interpretatorów Tischnera, również podkreśla znaczenie dialogu. W artykule *Od aksjologii do agatologii – filozofia człowieka Józefa Tischnera* (2020) omawia ewolucję myśli Tischnera. Przede wszystkim twierdzi, że jego filozofia wyrasta z refleksji nad wartościami etycznymi, co prowadzi go do sformułowania koncepcji aksjologicznego ja. Następnie filozofia Tischnera ewoluuje

w kierunku refleksji nad dramatem człowieka, co wyraża się w jego koncentracji na charakterystycznej triadzie: osoba, scena i czas. Dramat zawsze rozgrywa się w dialogowym spotkaniu osób. Myśl Tischnera kończy się agatologią, która zawiera konkluzję, że aby ocalić człowieka znajdującego się w dramatycznej egzystencji potrzebne jest dobro i Bóg. Jagiełło dodaje również, że „choć aksjologiczny rys myśli antropologicznej Tischnera jest faktem rzucającym się w oczy ze szczególną mocą, to jednak nie można powiedzieć, że wczesny Tischner próbuje zredukować filozofię człowieka do filozofii wartości, antropologię do etyki” (Jagiełło 2020: 44).

W niniejszym artykule najważniejszym elementem analizy jest dialog – rozumiany jako sfera spotkania dwóch osób w sensie etycznym, aksjologicznym i agatologicznym. Tischnerowskie rozumienie dialogu jest bardzo głębokie, posiada wiele wymiarów i jest zakorzenione w wielu tradycjach filozoficznych. Jak zobaczymy później, dialog jest zasadniczo skonstruowany wokół paradygmatu: pytanie–odpowiedź.

Filozofia dramatu

Józef Tischner konstruuje oryginalną antropologię z perspektywy człowieka rozumianego jako byt dramatyczny. Dramat osoby rozgrywa się w tym świecie – stanowiącym dla niej scenę – wśród jej współczesnych, którzy są postrzegani jako aktorzy w sztuce. Na scenie tej sztuki upływa określony czas – to czas naszego życia. Cała egzystencjalna sytuacja człowieka wrzuconego w świat (w j. niemieckim: *in-der-Welt-Sein*) porównywana jest do sytuacji aktora w sztuce.

Ludzki dramat rozgrywa się w obrębie fenomenu mowy: najpierw mówimy, zadajemy pytania. Dlatego dla Tischnera mowa (w j. francuskim: *parole*) jest uprzednia wobec języka (w j. francuskim: *langue*):

Mowa polega na wydarzeniu, a język jest możliwością wydarzenia, w tym sensie, że mając język, mając struktury gramatyczne, semiotyczne, semantyczne, człowiek może mówić, ale nie znaczy to, że będzie mówił. Natomiast mowa jest wejściem w możliwości, w sferę rzeczywistości, w sferę faktu. Pod tym względem mowa zdecydowanie wykracza poza wszelki język (Tischner 2012: 260).

Polski filozof przejmując tę myśl od Emmanuela Lévinasa, który koncentrował się na analizie mowy zamiast na analizie języka

(Tischner 2012: 261). Tischner stwierdza, że mowa jest nieredukowalna do relacji między podmiotem a przedmiotem, ponieważ rzeczy są danymi opisywalnymi, a ludzie się ujawniają. Różnica między ludźmi a rzeczami polega na możliwości odpowiedzi i uczestnictwa w dialogu: „Gdyby nie to, że drugi mnie zapytał, w ogóle nie byłoby systemu znaków, a więc dopiero fakt, że ktoś mnie zapytał i ja odpowiadam, jest źródłem struktur semantycznych i semiotycznych” (Tischner 2012: 262). Zwraca też uwagę, że „Jeżeli nie ma dialogu, porozumienia, jeżeli nie ma chęci do uczestniczenia w wydarzeniu, to wydarzenie intencjonalne nie zaistnieje” (Tischner 2012: 234).

Ten bardzo wyrafinowany aspekt relacji międzyludzkich analizował również Friedrich Nietzsche, który optował za rozumieniem dialogu w kategoriach porządku i posłuszeństwa w jego znanej relacji pan–niewolnik. Tischner stara się odróżnić relację posłuszeństwa od relacji „pójścia za mną” i „pójścia za tobą”, która według niego jest podstawą właściwego dialogu (Tischner 2012: 33). Jego zdaniem, taki rodzaj relacji buduje wzajemność. Wspólnota niewzajemna ma miejsce wtedy, gdy jedna strona dialogu nie podąża za drugą. Jak pisze: „«Ja» idę za, ale «on» nie idzie za mną i nie ma tutaj relacji wzajemności” (Tischner 2012: 233).

Według Tischnera prawdziwa egzystencja może zaistnieć dzięki prawdziwej mowie. Podobną ideę wysunął Martin Heidegger, który wskazał na zasadniczą różnicę między *Gerede* a *Rede*. Według niego tylko to drugie prowadzi do autentycznego sposobu życia, a następnie do *Mit-sein* podbudowanego przez *Sorge*. Jak twierdzi Tischner: „Przeciwieństwem *Gerede* jest *Rede* (mowa), które opisując w postaci autentycznych i nieautentycznych sposobów bycia, Heidegger przeciwstawia sobie” (Tischner 2012: 196).

Aleksander Bobko (2007: 12) zwraca uwagę, że wolność w filozofii Tischnera zobowiązuje do wzięcia odpowiedzialności za siebie i innych oraz umożliwia autentyczne spotkanie z innymi. „Odpowiedzialność jest kategorią etyczną. Aby zatem wyjaśnić rodowód odpowiedzi na pytanie, trzeba sięgnąć do pierwiastka etycznego” (Tischner 1998a: 90). Chcąc to wyjaśnić, Tischner dodaje: „Nie znajduję poza sobą żadnej takiej siły, która by mogła wymusić na mnie odpowiedź. Związek między pytaniem a odpowiedzią nie jest związkiem przy czynowym. W jakimś sensie miał rację Gottfried Leibniz, gdy mówił, że «monady są bez okien». Jeśli dam odpowiedź, to tylko dlatego, iż sam zechcę” (Tischner 1998a: 89). Tischner dalej kontynuuje:

Wokół mnie i obok mnie znajdują się ludzie, szczególnie ci, będący uczestnikami tego samego dramatu, w którym i ja biorę udział. Wbrew rozpowszechnionym poglądom nie widzę ich, nie słyszę, nie dotykam i w ogóle nie spostrzegam. To bowiem, co spostrzegam, jest tylko zewnętrżnością, a nie człowiekiem jako człowiekiem, innym jako innym. Inny człowiek jako człowiek może pojawić się dopiero wtedy, gdy – nie wykluczając całej „zewnętrżności” – stanie przede mną jako uczestnik mojego dramatu. Uczestnictwa w dramacie nie mogę ani słyszeć, ani widzieć – wymaga ono całkiem innego otwarcia niż otwarcie właściwe świadomości intencjonalnej. Inny człowiek staje wobec mnie poprzez jakieś roszczenie, w którego następstwie powstaje we mnie poczucie zobowiązania. Świadomość tego, że drugi jest obecny, dopełnia się jako świadomość roszczenia – roszczenia, które zobowiązuje. Oto do moich uszu dochodzi twoje pytanie. Jest chwila ciszy, wspólnej terażniejszości. Oczekujesz na odpowiedź. Trzeba dać odpowiedź. To trzeba jest istotne (Tischner 1998a: 9).

Głównymi czynnikami tego dramatu egzystencjalnego są więc osoba, scena i czas. Tischner pisze: „Być istotą dramatyczną znaczy: przeżywać dany czas, mając wokół siebie innych ludzi i ziemię jako scenę pod stopami” (Tischner 1989a: 7). Dalej wyjaśnia, że czas dramatyczny to „czas, który dzieje się między nami jako uczestnikami jednego i tego samego dramatu. Czas dramatyczny wiąże mnie z tobą, a ciebie ze mną i wiąże nas ze sceną, na której toczy się nasz dramat” (Tischner 1998a: 8). Dramat zatem rozgrywa się między jedną a drugą osobą. Jest wypełniony napięciami i przebiega pomiędzy różnymi punktami zwrotnymi tragedii. Perypetie aktorów w ich dramacie-życiu – jak się okaże – rozpięte są między dwoma podstawowymi punktami dialogu: pytaniem i odpowiedzią.

Filozofia dialogu

Filozofia Tischnera to nie tylko oryginalna filozofia dramatu, ale także filozofia dialogu. Znaczenie słowa wypowiedzianego w środowisku społecznym wynika z faktu, że odpowiedź wiąże mnie z osobą, która zadaje mi pytanie, a pytanie, które ktoś mi zadaje, wiąże nas w tym sensie, że stajemy się jednością dialogiczną: „Związek, jaki powstaje między zapytany a pytającym, nazywamy związkiem dialogicznym” (Tischner 1998a: 90). Dialog przebiega między dwoma podmiotami i rozgrywa się w świecie słów. Warto podkreślić, że kluczową rolę w filozofii Tischnera odgrywa dialog. Ma on swoje najwyższe znaczenie, gdyż jest sposobem komunikacji.

Trzeba jednocześnie zauważyć, że nie każda tradycja filozoficzna ujmuje język jako zespół relacji między ludźmi (w j. łacińskim: *lingua ac communitas*). Bardzo często mówimy w tym celu, aby przepowiedać (Augustyn), aby odróżniać rzeczy użyteczne od bezużytecznych, oddzielać sprawiedliwych od niesprawiedliwych (Arystoteles), czy też aby dzielić się swoimi myślami z innymi ludźmi (Tomasz z Akwinu). Język może być również traktowany jako sposób przypominania sobie o wrodzonej wiedzy, którą posiadamy jako idee (Platon), może być wyrazem pracy naszego ducha (Humboldt), naszego wewnętrznego życia i wolności (Swedenborg), czy też naszego stosunku do świata (Schelling) (Andrzejewski 2016). Jeśli chodzi o sam dialog, to również może być on różnie rozumiany. Najbardziej wielowymiarowe i poważne podejście do dialogu reprezentują filozofowie dialogu, do których z pewnością należy Tischner. Witold P. Glinkowski w książce *Człowiek w dialogu* postuluje wręcz, że jesteśmy *homo dialogi*, gdyż „człowiek jako istota wyjątkowa, bezprecedensowa na tle ontycznego uniwersum zawdzięcza swoje istnienie dialogowi, do którego został zaproszony” (Glinkowski 2020: 15).

Sam Tischner twierdzi, że „każdy język jest językiem, który się kieruje do kogoś – mówiąc, mówimy do kogoś albo mówimy z kimś. I to «z kimś» albo «do kogoś» nazywa się wymiarem komunikatywnym, komunikacyjnym albo wymiarem dialogicznym” (Tischner 2012: 258–259). Warto zauważyć, że dialogowi poświęcano uwagę już w obrębie starożytnej tradycji filozoficznej. Widać to między innymi w tzw. trzech sitach mowy Sokratesa (prawda, dobro i konieczność/użyteczność); pięciu kanonach retoryki – inwencji, układzie, stylu, pamięci i wygłaszaniu mów; trzech funkcjach retoryki – ethosie, pathosie i logosie czy też w cnocie prawdomówności jako czymś pośrednim między dwiema skrajnymi wadami – fałszywą pokorą a nieuzasadnionym wywyższaniem się, co zaproponował Arystoteles w *Etyce nikomachejskiej* jako zastosowanie zasady złotego środka w odniesieniu do mowy. Znaczenie słów w starożytności wyraża Platoniński *Fajdros*: „Skoro w naturze mowy leży zdolność do prowadzenia dusz, to człowiek, który chce być mówcą, musi koniecznie wiedzieć, ile form dusza posiada. Zatem jest ich tyle a tyle, a są takie i takie. A kiedy się rozbierze i wykaże, skąd jedni ludzie są tacy, a drudzy inni, to znowu są takie i takie formy mów, a każda ma coś sobie właściwego” (Platon 1958: 114).

Tę platońską koncepcję traktowania słów jako oddziałujących na ludzkie dusze można dostrzec także w Tischnerowskim (1998a) rozumieniu dialogu. Według niego „otwarcie na innego ma charakter dialogiczny” (Tischner 1998a: 9), a „słuchać to przenieść siebie w sytuację, w której znajduje się mówiący” (Tischner 1991: 15). Dialog bowiem „ustanawia, umacnia i rozwija trwającą dłużej lub krócej, bogatszą lub uboższą duchową rzeczywistość – rzeczywistość międzyludzką – która zakreśla istotny sens dialogicznej wzajemności osób” (Tischner 1998a: 20). Współcześnie John Searle wyjaśnia:

Stwierdzamy, że istnieje pięć ogólnych sposobów używania języka, pięć ogólnych kategorii czynności illokucyjnych. Mówimy ludziom, jak się sprawy mają (*asercje*), staramy się ich nakłonić do zrobienia czegoś (*akty dyrektywne*), zobowiązujemy się do zrobienia czegoś (*akty komisywne*), wyrażamy nasze uczucia i postawy (*akty ekspresywne*) oraz wprowadzamy zmiany w świecie poprzez nasze wypowiedzi (*akty deklaratywne*) (Searle 1979: VII).

W ramach kategoryzacji Searle’a, filozofia dialogu Tischnera obejmowałaby akty dyrektywne, komisywne i deklaratywne. Jest tak dlatego, że zgodnie z polskim myślicielem ontologia człowieka żyjącego z innymi ludźmi na scenie życia opiera się na serii spotkań i rozstań, które angażują nas w sprawy ludzkie poprzez dialog skonstruowany jako relacja: pytanie–odpowiedź.

Filozofia spotkania

Jak wyjaśnia Tischner, „dramat zaczyna się od spotkania, rozwija się w rozmaitych formach obcowania, kończy rozstaniem – rozejściem lub śmiercią” (Tischner 1991: 12). W ramach tego filozoficznego sposobu rozumienia życia człowieka opisuje on rolę innego w następujący sposób: „Inny człowiek staje wobec mnie poprzez jakieś roszczenie, w następstwie którego powstaje we mnie poczucie obowiązku” (Tischner 1991: 13). Uczeń Tischnera, Jarosław Jagiełło (2020), stwierdza:

Jasne jest zatem, że w optyce Tischnera dramaturgia, wręcz tragizm istnienia, wewnętrzny spór, jakiego człowiek doświadcza choćby w aksjologicznym horyzoncie swojego istnienia, nie dokonuje się inaczej, tylko w obliczu Innego – zarówno drugiego człowieka, jak i Boga (Jagiełło 2020: 68).

Tischner wyraźnie inspiruje się myślą Lévinasa, którego analiza spotkania *tête-à-tête* zawiera również te elementy pytania i odpowiedzi, gdyż znana z twórczości Lévinasa twarz pojawia się przy pytaniu, dowodzeniu i słuchaniu. Jak pisze Tischner, „metafizyką tutaj jest to, że ktoś pyta drugiego i że ktoś drugiemu odpowiada; metafizyką jest to, że ktoś drugiemu rozkazuje i że ktoś słucha. Istnieje także metafizyka prośby” (Tischner 2012: 256).

Pytanie jest *prima facie* prośbą – jest rodzajem zwrócenia się ku innemu z jakimś pragnieniem. Ta sytuacja pytania oczekuje na odpowiedź. Rodzi też pewne napięcie między dwiema stronami, które wynika z oczekiwania na odpowiedź. Czy ona w ogóle nadejdzie? A może tylko częściowo? Czy spełni moje pragnienia? Czy spełni moje oczekiwania? Czy w ogóle weźmie pod uwagę moje pytanie, czy po prostu je zignoruje? Czy słowa, które padną jako odpowiedź, będą prawdziwe?

Tischner postrzega relacje międzyludzkie w pewnym specyficznym otoczeniu – otoczeniu spotkania. Po pierwsze, spotykamy kogoś. Po drugie, w ramach tego spotkania ten ktoś może zadać mi pytanie. Po trzecie, moja decyzja o odpowiedzi lub jej braku czyni mnie uczestnikiem czyjś dramatu. By użyć słów Tischnera:

Stanął przede mną człowiek i zadał mi pytanie. Nie wiem, skąd przyszedł, i nie wiem, dokąd zmierza. Teraz oczekuje odpowiedzi. Pytając pragnie najwyraźniej uczynić mnie uczestnikiem jakiejś swojej sprawy (Tischner 1989a: 89).

Etyczny wymiar relacji pytanie—odpowiedź w filozofii dialogu Józefa Tischnera

Uwagi wstępne

Tischner podkreśla etyczne znaczenie relacji pytanie—odpowiedź następująco:

„Jakość” zapytywania – bycia zapytanym – nie odnosi nas jednak do abstrakcyjnej idei wolności, lecz do wolności jako wybrania. Objawienie ma w sobie coś z przypadku, ale nie jest to przypadek „bez sensu”. Jest to przypadek „z wyboru” [...]. Pierwszą wolnością jest wolność Innego, który pyta i aktem pytania „zwierza siebie” (Tischner 1998b: 175).

Szczególnie warto zwrócić uwagę na to, że w ramach teorii Tischnera ten, kto pyta, jednocześnie odsłania się i zwierza innemu. Nie otwieramy się przed byle kim: „Epifania twarzy nie jest objawieniem wszystkiego wszystkim, lecz objawieniem prawdomównego wybranemu” (Tischner 1998a: 32). Pytając, musimy zaufać drugiej osobie i mieć nadzieję, że nas nie zawiedzie, nie okłamie. „Ten, kto objawia siebie, szuka najpierw tego, komu mógłby się zwierzyć i powierzyć” (Tischner 1998b: 179). Pytanie jest aktem zaufania i wiary i nigdy nie jest to relacja jednostronna, gdyż „objawienie jest wybraniem, które dokonuje się na poziomie relacji dialogicznej między osobą a osobą” (Tischner 1998b: 179). Gdy ja zadaję pytanie, towarzyszy temu moje objawienie siebie, wiąże ono mnie z Tobą i jest szansą na zbudowanie przez nas relacji opartej na zaufaniu, wierności i sile.

Osoba, która pyta, nawiązuje swoim pytaniem relację z drugą osobą. Niemniej jednak, aby stworzyć relację, odpowiadający musi odpowiedzieć. Jest to dość oczywiste, bowiem odpowiadający ma na ogół do wyboru dwie logiczne opcje – może powiedzieć szczerze „tak” lub równie szczerze „nie”. „Objawienie rozumiane jako pytanie, wyznaczenie i zwierzenie oraz zapowiedź powierzenia przezwyjęcza odległość separacji, jaka dzieli Ja od Ty – Ty, które może powiedzieć «nie»” (Tischner 1998b: 180). Most między dwiema stronami dialogu zostanie zbudowany, jeśli odpowiedź będzie pozytywna, godna zaufania. Jeśli będzie ona milcząca i pusta bądź negatywna, wówczas rodzi się dramat.

Jest ważne, aby rozumieć, jak wielką rolę w filozofii Tischnera odgrywa relacja pytanie–odpowiedź. Ma ona ogromny ciężar moralny – wręcz buduje etykę – ponieważ tylko w kontekście relacji pytanie–odpowiedź można mówić o odpowiedzialności.

Inny człowiek jest we mnie obecny – lub obecny przy mnie – poprzez roszczenie, jakie we mnie budzi. Widać to w świadomości pytania. Drugi postawił mi pytanie. [...] Pytanie jest roszczeniem. Ten, kto pyta, rości sobie prawo do odpowiedzi. Pierwszą odpowiedzią na pytanie jest świadomość, że trzeba odpowiedzieć. W tym trzeba czujemy obecność innego człowieka. Inny człowiek jest obecny przy mnie poprzez to, co trzeba, abym dla niego uczynił; i jestem przy nim obecny poprzez to, co trzeba, aby on uczynił dla mnie. Więź, która między nami powstaje, jest więzią zobo-wiązania. Zobo-wiązanie to wiązanie obowiązkiem. [...] Zobowiązania rodzą się w spotkaniu (Tischner 1998a: 18).

Przede mną stoją inni ludzie – mają oni inny charakter i istotę niż każdy inny byt na świecie; nie są tylko jakimiś nieinteraktywnymi

ziarnkami piasku czy chmurami na niebie. Różnica polega na tym, że kiedy oni pytają, otwierają tym samym możliwość zaistnienia głębokiej, interpersonalnej relacji. Także zwierzęta mogą nas czasem o coś prosić – głównie o jedzenie – ale prośba człowieka jest jednak inna. Dzieje się tak dlatego, że według Tischnera osoba, która prosi, chce, by ktoś stał się prawdziwym uczestnikiem jej dramatu. Chce, by ktoś zaangażował się w jej sprawy. Może być w potrzebie, może odczuwać jakieś pragnienie, które domaga się spełnienia – i z pewnością pytając, potrzebuje odpowiedzi. Niemniej jednak nie ma etycznych środków, aby zmusić człowieka do udzielenia odpowiedzi na nasze pytanie. Odpowiedź rodzi się w sumieniu odpowiadającego i jest aktem wolnej woli. Uzależnia to w pewnym sensie osobę, która pyta, od tej, która odpowiada. Dzieje się tak dlatego, że według Tischnera akt pytania jest zawsze aktem, który pozostaje zanurzony w sferze ludzkiej biedy.

Pytanie—odpowiedź jako relacja zależności w biedzie

„Czym jest pytanie? Jest ono odmianą prośby. Kto stawia pytanie, prosi o odpowiedź. Pytanie i odpowiedź są możliwe tam, gdzie są możliwe prośby, a więc w określonym świecie – w świecie biedy” – pisze Tischner (1998a: 92). Pytanie ujawnia naszą biedę, czyli potrzebę, która wywołała prośbę. Bieda jest matką pytania, a odpowiedź funkcjonuje jako dar wolnej woli: „Obecność innego – tego, który pytając, prosi, i prosząc, pyta – jest obecnością jakiejś biedy. Bieda sama przez się domaga się miłosierdzia” (Tischner 1998a: 101). Jeśli odpowiedź zostaje nam udzielona, to nie przybiera ona formy relacji, jaka cechuje bogatych wobec biednych, ale raczej mistrza wobec ucznia. Tischner (1998a) wyjaśnia to w następujący sposób:

Ja-zapytany wiem dzięki pytaniu, które do mnie doszło, że inny człowiek jest przy mnie obecny, ale wiem również, że i ja jestem przy nim. [...] Odpowiadając na pytanie, zaczynam być – o ile odpowiadam na pytanie – „dla kogoś” (Tischner 1989a: 90).

Ta zależność od innego człowieka w akcie pytania stawia tego, kto pyta, w pozycji w pewnym sensie upokarzającej. Pytając, przyznajemy się przed drugą osobą, że jej potrzebujemy. Stawia nas to na jakimś nierównym poziomie z osobą, którą o coś pytamy. Przez sam akt pytania ujawniamy, że nie jesteśmy samowystarczalni i potrzebujemy drugiego człowieka. Co więcej, samo to, że nie wiemy czy otrzymamy

odpowiedź jest również dość niewygodne dla tego, kto pyta. Nie tylko w jakiś sposób stajemy się nadzy, gdy zadajemy pytania, ale także podejmujemy ryzyko, że ta nasza nagość zostanie zlekceważona:

Odpowiadam, bo pytanie było prośbą i wezwaniem, a prośba i wezwanie były ustanowieniem etycznej odpowiedzialności. Odpowiadam, aby nie zabić. Gdybym milczał, mógłbym dokonać zbrodni na twarzy pytającego. Moje milczenie byłoby aktem pogardy – metafizycznej pogardy (Tischner 1998a: 103).

W duchu Tischnerowskiej filozofii inspirowanej Lévinasem, ten, kto nie odpowiada, kto decyduje się nie odpowiadać szczerze, jest tym, który skazuje innego człowieka na pogardę. Brak odpowiedzi jest zupełnie dramatyczną sytuacją odrzucenia, wzgardzenia, zignorowania, pozostawienia w samotności. Ma to jeszcze głębszy, bo metafizycznie osadzony wymiar etyczny: „Brak wzajemności, a zwłaszcza jej odmowa, dopełnia się w perspektywie zła” (Tischner 1998a: 117). Brak odpowiedzi i odmowa wzajemności są etycznie złe. Tak właśnie Tischner postrzega relację pytanie–odpowiedź:

[...] u źródeł odpowiedzi na zadane człowiekowi pytanie musi być jakiś wybór etyczny – wybór między dobrem a złem. Odpowiadający nie tylko daje odpowiedź innemu, ale daje ją również sobie – sobie jako uczestnikowi dramatu dobra i zła (Tischner 1998a: 91).

Podsumowanie i krótkie rozwiązanie problemu badawczego

Zgodnie z poglądami Tischnera, człowiek żyjący wśród innych ludzi jest skazany na sytuację dramatyczną – dramat rodzi się wtedy, gdy potrzebujemy słowa prawdziwego, a dane nam jest kłamstwo. Na scenie teatru życia fabuła przebiega według zasady pytanie–odpowiedź, co można zaobserwować na różnych poziomach ludzkiego życia (osobistego, społecznego, regionalnego, narodowego czy globalnego). Polski filozof traktuje tę dialogiczną relację bardzo głęboko, twierdząc nawet, że jest ona warunkiem koniecznym, abyśmy mogli w pełni się stać sobą, gdyż „we wzajemności ja staję się tym, kim jestem, dzięki tobie, a ty dzięki mnie” (Tischner 1991: 12). Wzbogacając tę wypowiedź o metafizyczną perspektywę Emmericha Coretha (1986, 1994, 1980), należy podkreślić, że sytuacja człowieka jest jeszcze bardziej tragiczna – jego istnienie zależy od Bytu Czystego, podczas gdy jego istota oddziela go od Niego, co odkrywamy wówczas,

gdymy rozważamy ten problem. Biorąc pod uwagę wszystkie powyższe sposoby ujmowania człowieka, możemy stwierdzić, że w ramach tej perspektywy filozoficznej człowiek funkcjonujący w kontekstach społecznych i ontologicznych jest postrzegany jako żebrak. Znajduje się w ciągłej biedzie i to na różnych poziomach: osobistym, egzystencjalnym, społecznym, interpersonalnym itp. W tym miejscu Tischner przyznaje, że „pytania podstawowe, od których w ogóle zaczyna się filozofowanie, są bez wątpienia wołaniem bólu” (Tischner 1989a: 96). Sytuując się w pozycji osoby, która pyta, skazujemy się na prawdziwy dramat, gdyż sami jesteśmy zależni od odpowiedzi, która może nadejść lub nie. Co więcej, prosząc, wyznajemy i potwierdzamy, że nie jesteśmy samowystarczalni, bo czegoś potrzebujemy. Pytanie posiada ukrytą naturę dążenia do czegoś i jest ufundowane na jakimś głodzie. Z perspektywy metafizycznej, mając na uwadze naszą relacyjną konstrukcję, która ujawnia się w paradygmacie pytanie–odpowiedź, potwierdzamy, że jesteśmy istotami ograniczonymi i niedoskonałymi, skazanymi na wieczne poszukiwanie czegoś, co zasadniczo nie musi się spełnić, a jeśli nawet nadejdzie jakieś częściowe spełnienie, to pojawia się kolejny rodzaj braku.

Możemy być uwikłani w tę spiralę pytanie–odpowiedź *ad infinitum*, nigdy nie osiągając satysfakcji. Struktura relacji pytanie–odpowiedź opiera się na pragnieniu, a jak zauważa Budda Gautama, każde nieszczęście i cierpienie (*dukkha*) ma swoje źródło w pragnieniu:

Czym jest stres związany z nieotrzymaniem tego, czego się pragnie? W istotach podlegających narodzinom pojawia się pragnienie: „Obyśmy nie podlegali narodzinom i oby narodziny nie przyszły na nas”. Ale to nie jest do osiągnięcia przez chcenie. Jest to stres związany z nieuzyskaniem tego, czego się pragnie. W istotach podlegających starzeniu się, chorobie, śmierci, smutkowi, lamentowi, bólowi, strapieniu i rozpacz, pojawia się życzenie: „Obyśmy nie podlegali starzeniu się, chorobie, śmierci, smutkowi, lamentowi, bólowi, strapieniu i rozpacz, i oby starzenie się, choroba, śmierć, smutek, lament, ból, strapienie i rozpacz nie przyszły na nas”. Ale tego nie da się osiągnąć przez chcenie. Jest to stres związany z nieotrzymaniem tego, czego się pragnie (*The First Noble Truth... 2013*).

Według nauki buddyjskiej w obrębie strukturalnego pragnienia i chcenia nie można osiągnąć spokojnego umysłu.

Tischner ma pełną świadomość, że pragnienie jest przyczyną, przez którą na scenę naszego dramatycznego życia wkracza cierpienie, bieda i nieszczęście. Próbuje złagodzić ten dylemat, rozróżniając tęsknotę od pragnienia/pożądania, inspirując się przy tym Lévinasem:

Bycie-dla-innego wyraża się, według Lévinasa, pragnieniem, które różni się w sposób istotny od pożądania. Pożądanie, nawet w swej najbardziej wysublimowanej formie, jaką jest otwarcie na piękno innego, jest zawsze pożądaniem tego-samego; kto żyje na poziomie pożądań, oczekuje „wiecznego powrotu tego samego”. Pragnienie jest otwarciem na to, co inne, co całkiem inne (Tischner 1998b: 245).

Za Lévinasem Tischner twierdzi, że tęsknota za czymś zupełnie innym nie jest tym samym, co pożądanie, które jest pragnieniem tego-samego. W ten sposób wkracza w rozważania o Bogu i agatologii. Za św. Tomaszem z Akwinu także Coreth uważa, że tylko Byt (*Sein*) jest *actus in seipso subsistens*.

Jednakże pełnia wszystkich rzeczywistych doskonałości bytu może być jednak pomyślana jako coś skończonego; jednak może ona być ograniczona tylko wtedy, gdy istnieją także inne niespełnione możliwości, czyli niezrealizowane możliwości dalszych doskonałości bytu (Coreth 1958: 54).

Innymi słowy, niespełnione możliwości, istniejące w ramach tej ontologicznej hipotezy konstrukcji bytów bez Bytu Czystego, zawsze będą nam towarzyszyć. Nie zważając na to, w tym artykule pozostawiamy na boku rozważania o transcendencji jako możliwym rozwiązaniu problemu relacji pytanie–odpowiedź, pamiętając, że takie rozwiązanie zostało zaproponowane przez niektórych metafizyków. Na razie możemy jedynie przywołać perspektywę Pippi Pończoszanki, która z zapalem poszukuje „spunku” i po długiej przygodzie dotyczącej poszukiwania znaczenia słowa „spunk”, odkrywa je we własnych rękach (Lindgren 1961, rozdz. 3).

Wracając do początkowego zapytania: Jaka jest wartość słów? Co oznaczają słowa? Czy możemy ufać słowom? Być może odpowiedź na te pytania jest prostsza niż się wydaje. Być może z każdym słowem, nawet wymyślonym, mylącym lub zwodniczym, możemy podążać za Pippi i bawić się zarówno w szukanie znaczenia, jak i szukanie rzeczy (zob. Lindgren 1961).

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ADRES DO KORESPONDENCJI

Dominika Dziurosz-Serafinowicz
 Uniwersytet Gdański
 Instytut Filozofii

e-mail: dominika.dziurosz-seraferinowicz@phdstud.ug.edu.pl

Szymon Tarka
ORCID: 0000-0001-5672-2537
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow

Education from the Perspective of the Philosophy of Dialogue: Ethical Aspects During the COVID-19 Pandemic

ABSTRACT

The personal relationship between teacher and student is an important element of the educational process. It takes place in a specific space, which is usually a school. Interpersonal relationships and the space in which the interaction occurs are very important for understanding the essence of humankind. Problems related to the understanding of interpersonal relationships and their place in the broader educational process are also key issues in the philosophy of dialogue, as perceived by Józef Tischner. Therefore, the article first presents the main outlines of the philosophy of dialogue, understood as a starting point for education; then it emphasizes the importance of dialogue in education and the role of the meeting between teacher and student in the educational process. Over the last two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, interpersonal relationships have been greatly limited and sometimes even impossible, while the learning process was carried out remotely. With this in mind, the article discusses the ethical dimension of education in both real and virtual meetings. The main aim of the article is to draw attention to the threats facing today's changing education and to emphasize one of the important elements of education, which is educational dialogue.

KEYWORDS

education, dialogue,
meeting, ethics,
philosophy of dialogue

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Introduction

The time of the pandemic influenced all aspects of our lives. It is hard to find a space that would not have been affected by restrictions, lockdowns or isolation. A life-threatening disease keeps each person in a state of permanent readiness and tension. Our health, which is the basis for our existence and action, provides us with strength necessary for functioning in the field of science, work, culture, and education. When we instinctively want to protect ourselves and other people, we ignore the cost we have to bear. It is not surprising, then, that the circumstances in which we live make the protection of our health and life a priority. Unfortunately, during the long time in which we were under various pandemic restrictions, the quality of our life decreased. Travelling, which used to be so simple, started to require several sanitary rules that limited our freedom to move from place to place. Everyday life showed us that, apart from hospitals, shops and offices became places in which the most significant changes occurred. There were restrictions related to the number of people per one square meter in those places, as well as many other sanitary requirements for everyone who wanted to access them. Pandemic restrictions involved changes in almost all spaces in which people met both for private and professional purposes.

One of the spaces which experienced such changes in a particularly strong manner was education: primary schools, secondary schools, universities, and other places related to education. It is difficult to predict how online education, which has already exerted influence on students' functioning, will be interpreted in future. That is why, in this article we will discuss a fundamental educational issue, i.e. the personal relationship between a teacher and a student at school, with particular reference to the online educational process.

Issues connected with understanding personal relationships and their place in broadly understood educational process are also key issues in the philosophy of dialogue according to Józef Tischner. In his opinion, the space of interpersonal relations and the space in which the meeting occurs are very important for understanding the very essence of a human being. The philosophy of that thinker from the Polish Highlands reveals the relationship horizon that makes it easier for us to understand the transformation of teaching (from

traditional to remote one) from the ethical perspective. It is worth mentioning, however, that providing final responses in a normative form is very difficult, as the changes are taking place all the time and we do not know when they will end or what their final results will be.

Thus, the objective of this article is to indicate threats facing modern education which is undergoing dynamic changes, and to emphasize the most important elements of education. Therefore, first we will outline the philosophy of dialogue as the starting point for education, and then we will discuss the meaning of dialogue in education and the process of upbringing in the context of a meeting. Also, we will emphasize the ethical dimension of education that is not only taking place in a meeting in the real world, but also in the virtual world.

Philosophy of dialogue as the starting point for education

Philosophy of dialogue is one of the trends of modern thinking which is based on the concept in which relationships constitute the foundation for a human being's existence. In this approach, a person's existence is based on dialogue/talk with another person. Dialogue goes beyond the subjective cognition of the world because it does not refer to the subject-object relationship, but it facilitates the subject-subject relationship. The philosophy of meeting, which is another name for the philosophy of dialogue, objectivizes the reality due to interpersonal interactions, revealing the foundation for the axiological basis for the "I-You" relationship (Kiereś 2001: 570).

While tracing the development of the philosophy of dialogue in Polish thinking, we can come across its leading representative: Józef Tischner. His work related to this subject is *Filozofia dramatu* [*The Philosophy of Drama*] (1990) from which we can draw the basic knowledge for understanding human relationships, as well as the relationship between a person and the world. The space in which we live enables us to experience impulses that inspire our attitudes towards life. The relationship between a person and another human being is a direct experience as a result of which we enter a dialogue. "Dialogic opening is opening to another person; to you, him, her, us, and to them. In another person a human being is present for me, and I am present for the other" (Tischner 1990: 18). It is worth

emphasizing the fact that in the world full of pandemic restrictions it is not enough to be open to another person because it is difficult to meet when all people are locked down or isolated from one another. In this specific situation, all the complexity of communication faces barriers in the fulfillment of the assumptions of a dialogue. The presence of another person is not just the exchange of thoughts, but also a handshake or a facial expression through which he/she asks us to say: “How are you?” In a dialogue, this is a verbal and non-verbal form of expressing being for someone else and communicating with them. Modern communication devices give us the opportunity to talk to someone without physical contact. However, is such a contact (e.g., on the phone) equally valuable as a physical meeting? The reply may be difficult. On the one hand, it is good that we have at least such a contact. On the other hand, it is impossible to communicate with someone fully if we only hear each other, without experiencing the real presence here and now. A meeting in such conditions cannot be complete. I am not fully present for you, and you cannot be fully present for me. That is why, referring to the basic assumptions of the philosophy of dialogue and to broadly understood communication problems during the pandemic, it is worth discussing the space of contact in education.

Scene as the place of a meeting is one of the fundamental assumptions in Tischner’s philosophy of dialogue, which were described in the book *Filozofia dramatu*. “We are in the world like on the stage” (Tischner 1990: 14–18), says Tischner. Narrowing the field for understanding the role of a “stage” in an interpersonal dialogue, we may assume that each talk takes place on a “stage.” A place itself can evoke specific emotions and behaviours in us. When we are in a public place, we follow different principles than we do in our own house. Also, in a cafe we behave according to different principles than in a sacred place. Each location can be our little scene that facilitates or hinders dialogue. School, which is a particular meeting place, aims at teaching knowledge and objective values, as well as educating a young person. While undergoing many transformations, education, which originated from the ancient Greece, in its history has worked out a special place for the fulfillment of its assumptions, i.e. a school. While entering a school, we know from the start what the place is intended for. We become intentionally oriented at gaining

knowledge, looking at the place from the perspective of a student. Also, a teacher entering the school building is aware of the fact that this is a place of his/her work and fulfillment of their vocation to be a pedagogue.

For education and philosophy of dialogue the following two basic aspects are crucial: a meeting with another person and the place of such a meeting, i.e. a specific “scene.” Nevertheless, what conditions must be fulfilled to make the meeting/dialogue/talk valuable and to make the place itself facilitate the true presence and being for each other? Teaching is a special kind of a meeting in which the teacher aims at transferring his/her knowledge to the student. But, in this situation, after the changes that took place in the way of teaching, which form new barriers for the “scene” of the educational meeting, does the educational value itself remain intact? In this context, is not the ethical dimension of education weakened by the impossibility to participate in a real meeting between the teacher and the student? These are certainly important questions which we should try to answer.

Dialogue in education

The beginning of education is marked by the presence of a teacher, a *paidagogos*, who lived in Athens of the ancient Greece and who was usually a slave. He was perceived as a craftsman, and his task included physical, intellectual, cultural and civic preparation of a student for public life (Juraś-Krawczyk, Śliwerski 2000: 104). He was treated as a skilled businessman or technician who was able to transfer his experiences to his pupils. He was often perceived as a member of a family whose job was to teach his students the art of hunting, courage, power of the spirit, and fitness. In this classical approach to education, teaching in a remote manner would be unthinkable. The master-student relationship has always been crucial in educational practice. That is why, we should consider whether dialogue that cannot overcome certain barriers is still a dialogue in the full meaning of the word.

If the meeting of a teacher and a student was a common teaching practice, it is worth considering general, and, at the same time, basic tasks of a teacher. The most important competence typologies,

focused on the specific features of a teacher's work, were indicated by Hanna Hamer and Czesław Banach. The first of them (Hamer 1994: 25–125) divides teaching competences into:

- specialist ones, which mainly include knowledge of the subject taught, as well as self-education skills;
- didactic ones, which specify the skills related to directing the students' learning process;
- psychological ones, which combine attitudes and personality traits related to the positive approach to people with communication, social and self-regulation skills.

Let us analyse the third task. A teacher is to combine “attitudes and personality traits” with particular skills, and the transfer of knowledge should be based on dialogue. Everything that is combined within psychological competences is the expression of the influence of one subject on another subject. Communication skills, which are necessary in the modern world, are first born within a meeting with a parent and with the surrounding world. Then, a child meets a teacher who is to shape the young mind and body. Education should not just assume the transfer of pure knowledge.

In the history of humankind, educational activity has always faced various challenges. Nevertheless, it has never experienced such a specific and difficult challenge as the COVID-19 pandemic time. In the pedagogical dimension it is important for the teacher to become fully involved in the educational process. He/she is to give the students their time, knowledge, presence, values, and ideals. Such a vision of a teacher is a model for all pedagogues. The experience of everyday life, however, shows various attitudes of teachers towards such an ideal. A teacher is to encourage a student to search for the truth, to do good, to be open to the beauty of the surrounding world. It is due to direct contact that a person responsible for teaching is able to react to possible deficiencies of a student, so that, in the educational process, the student may not only gain knowledge but also become a responsible person. A student who is about to complete his education should, apart from gaining broad knowledge in various areas of life, become equipped with reliable social competences and proper communication skills. In further stages of development, as a result of previously gained competences, a young person is to shape his/her self-confidence, new horizons of self-fulfillment of their dreams and

ambitions, as well as the awareness of perspectives awaiting them in future, not only on the job market, but also in personal life.

However, do not students have their obligations, too? The opportunity to gain education is given to everyone, but using this benefit assumes being open to knowledge. Readiness for dialogue assumes presence, but presence itself does not result in interaction. It is because the presence itself does not always involve openness at the beginning of a meeting. If a student, being in a classroom during a lesson, is not open to dialogue and to the knowledge which is being transferred to him/her, the presence itself will not result in adopting the knowledge. And what happens when the student does not sit with his/her classmates in a typical classroom, but in a room of their own house? The temptation to focus on something else than on the knowledge which is being transferred is very strong in such circumstances. While sitting in front of a computer at home it is much easier to open a new window in the Internet browser and read things that seem more interesting, but are less useful. In such a situation, a student remains “in the virtual classroom,” but his/her attention is somewhere else. The same situation may occur at school, but then, seeing that a student is focused on something different than the subject of the lesson, a teacher may react more quickly, and the student, through being “here and now,” is forced to think about what is happening in the classroom. Openness is an internal and external attitude of intentional orientation towards messages sent by another person who is searching for contact (Tischner 1990: 18; 2000: 297). If a teacher is looking for such contact, he/she may come across the student’s presence, but not always openness. Then, the teacher’s words and attempt to transfer knowledge is “like herding cats.” The need for common openness appears, as neither the teacher’s competences, nor the student’s presence are sufficient for effective education. However, it is worth emphasizing that the value of education does not only consist in knowledge itself, but also in shaping a person’s responsibility, justice, knowledge of good manners in all kinds of everyday situations, awareness of one’s social and personal granting of priority to objective principles, such as “do not kill; do not steal,” etc. In this way, the value of ethical dimension of education is fulfilled in dialogue.

Taking into account differences in dialogue taking place in the real or virtual world, we can notice that they result from differences

occurring in other places (scenes) of that meeting. Each of them has its strong and weak points, which results in, on the one hand, new opportunities, and, on the other hand, obstacles on the way to a real personal meeting. Virtual education certainly makes it possible to follow the adopted curricula. However, does this exhaust the basic meaning of education, or perhaps this only aims at the continuation of knowledge transfer? Have not we, somewhere on the way, lost a person whom we are educating? What does upbringing mean? How should we understand education that is fulfilled through a meeting?

Education as a meeting

In the context of the above outlined issue of dialogue in education taking place in the real and virtual world, we can formulate the question concerning a meeting in a strictly educational perspective. Let us make the question more precise: how does a meeting influence education, and how should we understand education as such? If we answer these questions, it will be easier for us to specify what we can learn from the experience of online learning during the pandemic.

It would be a mistake to assume that the pandemic, changing the ways and place of teaching, is the only (if at all) reason for the crisis of education. Did the crisis of school start during the pandemic? It seems that the pandemic, changing the dimension of the real meeting and taking us into the virtual world, only made the existing educational crisis deeper. “We are talking a lot about the crisis of school. According to Plato, the author of one of the archetypes of European education, every crisis is, in its essence, a personal crisis. It consists in living in the illusion of good, truth and beauty” (Gadacz 1991: 50). We have already discussed tasks of a pedagogue, as well as the crisis of dialogue that occurred during the pandemic. However, the key issue includes values that should be the basis for education. Nowadays education stops leading to knowledge and affirmation of basic values, and boils down to pure knowledge, without axiological weight. Such education is deprived of its meaning. For Plato, that meaning included basic values, such as truth, good and beauty. He taught that it is in those values and through them that we can develop our souls. The more a person developed the value of truth

in themselves, and the more they learnt about it, the easier they saw good and beauty which grew up along with themselves.

A person full of these three values made themselves able to be fully human. The crisis of a person may be expressed in, e.g. distortion of the hierarchy of values, or the lack of knowledge of such a hierarchy, as a result of which a human being cannot fully develop as a person. Plato's ideal world assumed taking values as patterns that help us live in harmony with the world, other people and ourselves. When we start looking at the world as the arena of wars and conquests, and at another man as a tool for the fulfillment of our needs, then we experience a crisis of ourselves, our personality and humanity. "For modern times, knowledge discovers the world, but no longer as a way to values, but rather as an object one may rule. Truth ceases to be the fruit of unselfish cognition that allows us to return to the world of ideas and becomes the power of ruling over a man and the world" (Gadacz 1991: 52). The personalistic perspective shows the primacy of a human being over the world of things. Placing himself in the centre of the universe, without proper hierarchy of values, a man risks losing the ability to understand himself. This means that a person, being in the centre of our interest, instead of material goods, such as power, money or other minor values should see the values of truth, good and beauty as the basis for his existence.

If those basic values are not a priority, education becomes just teaching the technical will of ruling over the world and another person, and not upbringing for experiencing the fullness of one's humanity. A modern post-industrial, transhumanist man often adopts the attitude of rejecting truth, good and beauty for the willingness to rule the world and his own life, without noticing that, in quest for such power, he loses himself. One of the consequences of such an attitude may include aggression towards basic values, because when such a man lies, truth dazzles him; when he does wrong, good judges him, and when this happens, he is not beautiful in his humanity, but he is a caricature of himself. What is a person, then, if not a true reflection of higher values, basic values, the only values that make them human? Is he/she only a part of a technical, mechanical world? Or perhaps the image of the future is not so dark?

Let us go even further to avoid doubts. If changes in education assume reducing a person's education to teaching them how to

consume this world, what this means or what it can lead us to? “Education is upbringing for being a person. Apart from the well-known distinction between «be» and «have» by Gabriel Marcel, which is extremely important for the issue of education, we also make a distinction between «be» and «function». Being is being a person. Functioning is a non-personal activity” (Gadacz 1991: 53). If functioning is the priority of education, values seem to be pushed to the background. In such an approach, truth is only useful and right if it helps us functioning. It becomes a usable product that can undergo a subjective transformation for one’s needs, and not a pattern of behavior as an objective paradigm of existence. A man in such a reality is threatened with losing his essence, i.e. his humanity.

Obviously, we do not want to say that the ability to function in the society is of secondary value. Communication competences, management skills, as well as the ability to carry out effective trade and provide services are very important competences in the modern world. However, we should also ask ourselves about the place of a human being and the role of his/her competences in functioning as a person. All competences and skills are to serve a person. If they do, we can develop, understand the world better and build the world in a wiser manner. However, such a servitude requires the acceptance of the normative nature of basic values. They are values that make it possible to normatively specify what is good, i.e. what serves a human being and what does not. However, very often it is exactly the opposite. A human being becomes a tool for the fulfilment of imposed assumptions that take into account only economic, social, etc. good. Such a reductionist approach does not take into account the primacy of basic values, which is why the proper hierarchy of values becomes distorted. Again, the question about the hierarchy of values returns: are truth and good more important than material goods?

The philosophy of dialogue emphasizes the relational nature of a person. Such nature results from the common experiencing of one’s existence in the common space. A person is in the center of a meeting and, at the same time, he/she is not alone. “Education as a certain intention is a vocation” (Gadacz 1991: 50) because a teacher “lifts a young person up” and develops what they already have, i.e. humanity.

Therefore, does a meeting have an influence on education? It seems that it does. What's more, it is mainly in a meeting that we should educate a person for values. "A teacher who educates in a personal manner has spiritual and intellectual authority which he/she does not lose when ideologies collapse and social orders change, as the teacher is a mandatory of God. Being such a mandatory, the teacher does not have to hide his/her weaknesses" (Gadacz 1991: 60). A person with such an authority may or even should be called a pedagogue by vocation, i.e. someone who acts with a certain intention aiming at educating others. The ability to open oneself and sacrifice one's work for another person to show them basic values is a model attitude, i.e. an attitude that should be shown by each pedagogue. "The world of values is revealed in a living manner through a meeting of people. But just as we have separated the order of being from the order of functioning, we can differentiate education «in the optics of being» and «in the optics of functioning»" (Gadacz 1991:58). This optics of education for functioning is presented as a rigid fulfillment of the assumptions made in advance. In this attitude there is no openness to the individual dimension of education. As we are all individuals, none of us needs a technical instruction of using oneself as a cog in the machine of humanity. Instead, we need a perspective for development and fulfillment of ourselves in the world in which we live. We need to learn the attitude of openness to being oneself in the full meaning of the word, i.e. to be delighted with objective values and fulfill them in everyday life. A pedagogue by vocation should be a leader directing young people towards real humanity. A teacher who only teaches others to function in a society becomes a tool of ideologization. He/she treats students as actors preparing for playing their role in the society, which seems a very narrow-minded approach to the multifaceted process of learning and education.

Ethical dimension of education in a real and virtual meeting

It is a cliché to claim that proper education of the young generation is an expression of concern for the future of humanity which is nowadays developing fast in almost each possible direction. Such concern for the improvement of our children's conditions of life results from our need to feel that their future is safe. By sending

children to school, we hope that they will gain knowledge that is necessary for living in the modern world. Such knowledge is a value and it also involves development of self-knowledge, i.e. knowledge of who one actually is.

The fulfillment of the assumptions of the philosophy of a meeting without taking into account specific time, space and another human being, seems impossible. School as the place for education enables the meeting of an internal world of a child/young person with a teacher responsible for their education. Various aspects of that meeting depend on constant changes that are made in the educational process. Such changes include the necessity to adjust the form of education to the requirements of modern times. Changes in the way of teaching which resulted from the pandemic include the mass introduction of modern technologies into the process of education. However, the use of such technologies should not erase the personal primate and relational nature of transferring knowledge and education. The time of the pandemic moved us into virtual places of education, i.e. internet platforms, which is related to a new, different quality of education. However, that new, different quality cannot be the reason for forgetting about the teacher's mission and vocation. Education, in its essence, must take into account upbringing as the foundation. "Ethics wants to understand the sources and meanings of fears of human conscience; it wants to understand the scope of human freedom; and, first of all, it wants to give a meaningful shape to human hope. It is because the whole human quest for values; the whole effort aimed at fulfilling values in the real world and in oneself; the whole searching for *ethos*, is full of the experience of hope [...]. That is why, our concern for the basic ethics includes: making unbridled human hopes meaningful" (Tischner 2018: 68). The meaning we are discussing is not easy to find. Neither material goods, nor fame or power can satisfy the need for such a meaning. It seems that if a person wants to follow the internal ethos of searching for the meaning, he/she has to return to what Plato taught. Thus, basic values should fill in our internal and external world of hopes in an objective manner. Such values may become a pattern for a man's way of life in his constant fulfillment of the meanings to which his own hope leads him. If a person is to follow the way of truth, good and beauty, i.e. constantly to learn about oneself and look for the meaning

of their existence, it is necessary to educate them in a way that is not just education for “functioning,” but also for “being.” Thus, a question arises about the ethical dimension of education in the virtual world.

The time of the pandemic was very difficult for education which had to face new challenges. As a virtual place of meeting, school facilitated further separation of “education for being” from “education for functioning.” The virtual world that was introduced into education makes it possible to activate new forms of knowledge transfer, but, in itself, it does not give us a new quality. Tadeusz Gadacz notices that “the symptom of the school crisis is losing the meaning of the word «education». School does not provide education; it only teaches and transfers knowledge” (Gadacz 1991: 51). During the pandemic, education perceived in this way was deprived of the event of a personal meeting in which upbringing may be carried out in the best manner. It turns out that, in a way, the pandemic deepened the school crisis. This can be noticed in losing the personal, physical relationship between a teacher and a student, which is why the meeting based only on a virtual transfer of knowledge loses the features of a real, personal meeting. Obviously, I want to emphasize that my intention is not to close education in traditional forms, because I am aware of the fact that new techniques of education, as well as new information technologies, may improve the educational process. However, while chasing the future we cannot forget that it is grandparents, family, peers, teachers, and the local community who create the original environments in which a person develops. Another natural environment which supports educational places is school where, first of all, we should care about the personal master–student relationship. “A teacher, who is a master, can open his/her house to the student and invite them in. In the ethos of life, the student can find place in that house. In this way, school becomes an extension of a family home” (Gadacz 1991: 60).

Ethics in the space of education does not only involve revealing incorrectness. First of all, it should show a young person the proper way. In its essence, education should teach “being” and not “functioning.” Teaching the meaning of being is to discover the values Tischner discussed in the context of ethics. Why should it be this way? Because virtual “places of teaching” may, in a way, dehumanize us through separating the process of education from the requirement

of fulfilling it through a meeting in the real world. That is why, such a way of teaching may deepen the crisis of school. Despite the fact that the curriculum is carried out, its essence is not so clear anymore. Education for living in the light of values becomes blurred and diminished through the radical change in teaching methods. We should hope that, in education, we will always keep “the subjective I” and “the subjective you” as the priority, so that our common meeting in the unspoiled world of our stage of life can constantly develop and motivate us for further work on ourselves. However, we have to admit that, in future, online education may become the basic form of teaching and learning. This is as much possible as impossible. Before the pandemic it seemed impossible, at least in Poland. It turns out, however, that reality sometimes goes beyond our imagination. What we can learn from that difficult pandemic time is that we have to search for such technologies, skills and competences that facilitate a good meeting in which educational assumptions can be fulfilled. The primate of a meeting and shaping students’ basic values as the essence of the educational curriculum can never be moved to the background. Responsibility for future generations requires education in accordance with the objective values such as truth, good and beauty. Virtual methods of teaching seem to distort the meeting to such an extent that education for values becomes very difficult or even impossible. The crisis of school, from modern times to the pandemic time, can only be stopped if we start educating a man “for being.” As the main educational idea, learning for the development of one’s humanity should not be reduced to the transfer of knowledge, which usually happens in strictly virtual education. Truth, good and beauty are values that can only be fulfilled in the personal meeting with another person. Education for these values, as well as fulfilling them, is impossible without the reality of a personal meeting, and not just a meeting based on the telephone, computer or other internet devices.

Conclusion

Interpersonal relationships are based on people’s meetings. During such meetings it is possible to carry out real communication based on dialogue. There is no doubt that dialogue is a very important educational interaction. Preparing students for dialogue and developing

it is a long and complex process, which is to be taught at school at all educational stages. Dialogue occupies special place in a person's social life and functioning, as well as in the life of human communities or institutions. In education, dialogue is related to the subjective approach to the whole educational process, to activeness, innovation, creativity, as well as responsibility for the autonomy of the educational process subjects. Also, it is worth mentioning that, in the present social, economic and political situation, education requires teachers, parents and students to adopt specific skills and good will to carry out dialogue. A meeting, which used to take place in a specific place and time, can now be fulfilled through various communication devices using new information exchange techniques. That is why, in today's school reality, it is very important to create, maintain and care for the proper course of dialogue which, to a large extent, already moved into the virtual world. We should always remember that "the key experience for human ethical self-knowledge is the experience of another person" (Tischner 1982: 399–400). According to Tischner, a meeting is connected with an ethical experience, as it involves responsibility for another person and going out of one's own comfort zone. In such an approach, education is particularly sensitive to the experience of another man. When meeting a student, a teacher carries out dialogue and, at the same time, he/she teaches dialogue and through dialogue. All possible disorders in dialogue through new, virtual meeting places, emphasize the need for careful research and analysis of this phenomenon. The future of education shaped in the ethical perspective requires subjective approach which should lead to educating a person in such a way that makes him/her prepared and open for the experience of another person.

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Szymon Tarka
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow
Faculty of Philosophy
e-mail: szymontarka1998@interia.pl

Andrzej Skupień
ORCID: 0000-0003-0432-8444
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow

Ethics in Educational Science Fiction in the Era of Transhumanism and Posthumanism

ABSTRACT

Education is a continuous process of preparing young people to enter adulthood, of equipping them with the tools and knowledge necessary to cope in the future. It is also, in its own way, a process of “human enhancement.” This article aims to introduce the philosophical concepts of transhumanism and posthumanism. First, some of the most famous visions of the future from visionaries at the end of the 19th century are presented, with a particular emphasis on those that have come true. In the next part, the very concepts of transhumanism and posthumanism are clarified, along with a presentation of the most important differences. In the last part, the educational challenges posed by proponents of these philosophical movements are indicated, as well as the main ethical problems that arise in the world of futuristic visionaries.

Visions of the future

Can we foresee the future? Is it possible for us to, based on the scarce data on the surrounding, yet constantly changing, world, outline the vision of what will happen in several dozen or several

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hundred years? We are not the first people in history for whom immersion in scientific fantasy is an interesting thought experiment. What is more, there have already been people who successfully described their visions of the future or expressed them in another way (e.g. through pictures).

A perfect example of a visionary who managed to go beyond his times was Nikola Tesla. More than a hundred years ago he predicted the creation of something similar to WiFi and mobile phone network. In *New York Times* of 1915 he assumed that soon it would be possible “to send wireless messages around the world” and “to carry and operate one’s own devices” (Tesla 1915). Interesting artistic works designing the vision of the future were created in France at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is particularly worth mentioning a picture drawn in 1920s that shows a café of the future and two people talking to each other without being connected with a wire. They are sending each other images and sounds through devices held in their hands. It is hard to resist the impression that what they are using are smartphones which we use now, in the 21st century.

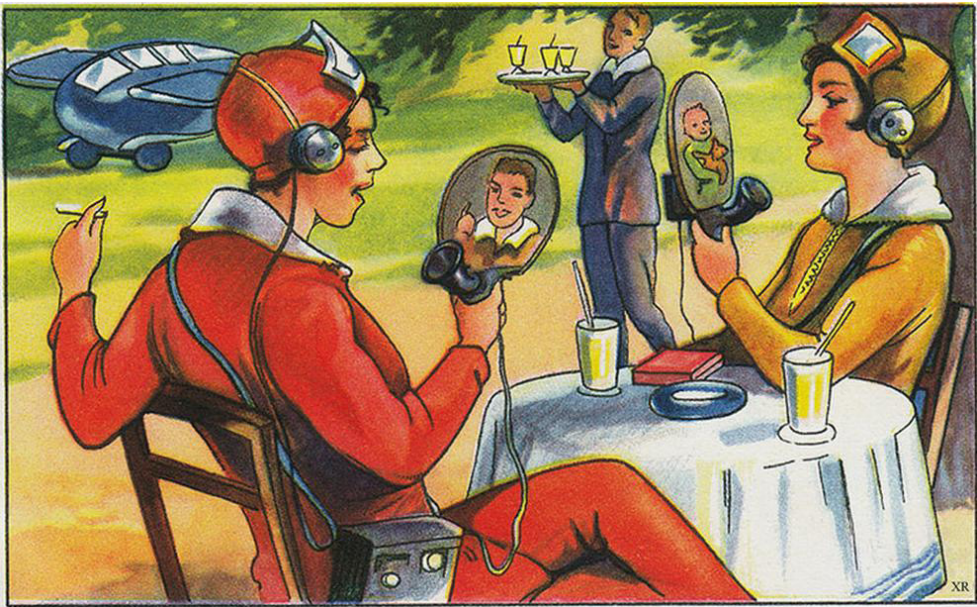


Photo 1: Face-to-face talks according to a vision from 1920s, <https://imgur.com/v6oyw09>

Visionaries-futurists of those times did not only describe the future of selected aspects of life, but they treated their works in a holistic manner, without omitting what is the most important to us, i.e. education. The artists of the time presented a huge variety of concepts related to this area of life. One of the most interesting visions is presented in the series of postcards of 1910 by Maximilian Villemard entitled "In 2000." A postcard presents a machine connected to students' heads with wires. The teacher puts books into the machine and "sends" knowledge directly to the pupils' brains. Another example of similar educational visions is the American cartoon: "The Jetsons" of 1963 in which the human teacher is replaced with a robot who is to perform the same function.

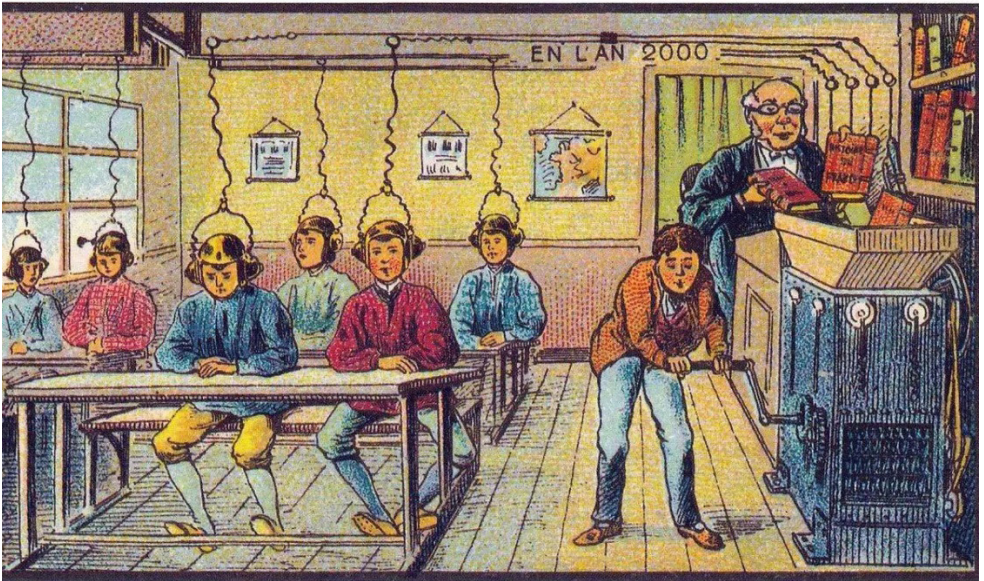


Photo 2: Classroom of the future?, <https://theconomyofmeaning.com/2020/12/20/classrooms-of-the-future/>

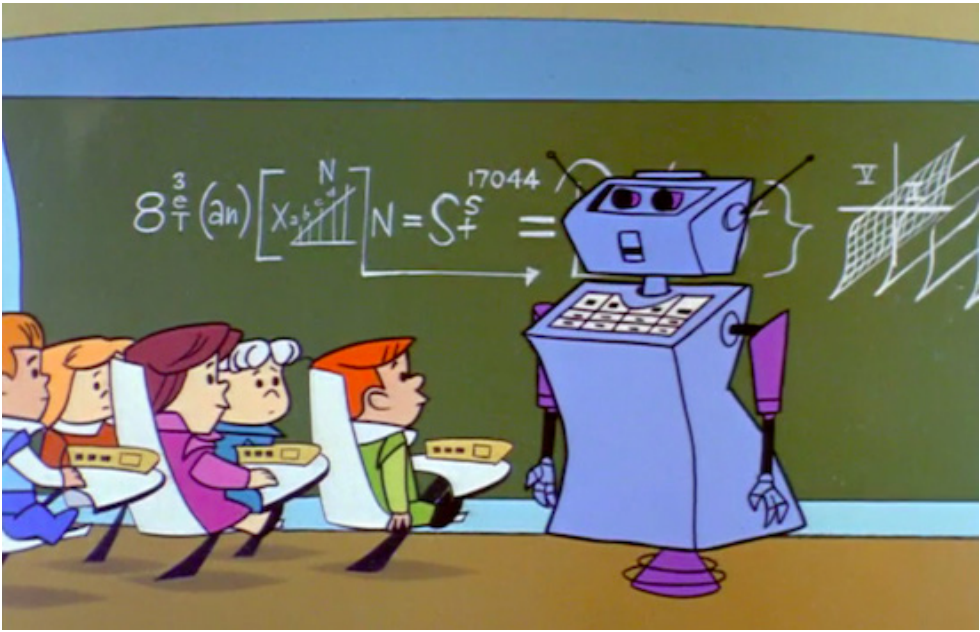


Photo 3: "The Jetsons" cartoon frame, <https://theeconomyofmeaning.com/2020/12/20/classrooms-of-the-future/>

From the perspective of time, we can conclude that all those concepts and visions could be the first shy human steps towards further futurist philosophical trends, such as transhumanism and posthumanism, which will be discussed in the next part of the article. Also, the end of the 19th century is when Friedrich Nietzsche outlined his philosophical concept of a "superhuman" (German: *Übermensch*) which, however, focuses on the need to revise the previous system of values rather than on interfering with the human body to create a transhuman and, finally, a posthuman.

Transhumanism and posthumanism

Nikolai Fyodorov (1829–1903), a Russian philosopher who was a member of the Orthodox Church, is considered to be the father of transhumanism. Fyodorov is the author of the concept according to which the dead can be revived and people can live forever (Sykulski 2013: 89–91). The very term "transhumanism" was created by an English biologist, Julian Huxley, who wrote an essay under this title

in 1957 in which he announced the appearance of a new “cosmic consciousness” that will make it possible for people to take responsibility for the evolution and decide about the future of humanity (Huxley 1968: 73).

While commenting on the origin of the idea of transhumanism, Leszek Sykulski points out:

The history of transhumanism can be divided into two stages. The first one refers to the birth of the philosophy, and the second one includes practical actions aimed at the fulfillment of theoretical assumptions, i.e. development of high technology, as well as achievements in genetic engineering and medicine. [...] However, the actual boom for transhumanism has started recently, i.e. more than a dozen years ago, and it is related to, inter alia, rapid development of nanotechnology, genetics and artificial intelligence (Sykulski 2013: 89–91).

According to the definition of the World Transhumanist Association, transhumanism is a philosophy in which technology should be used to overcome a man’s biological limitations and to improve his condition. Such overcoming and improvement are perceived as becoming free from diseases and old age, as well as achievement of full happiness and replacement of many organs (ultimately the whole organism) with artificial elements. Transhumanism supports the maximum development and popularization of technology so that the above-mentioned overcoming of limitations and improvement of a human being can occur as soon as possible (Bishop 2010: 700). Transhumanists see human nature as an imperfect project which we can learn to process in a desired manner. The current human condition does not have to be the final point of the evolution. Transhumanists hope that, due to the responsible use of science, technology and other resources, we will finally become posthumans, i.e. creatures who will have much more possibilities than we have now (Bostrom 2005: 3–14). Transhumanism is rooted in humanist thinking, but it is much more radical as not only does it promote traditional ways of improving human nature, such as education and improvement of culture, but it also supports direct implementation of medicine and technology in order to overcome some of the basic human biological limitations.

Transhumanism and posthumanism do not differ in terms of the views on human existence in the biological body and on the digital domain. The biggest difference between those two philosophical

concepts is the stage of transforming both human body and social awareness and, in consequence, the acceptance of changes suggested by the activists of those movements. The accurate differentiation of the target “products” of both philosophical concepts was offered by Mike McNamee and Steven Edwards from the University of Wales in Swansea (McNamee, Edwards 2006: 514): (1) transhuman—a transitory cyborg (the object of the process of dehumanization/cyborgization), (2) posthuman—the ultimate cyborg (the result of the process of dehumanization/cyborgization).

After this cursory presentation of the most important ideas of transhumanism and posthumanism, and after outlining the differences between these two philosophical concepts, I will now focus on our basic topic, i.e. ethics in the educational vision of the future.

While commenting on the philosophical features of posthumanism, Francesca Ferrando notices:

Posthumanism may be perceived as postexclusivism: the empirical philosophy of mediation that offers reconciliation of existence in its broadest meanings. Posthumanism does not use any frontal dualism or antithesis, demystifying any ontological polarization through postmodern practice of deconstruction (Ferrando 2013: 26–32).

I think such an approach resembles monism. The Cartesian dualistic concept of perceiving the world (*res cogitans* versus *res extensa*) was a departure from the scholastic concept of a human soul and from the Aristotelian principle of hylomorphism. The division into soul and body does not seem to be valid in transhumanism. Exclusivism, however, provides a form of thinking about the space in which we move, announcing a sphere unavailable to most people. Thus, postexclusivism would indicate a step further, and it would separate the sphere that is even more exclusive than the one already separated by exclusivism. This means a huge narrowing of the possibility to become a posthuman. Such a possibility would only refer to the elites who simply can afford the procedure of changing their nature. Theoretically, both transhumanism and posthumanism assume the common availability of their solutions, promising improvement to each person, but in practice such procedures would be extremely expensive and thus available to few people. In this way, we have to face imagining the world with many “species” of people whose manner and degree of transformation would be extremely varied. Assignment of

exclusivity to transhumanism, and postexclusivity to posthumanism, gives a logical meaning to the gradation of availability and progression of changes suggested by the supporters of both philosophical concepts. Through this vision, the field of ethics is extended to other species. Inevitably, questions and possible threats appear, as transhumanists aim at even greater expansion of hybrid human subjects. Ethical issues concerning the interaction of hybrids (cyborgs) with people born in a traditional way and have no modifications in their bodies remain unknown to transhumanists (Kriman 2019: 132–147).

Obviously, these are just selected concepts of the vision of a human being in the future. The considerations concerning the possibility of transferring human thoughts or awareness into the digital world are unlimited. Also, there is a certain risk resulting from a thoughtless approach to AI (artificial intelligence), especially in terms of using it in everyday life. A lot of people, especially young ones, get used to continuous activity in computer networks in which they enter into interactions with AI algorithms more frequently than with living human beings. Thus, it is difficult to say which problems are more important: the ones that require the improvement of technologies or those which refer to the condition of a contemporary man (Osiński 2021: 71–71).

Combining the transfer of thoughts or consciousness with the well-known hologram technique may transfer the direction of considerations from the sphere focused on purely biological aspects of human life to the idea according to which our thoughts or consciousness may survive without our body. Also, this transfer opens the path to considering the possible copying of the mind that would enable us to multiply ourselves, and the potential of cooperation would eliminate the conflict among the copies of the same mind (Sotala 2012: 275–291).

Some authors, such as David Roden, claim that if the policy of a posthuman is anthropologically unlimited, each ethical evaluation of the posthuman must result from his historical appearance. In Roden's opinion, if we want to follow a serious posthumanistic ethics, we have to create a posthuman or become a posthuman (Roden 2017: 99–119).

Trans- and posthumanism, and education of the future

While analyzing numerous reports of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), we may come to the conclusion that, unfortunately, schools prepare students to live in the world which no longer exists. Within the last decades we can notice that learning has become much more effective in some countries due to the application of technology in educational processes. Those countries have invested significant resources (not only financial ones) in the extension of digital access, and their reforms of education were accompanied by a clear new vision of the target model. The implementation of new ways of teaching and continuous education of teachers have optimized technological opportunities in countries such as Estonia, Finland or South Korea. The rest of the world had to face similar changes within only a few months after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we can see from the perspective of time, most of the countries which delayed the implementation of technology before the pandemic, had to struggle with such a difficult undertaking. The results were different depending on the country. We can notice that digitalization, i.e. using new algorithms and artificial intelligence, may replace human decisions, allocating the resources in the most efficient manner in order to, for example, satisfy students' individual needs. Also, during the pandemic, solutions were implemented that made it possible for students to connect with other students and teachers through the internet. Unfortunately, apart from the benefits of online learning, there were also many challenges, as there were certain aspects of the remote educational process that caused undesired effects or even damage to students and teachers.

Nowadays, students need more social and emotional support than ever. Technology cannot replace counselling or mentorship which support students throughout the whole educational process. The lack of proper control over technology may threaten young people's wellbeing. Examples include students who thoughtlessly use video games or contents available on various internet platforms, or those who are persecuted in social media. Technology may save time spent by teachers on transferring basic knowledge and performing administrative tasks. It may also enable teachers to spend more time on correcting students' behavior or supporting them in an active manner,

especially in non-typical or hard situations in life. However, technology cannot replace their sense of being a human/teacher/mentor to whom students may come if they feel lost or uncertain. In general, education is to lead a young person from their immature form into the mature one. This process occurs within many different aspects, including the mental one, but also in the area of physical fitness. The meaning of education which is known to us is not only based on considering school tasks, but also on questioning and discussing the components of so-called apparatus of critical thinking. This requires coexistence of the relationships of both sides in the process: teacher-student (vertical communication) and student-student (horizontal communication), because we should approach the learning process in a cross-sectional manner.

From this perspective, education may also be treated as a formal process of improving people. It is education which (also in the transhumanist concept) changes a man (through technology). Thus, following the transhumanist philosophy is an element that constitutes the possibility to create the concept of the world both without education and in a radically changed form about which we have not been thinking about.

A vision of such a world may reveal itself to us in two forms. The first one is the world without conventional education, i.e. education which we know and which we have been shaping for ages. Social needs, which constitute the fundamental connection between a unit and other units in the society, should be redefined or replaced in the utopian vision of transhumanists. People need other people in order to satisfy their non-material needs, such as education, friendship or culture. Those typically human (if we can put it this way) features require that we are social beings. In this way, social needs are an inseparable part of human nature (Steinhoff 2014: 1–16). So, is presenting other visions of future teaching necessarily connected with redefining human nature? According to transhumanists, this is a key element in the stage of dehumanizing a man in order to achieve the required results.

Separation of a young person from educational processes which we have worked out throughout the ages, is the only way to change the consciousness of the target society through total control over the process of transhumanist vision of human improvement. Not only is

this element crucial in the changes to the human body or its parts, but it is to change our mentality and way of perceiving the reality.

Well-developed countries already take first shy steps in this direction. For example, in one of the Japanese schools, a teacher-robot named “Saya” is employed. He transfers knowledge to the students, but he is unable to support them in the emotional sphere. As technology is developing, transhumanists believe that this will also change soon. However, the relationship between robots and children may go beyond human control. While performing the tasks to which they were programmed, robots may dominate over children, classifying all behaviors only within the frames of the programmed norms from which there can be no deflections. Instead of introducing the atmosphere of openness, creativity and trust, this could introduce misunderstanding, emotional pain and fear. This is particularly important because, as a rule, children of the 21st century trust technology and, in a blind manner, follow the orders or instructions of artificial intelligence. We all know the cases of computer games that lead to suicide or self-harm. The lack of control over technology, using it consciously for wrong purposes, or a computer virus/cyberattack may become serious risks to health and life of many students.

Another vision is the world without education. Transhumanists believe that education is a key element, but for posthumanists the process of gaining knowledge does not have to occur within the frames of the conventional system of education. The world without schools and teachers, in which we gain knowledge through software loaded into our minds and regular updates that include the whole humanity, is only possible when we overcome the existing technological barriers, such as going from nanotechnology, which we use today, to picotechnology, femtotechnology, or even attotechnology.¹ For the time being, all those technological possibilities remain within the sphere of science-fiction. Although the world of science is still light years from fulfilling the dreams of posthumanists, the activists’ imagination already explores technological possibilities of using

1 Systems of measurement in technology that specify the materials which, at least in one dimension, have the size of 1–100 nm (nanotechnology 10^{-9}), 1–100 pm (picotechnology 10^{-12}), 1–100 fm (femtotechnology 10^{-15}) and 1–100 am (attotechnology 10^{-18}).

chips, thought and consciousness transfers, as well as programming within our metal sphere.

The newest achievements of science include the “neuromorphic” equipment which is being prepared to replace the chemical-biological operation of a human brain. The pioneer Brainternet project, presented a few years ago, tries to send brainwaves to the internet, which means that a human brain could be transformed into an “internet of things” (IoT) device in www. The internet of things makes it possible to connect any device (e.g. coffee machine, washing machine, garage gate, or alarm) to the internet. Brainternet means new opportunities in the interface systems (contact line) on the border of brain-computer which make it possible to read brain signals in a device with the use of the technique known as electroencephalography (EEG). The objective of the project is enabling programming which is advanced enough to ensure interactivity and to send electric signals both ways, i.e. back from the device into the human brain (Wits University 2017). This process is not yet possible to attain because a human brain is very different from the computer processor (Andrews 2017), and the process of data conversion is still incompatible. While digital computers use binary signals consisting of digits 1 and 0, our human brains send signals consisting of several billion bioelectrochemical transmissions. If such a conversion becomes possible, we will no longer see university teachers queuing for the photocopier because students will be able to download data in a virtual manner (provided that the profession of a teacher will still exist).

Forming ethical and moral principles of trans- and post-humans

Transhumanist and posthumanist opinions make it possible for the scientists dealing with education to focus on the ethical sphere of introducing changes and on the moral evaluation of the target product, i.e. the presented visions of the world. Research and educational practices aiming at dehumanization of a man are always structurally connected with presenting the surrounding world as the product of spoiled, wasted or rotten society. Such dehumanization occurs through questioning the output of the *homo sapiens* species and rejecting the values which we all share. Traditional understanding of a “human” must be extended or replaced as another step towards

the development of reasonable society (Gladden 2016: 90). This also means saying “no” to “mother nature” and natural selection which our species has been undergoing. In this context, education not only includes the processes that secure the position of a man in future in the current form, but, according to transhumanists and posthumanists, education should include a more radical project which presents research practices in ontological and epistemological relational categories as opposed to the present ones.

Posthumanism (and transhumanism) ask us to abandon ethics rooted in universal humanism and turn towards the immanent and relational ethics. From the posthumanist perspective, we are always settled and embodied in our research practices and in a given context. Since we gain our knowledge together with the world and through developing with the world, all our research efforts are affective (Kruger 2016: 88). Does this mean that they are also ethical?

Future graduates should understand the advantages and disadvantages of technological innovations. Thus, moral attitudes of students should be shaped properly, as some of them will become teachers who should ensure the safety of applied innovative technologies in the process of improving the system of education. This should be supervised by qualified people with high level of technological knowledge, and with the support of the state as a regulatory body. However, philosophical political sciences may shed some light on ethical implications in all their details, including those which have to be considered by governments of all countries (Casten 2012: 697–698). While doing the research, we have to consider if the relationships we enter into and the relationships made possible through our research—human and non-human, organic and non-organic ones—are durable and develop another person’s power to function in the full scope (Kruger 2016: 88). What is worse, the development of superintelligence may be more dangerous to us than we think. It may turn out that the object of our research will be much more intelligent than us, which seems to suggest that even if we knew a lot about such technology, it may ultimately be impossible to understand, which may become an uncontrollable field of research for us, i.e. ordinary people (Müller 2016: 1–8).

Conclusions

In my work I have described the concepts of the world of education from the point of view of transhumanists and posthumanists, and I have presented the main ethical problems resulting from the analysis of the visions suggested by the activists of those philosophical concepts. It is impossible to predict how the world will change within the next several decades. Thus, teachers should try to equip their students with highly universal tools and skills that will make it possible for them to live in the world of inevitable changes. The balance point moves from sectional, temporal limitations of the model of education into the integrated model based on competences and cooperation that will make it possible for students to master digital tools and personalize educational experiences according to their needs and interests. Students must prepare for living in the world which their current teachers cannot even imagine. This kind of a change is systemic and requires taking up new roles by teachers, parents, politicians, and especially by students. Such roles have to better match the requirements of the changing world. It seems that the key element is the proper attitude of a young person who should be prepared for critical thinking and self-aware, and should have a strong moral backbone so that he/she can adequately interpret the surrounding reality and make good decisions.

Irrespective of the path we want to follow, it should be possible to withdraw our decision. If placing artificial intelligence under control turns out to bring undesired effects, there should be a “back” button to withdraw the project. Unfortunately, not all currently discussed paths have such a security function (Yampolskiy 2020). The risk of irreversibility of changes may lead us to such a state of humanity (or anti-humanity) that, instead of cyborgs (half-people, half-gods), we will become ordinary mutants regretting our decision to “improve a human being.” After all, how what is imperfect and accidental may generate what is perfect and radically improved (Duchliński 2018: 281–300)?

Each utopian vision of the world only includes an element of realism, and it is also the case with the world suggested by transhumanists and posthumanists. If the implementation of any aspect of superintelligence appears on the horizon, sooner or later it will

probably be carried out and developed (Bostrom 2003: 12–17). However, the perspective of overcoming numerous technological barriers still remains (and will remain for a long time) science-fiction mentioned in the title of this article.

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Andrzej Skupień
 Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow
 Institute of Philosophy
 e-mail: andrzej.skupien@interia.eu

Magdalena Maciejewska
ORCID: 0000-0001-8523-3310
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

Patroness for Confirmation as a Moral Model: The Perspective of Catholic Women on the Threshold of Adulthood

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the patron saints chosen by young Catholics for the sacrament of Confirmation, recalled several years after the decision. It was based on focus group interviews conducted with students in the last years of secondary school. Despite the decision of the Polish Bishops' Conference that young people should keep their baptismal names at the sacrament of Confirmation (if it is the name of a saint), most of the women interviewed had the option of choosing any patroness. According to the narratives presented herein, it was an important event for them and most of their decisions were carefully considered. Their searches regarding names were most often independent, rarely related to either religion lessons or parish catechesis. The patron saints chosen by the interviewees a few years earlier were often referred to as specific moral role models. The holy or blessed behavior and attitudes displayed by these women were usually positively perceived by girls on the threshold of adulthood. Therefore, it is worth reflecting on both preventing young people from autonomously, reflectively choosing a patron saint with whom they want to identify due to interests or professional plans as well as the entire process of familiarizing them with personal religious role models from parish catechesis and religious education at school.

KEYWORDS

patronesses,
Confirmation, moral
model, women

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Introduction

The sacrament of Confirmation is often called the sacrament of Christian maturity (Czaplicka-Jedlikowska 2015; Misiaszek 2017). Thus, it seems that the selection of the Confirmation saint is very important. Nevertheless, in scientific literature there are not many texts concerning this issue. The main area of interests of the theologians who deal with the sacrament of Confirmation refers to the liturgical dimension of the event or to its historical aspects (Janczewski 2008; Borysiuk 2016). Few sociological or pedagogical reflections are based on empirical research.

Considerations related to Christian maturity related to this sacrament are hardly ever carried out in a way that takes into account both catechetical or pastoral recommendations, and young people's needs and difficulties. Also, it is worth paying attention to the absence of scientific reflections on the issues related to this sacrament, discussed from the perspective of the future and not the past. It means that we prefer discussing the role of the sacrament (Pyżlak 2018) or the way in which we should prepare young people for it (Kochel 2017), to considering how the sacrament was administered and how it is perceived by those who experienced it. Without such a reflection it is difficult to evaluate both the way of preparing young people for receiving the sacrament of Confirmation by the parish catechesis, religious education or upbringing, and the youth's inner readiness (Wieradzka-Pilarczyk et al. 2016) and external difficulties.

In this article, we will analyze a subject that is important both in the context of a reflective preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation and in the perspective of the further analysis of decisions that had been made and their influence on life, especially in terms of moral choices. Such choices can be influenced by patron saints selected by Catholic women at the threshold of adulthood before the sacrament of Confirmation. In this text, the patronesses will be considered from the perspective of moral models important for further development and growth, both in the earthly and transcendental perspective. Therefore, the structure of the article is as follows: in the first part, preceded with the introduction, the author will present theoretical considerations concerning moral models and their role in solving moral dilemmas. In the second part, the author will

describe the methodology of her research, and then she will present the results of her own studies and the summary, along with the bibliography.

The role of moral models in solving existential dilemmas

When young people grow up, they have to face various challenges. The shape and nature of those challenges result from many different factors, including sex, related to performing various social roles. While struggling with different dilemmas, young women may find support in role models, i.e. specific people who experienced particular situations connected with making difficult decisions and solving moral problems. Those models are not the same as abstract personal ideals (Skrzyniarz, Gajderowicz, Wach 2013; Rynio 2016), or as authorities, i.e. specialists in a given field whose knowledge and skills are important for particular individuals, yet those individuals do not think they should imitate these authorities (Bocheński 1993). The term “moral models,” which appears in the title and in particular parts of the article, concerns personal models who, in this case, constitute an inspiration and support, especially in making moral decisions.

Personal models play a very important role in the life of young people who struggle with existential problems related both to social relationships and to their relationship with God. Following the idea of Margaret Archer, we may state that those dilemmas refer to transcendental, natural, social and performative problems, i.e. those which are connected with (respectively) the Absolute, one’s own wellbeing, relationships with others, and creative activities carried out in the world (Archer 2006; Archer, Collier, Porpora 2004). However, the key choices refer to the indication of the ultimate problem, i.e. the one which is crucial for a given individual. It is because of this problem that personal models may constitute a significant point of reference showing their attitudes and solutions that make it possible to successfully combine the solutions related to particular problems (Horowski, Sadłoń 2019).

Taking this into account, the author of the article analyzed the utterances of young women who received the sacrament of Confirmation a few years ago. That was the time when the girls were choosing women whom, for various reasons, they found inspiring.

Confirmation is perceived as a special kind of confession of faith because, due to the age of those who receive it, the sacrament is experienced in a much more conscious, autonomic and reflective manner than the previous sacraments. Those aspects are usually related to the category of maturity which, in the context of the sacrament in question, is especially emphasized. It is worth mentioning that considering maturity as an (un)achieved state, combined with young age and experienced dilemmas, is easy to connect with the conclusions related to unpreparedness of young people both to the sacrament of Confirmation and to making choices related to the selection of patrons or patronesses.

However, while analyzing maturity in the category of a process (Misiaszek 2017)—which is justified based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), according to which people who received the sacrament of Confirmation “are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence, they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed” (CCC, 1285)—we should emphasize that, during the process, a young person may come across challenges that facilitate their spiritual development. An example of such a challenge may include the selection of a patron or a patroness. Searching for a patron, which is more attractive to young people if it is a new or unknown saint, may be an example of such a challenge on the path to spiritual development. Moreover, this is an occasion for looking for differences and similarities between one’s own life and biographies of saints who can become moral models for the youth, not only during the time when they receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Due to such choices, we can also look at the sacrament in question from the perspective of an initiation (Walulik 2017), noticing a specific transition from the previous sacraments—in which subjectivity, reflectiveness and autonomy of a young person were not the priority—to the sacrament of Confirmation, which is “the development and location of a Christian’s supernatural existence in the power of the Holy Spirit, which enables them for conscious participation in building the community of the Church” (Snela 1989).

Methodology of the research

The research area, which is important for this article and focused on the perception of Confirmation patronesses chosen by girls as moral models, was not separated at the stage of designing one's own research carried out in November and December 2021. That research was related to female role models in school religious education and their perception by the students of final grades of the secondary school. However, already during the first talks with the girls, it turned out that the subject of Confirmation patronesses was very important for them, which is why they mentioned this during the main discussion, i.e. during the third stage of a group discussion (Bauman 2001), while considering female moral models which they got to know during religious education lessons. This took place despite the fact that in partially structured scenario of the interviews, in which topics for group discussions were included, there were no subjects concerning Confirmation patronesses. Thus, the following research question was posed: which Confirmation patronesses were selected by this year's secondary school graduates (girls who took the final exams in 2022) and what was their choice based on? Which personality traits were the ones to which the girls paid attention? The objective of the research focused on the above-mentioned questions was recognizing which of the Confirmation patronesses may be moral models for young Catholic women and why is it so.

Within the research related to female moral models, focus group interviews were carried out. In such analyses, research units are not individuals but whole groups of people. It is worth mentioning that "each group discussion may be called a focus group as long as the researcher actively encourages the participants to interaction in the group and maintains such interaction" (Kitzinger, Barbour 1999), which, in the context of focus groups, is the most important. Each group consists of people with particular features and those individuals remain focused on a given issue that is important for the discussion (Anderson 1990). Also, it is believed that these groups are a more natural environment for young people than an individual interview, as group participants can influence and be influenced by others, just like in the real life (Krueger, Casey 2000). Focus groups usually consist of 6–12 participants and a moderator (Smithson 2007), but, in this case,

they were smaller (3–5) people. They can be treated as so-called “mini groups,” which are often selected for interviews referring to sensitive topics that require private atmosphere and make it possible for the participants to provide extensive explanations (Ciechowska 2018). Also, the decision to make smaller groups was influenced by the nature of the research which was carried out online: through ZOOM and Skype. All the talks, which were led by two researchers, were recorded. The interviews were carried out after the obtainment of the approval of the Commission of Ethics of the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.

Organization of 10 group interviews was a time-consuming activity which included searching for participants in the social media and among holders of the scholarships funded by the Foundation Work of the New Millennium.¹ Another step related to searching for the participants was connected with the new criterion (Flick 2010), i.e. intensive religious involvement, and it included making direct contacts with Catholic schools. Each talk lasted for about 60–75 minutes. Altogether, 35 female secondary school graduates aged 17–18 took part in the interviews. They all lived in the western and northern part of Poland, and they regularly attended religious education classes. Thus, the selection of the sample was purposive which, due to the qualitative nature of the research, was very important (Maison 2001). The girls from four groups attended public schools, while others attended Catholic schools.

Research results

Not all the girls who took part in the research were able to choose the Confirmation patron themselves. In four groups there were several girls who did not obtain their parish priest’s consent for this. In such cases, the girls’ patronesses were the saints whose names were given to them during the baptism. From the girls’ utterances we can conclude that the selection of a patroness was often very important

1 An organisation established in 2000, after one of the pilgrimages of John Paul II to Poland, as an expression of gratitude for his pontificate. Its objective is promoting the Pope’s teachings and supporting talented Catholic youth from poor families living in villages and small towns.

for them, and it usually resulted from their own searches and reflections. The girls for whom the sacrament of Confirmation was related to their baptismal names experienced the event in a different manner. A half of them appreciated the opportunity to learn more about their patroness, an example of which is the following utterance:

I believe that it was not a wrong decision, because then we could learn more about our patron of baptism. I explored the biography of my patroness, I got to know her better, and I appreciated my name as my patroness is really great.

However, a half of the interviewees declared that forcing them to identify with the saint, who may seem to be inadequate for their experiences, interests and other aspects of life, is wrong, which is confirmed by the utterance of one of the girls who was in such a situation:

In my parish the priest said that if someone has a name of a saint, the person should choose the same name. So, I had to choose St. Julia, because the priest said so, which is not necessarily right, because if I we do not identify with the saint too strongly, it should not be imposed on us.

Interestingly, in case of this subject, other people from the group did not refer to the opinions of those who were not allowed to choose the patroness on their own, but were generally satisfied with the results of their own searches. Such lack of interference may suggest that the choice of a patroness is very personal, and, at the same time, it is one of the most important elements related to the formation of religious identity among young Catholic women, and to a reflective search for moral models.

Young women who chose a patroness paid attention to the elements that were important for them not only in the context of the sacrament of Confirmation, but also in more broadly understood search for a moral model. This means that the girls were not interested in saints whom they perceived as unreal and inadequate for our times. In some groups there were even utterances which emphasized what could not be the feature of a woman to be chosen as a patroness. Here is an example of such an utterance:

I am sure I would not like a patroness who had stigmata and I do not want a saint who finished her life in a monastery. Those were my two main criteria.

What is interesting, some girls also disqualified martyrdom, which may signal searching for a saint whose experiences would actually be

close to the challenges of modern girls. Moreover, in several utterances, the girls discussed the non-realistic presentation of the image of saint or blessed women, an example of which may be the utterance of the only girl who chose Joan of Arc as her patroness:

I was reading about the lives of those saints and I thought that they were all so perfect, flawless, and terribly unrealistic, and what I needed was a woman from flesh and blood. And here is my confirmation saint, Joan of Arc.

Excessive glorification of female saints and making them unrealistic was not very well received by the girls, not only in the context of the selection of the Confirmation saint. Interestingly, some girls emphasized that they wanted their patronesses to be unique and characterized by something special.

Religious education lessons had insignificant influence on the girls' decisions. This is connected with the fact that the teachers do not often focus on presenting moral models (especially female ones) during their classes. However, of all the educational stages, it was the junior high school where the girls heard the most about female saints. Nevertheless, when asked about the most significant influence on the choice of their Confirmation saints, they hardly ever mentioned religious education lessons. In each of the groups, the secondary school graduates talked about their own searches mainly carried out in the internet. There were also situations in which they had been thinking about a given saint for a long time, so choosing the saint as their Confirmation patroness was natural for them. Such a case occurred in the first group in which one of the girls said:

As far as I am concerned, the selection of the name was a deeper issue. I was not looking for the names of saints in the internet, but, at a certain time in my life, I came across the prayer to St. Antonina [...]. I really needed this prayer, and I think it helped me a lot.

Similar experiences were described by another secondary school graduate from the same group while talking about the motivation for choosing the name of St. Rita.

She is close to my heart because my parish choir is named after St. Rita. Every month we have services dedicated to this saint. She is close to my heart because, through her intercession, I have experienced a little miracle after someone's prayer. Some time ago I prayed a lot to her, and I felt her presence in my life.

There were also situations in which the key factor that influenced the selection of the Confirmation saint was a person—usually from the family—who was very important for a given girl and was a moral model to her. This referred both to lay people (including, e.g. mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers) and to consecrated people (a girl’s aunt, who is a nun, was named Melania, and the girl chose this name after the priest did not accept the girl’s choice of St. Hope). In one of the groups there was also an utterance concerning the selection of the name of St. Hedwig, which was inspired by the popular TV series “The Crown of the Kings”. In another case, blessed Laura Vicuña was selected as the Confirmation saint because she was the patroness of the girl’s school.

The most popular saints among the interviewed girls were: St. Cecilia, St. Rita, St. Philomena, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Hedwig, and St. Elizabeth (each of them appeared in at least two groups). Detailed information concerning the selection of the Confirmation saints described to the researchers in particular groups, are included in Table 1:

Table 1. Patronnes for Confirmation

Group No.	Girls' patronesses
1	St. Cecilia, St. Rita, St. Antonina
2	St. Cecilia, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Blessed Isabella of France
3	St. Philomena, St. Cecilia, St. Joan of Arc
4	St. Mary Magdalene, St. Anne, St. Mary Magdalene
5	St. Clare, St. Hedwig, St. Melania the Younger
6	St. Elizabeth, St. Hedwig, Blessed Laura Vicuña, St. Anastasia
7	Blessed Laura Vicuña, St. Lucia, St. Martina, St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta
8	Miriam, St. Elizabeth, St. Clare, St. Veronica
9	St. Rita, St. Hildegard of Bingen, St. Philomena
10	St. Rita, St. Rose of Lima, St. Blanche of Castile, St. Julia of Corsica, St. Dorothy

Source: The author’s own work

The girls decided to choose particular patronesses due to various factors; mainly to the girls’ interests and plans concerning the selection of the professional path. The secondary school graduates whose hobby was music often selected St. Cecilia. It was the case

of Agatha whose parish priest did not agree for the name of Miriam. Agatha, a fan of music, describes the further part of the story in the following manner:

I went to the retreat to the Sisters of the Passion of Christ and I helped them as a music animator. During one of the adorations, the Holy Spirit inspired me and said: Agatha, you play music and sing, you are talented and you like it. Why don't you choose St. Cecilia?". It was an inspiration, because I was not thinking about St. Cecilia while I was considering the Confirmation saint. I decided to read about her, and I concluded that her story was similar to St. Agatha's, so I can see a connection between them. This is how I chose St. Cecilia as my Confirmation saint.

Medical interests of Marta made her choose Mother Teresa of Calcutta, which was justified as follows:

My choice of the Confirmation saint was influenced by my family as they are very religious people. I chose Mother Teresa of Calcutta. What I liked about her the most? The fact that she helped those poor people in such a selfless manner, and that she never gave up in her work. And that, although she faced numerous challenges and difficulties, she persisted in supporting those who needed it the most. I have always wanted to become a doctor and help people, so she is a model to me as I want to imitate her selflessness and support to others.

While choosing the Confirmation saint, Wiktorja also took into account her professional plans:

My teacher, who prepared us to the Confirmation, always told us to choose a person with whom we can identify. She also said that the patroness should be connected with something important for us, so that we can pray to her if we need support with this. That is why, I chose St. Hildegard of Bingen. She is the patroness of languages and linguists, and I have always wanted to focus on this in my career.

Similar factors made Maria choose St. Philomena:

Everyone was really surprised, [...] but I chose her because I really wanted to, and I have the impression that in the future I would like to go on a mission, and St. Philomena is the patroness of missions.

There were more of similar justifications during the talks. In one of the interviews, the girls said that she chose St. Philomena because she is the patroness of exams, and passing them with a satisfactory result was one of the most important challenges of the girls at that time. Thus, we can conclude that searching for the common points

between one's own life and the lives of saint and blessed women indicates that a reflective choice of patronesses (irrespective of its sources) is really significant for the girls. This suggests that the girls were looking for a patroness not only for the sacrament of Confirmation, but also for further life. Therefore, the girls' moral models following similar values and experiencing similar problems as themselves could become helpful both in their professional and in private lives.

While talking about their patronesses, the girls paid attention to the features they found particularly important in timeless moral models. Some features were mentioned by few people, e.g. the rejection of excessive material goods, which was typical of the patroness of gardeners and abundance—St. Rose, as well as solidarity with other women, which, in case of St. Clare, led to becoming the patroness of embroiderers. However, there were many aspects related to the behavior of particular patrons, which appeared in many groups and obtained the approval of other participants of a given focus group. Such features included perseverance (which was the most popular), courage, and readiness to help other people. The girls also mentioned persistence in faith, trust, resoluteness, having one's own opinion, self-esteem, humility, love of prayer, patience, forgiving, and readiness to sacrifice oneself to others, which shows that they are features important for moral models from the perspective of young women. When asked if these models are more important for the girls than the Virgin Mary, the girls denied, but some of them said that their patronesses are equally important to them as Mary and that they treat these two saints as a special pair to whom they often pray and with whom they are close friends, which is illustrated by the following utterance:

I chose her because mum always told me that a patroness is a kind of a friend, and I felt that St. Rose is someone with whom we can become friends.

Summary

Moral models, which can also be personal models, are not a construct that is inadequate for the modern times, despite the present aversion to such references (Kopiczko 2021). Thus, presenting them, both in the context of the parish catechesis, religious education or

upbringing within the family, is absolutely justified. The sacrament of Confirmation and related choice of patronesses is a great opportunity to make such a presentation. However, we should be aware of the fact that not all personal models, which are presented to young people as propagated models, are accepted by the youth. Even if they accept such models verbally, young people may not understand or implement the attitudes of such models in their lives, which is a fact in case of the models who are fulfilled (Ossowska 1992). Nevertheless, even fulfilled models do not mean the full imitation of someone's life by an individual who chose them. It is because, through the hermeneutics of someone else's experiences, young people may reflect on their challenges, their nature, possible consequences of a given choice, and various solutions located within specific social and cultural circumstances. Presenting a broad catalogue of saints who may be perceived as moral models by some individuals is absolutely justified, taking into account that

in the process proving the heroic virtues of a Christian who died in the opinion of holiness, the Church takes into account their moral and religious attitude typical of the values promoted in Christian education. That is why, a saint should be a model of faith for Christians who want to perfect themselves in this virtue (Parzych-Blakiewicz 2015: 207).

This is particularly important in the context of changes taking place in the modern world, as such changes result in the axiological and normative chaos being the most important challenge for the contemporary youth (Mazur 2018). Thus, presenting the above-mentioned models

[...] is especially needed in those environments which are against Christian ethics claiming that Christian principles and norms are cold, impossible to fulfill and too radical. In such a situation, referring to a real person helps us defend the view that Christian ethical norms are not defined for an abstract person, but for a specific, historical human being who is called to do good in particular time and space situations. Due to such real-life models, realistic nature of Christian ethics is confirmed (Zadykiewicz 2001: 123).

Thus, the Church is given a special challenge. Through parish catechesis, religious education and preparation of the youth (and their parents) for the sacrament of Confirmation, people of the Church should not impose specific solutions on the youth, but they should encourage them to reflectiveness which is the basis for the individual

development of a person (Chrost 2018) and makes it possible to make conscious choices of moral models that match the youth's individual needs. Also, reflectiveness enables young people to share their decisions and motivations during religion lessons or meetings before the sacrament of Confirmation, which, according to the interviewees' utterances, hardly ever takes place. While creating the space for the subjective expression of the fruit of one's reflectiveness, it is possible to change the perception of the sacrament in question, both in the context of choosing the models important from the point of view of moral decisions, and in the context of Christian initiation which does not end with the Confirmation, as the sacrament is just one of the steps to a person's spiritual maturity. This is verified by the moral attitudes taken up by the person (Marek 2017). Such attitudes may be inspired by the saints met by young people during the preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

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ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Magdalena Maciejewska
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń
e-mail: 503268@doktorant.umk.pl

Reviews

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Recenzje

Mariusz Konieczny
ORCID: 0000-0001-6967-5231
St. Adalbert Parish in Tyśmienica

For the Sake of Human Dignity

Janusz Mariański, *Godność ludzka w narracji społecznej. Studium socjopedagogiczne* [*Human Dignity in Social Narrative: A Socio-pedagogical Study*], Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2021, pp. 302

In the introduction to the publication by Janusz Mariański we can find the summary of what human dignity actually is and how we should understand it in the contemporary world: human dignity includes the most important human values and no one formally questions the principle of respecting it as the foundation of the civil society. Changes taking place in the modern world are connected with globalization, mobility of societies and human thoughts, higher level of education, and increasingly easier access to the mass media. Some sociologists perceive these changes as the basis for claiming that human dignity is becoming weaker or that it even faces a crisis. Challenges related to the contemporary migration policy, the failure to accept the basic ethical principles, as well as clear rejection of religiousness and its moral laws, become the impulse to searching for the answer to the question of understanding and meaning of a person. Artificially radical choices, which are characterized by varied emotional intensity and refer to details of human life, including moral values, encourage us to carry out profound analyses concerning not only human liberty and freedom to present particular opinions and approaches to life, but also the way in which we perceive human dignity and human nature as such.



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The importance of dignity has recently increased, but it is not equal to the role ascribed to values, attitudes and behaviors related to dignity. Without deep analysis of the essence of human dignity and its consequences, we will not be able to capture the truth of who a man really is and what his social relationships are like. In the book in question, Janusz Mariański is trying to refer to contemporary demands related to the discussions around the issue of perceiving freedom. It is an attempt to provide an adequate and complementary answer to the above-mentioned questions, as the author takes into account the changing perspective of the religious, social, political, and economical situation. The book is the result of a long cognitive process presented in the texts: *Godność ludzka jako wartość społeczno-moralna: mit czy rzeczywistość? Studium interdyscyplinarne [Human Dignity as a Social and Moral Value: Myth or Reality? Interdisciplinary Study]* (Toruń 2016), *Godność ludzka w kontekście społecznym. Szkice ze społecznego nauczania Kościoła katolickiego [Human Dignity in the Social Context: Essays on the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church]* (Lublin 2017), *Godność ludzka – wartość ocalona? Studium socjopedagogiczne [Human Dignity – A Value that Was Saved? Socio-pedagogical Study]* (Płock 2017), *Godność ludzka – wartość doceniona czy puste słowo? Studium socjopedagogiczne [Human Dignity – An Appreciated Value or an Empty Word? Socio-pedagogical Study]* (Warszawa 2019). The book which is being reviewed is a kind of a summary of the author's intellectual quests, as well as his attempt to define human dignity and its understanding by the contemporary Polish youth. Also, it is a diagnosis showing modern threats and providing specific hints for the institutions that shape our social life.

In the postmodern world, experiential, pleasure-oriented and postmaterialist values become increasingly more important. People do not feel the need for stability; they are focused on short pleasures, and become more and more oriented at collecting events and interactions. Such attitudes also facilitate shaping norms and values that are often adopted through departing from the established, traditional axiological-normative canon. Sociological research, which was also carried out in the Polish society that undergoes sudden transformation, presents a pessimistic image of a human being indulged in hedonism and pragmatism, oriented at consumerism, and prone to violence and egoistic attitudes. Changes in moral attitudes and

behaviors oscillate between absolutism and moral rigorism, and tendencies characterized by utilitarianism, permissiveness and moral relativism the supporters of which emphasize an individual's right to autonomy, independence and happiness.

Primate Stefan Wyszyński noticed these phenomena in the Polish society and tried to refer to them in his teachings. His suggestions, especially in the context of his beatification, should become the determinants of the pastoral activity of the Polish Church. Janusz Mariański mentioned this issue in his book, presenting the basic assumptions and the original nature of the teachings of the Primate of the Millennium. Stefan Wyszyński's social thought was based on a person who, in their ontic dimension, is a substantial unity of body and soul. The originality of Wyszyński's Catholic social teaching consists in the fact that it was inspired by all the books of the Bible; both the Old and the New Testament. Moreover, he gave the teaching of the Church a historical context, emphasizing its continuity and developmental nature of the basic social and moral principles. Wyszyński placed a human being in the center of his teachings, presenting a person as God's creature with a special dignity and vocation, as well as exceptional rights, such as the right to nature, to freedom, and to equal treatment by other people and institutions. While presenting a human being in the context of creation and relation to God, he showed the religious concept of a man's dignity. On the supernatural level, the basic ingredient of a person's value is the truth concerning being created in the image of God and being God's child through redemption.

The personalistic and integral approach to the Catholic social teaching is expressed in emphasizing the natural and supernatural dignity of a human being, human rights and ethical-social principles. Each representative of the *homo sapiens* species is endowed with dignity. It is an inalienable feature that cannot be lost. All structures and institutions of social life should serve a human being. A person cannot feel a slave in their own national or religious community. The primacy of a human being over the material world or even social life is based on the spiritual properties of human nature. As a person, a human being is more important than any community, e.g. a national, state, professional, economic, or cultural one. Thus, human dignity is absolute; it only changes in the historical development to the

extent to which a person changes. Dignity is given to a human being as a feature and as a task, which is determined by the dynamic nature of a person. On these theoretical principles Stefan Wyszyński builds the concept of social order with reference to marriage and family, nation, the state, and the whole human family.

Human dignity is also the crucial idea of the social and moral teaching in the message proclaimed by John Paul II. This issue is discussed in almost all of his encyclicals. According to John Paul II, dignity is the fundamental feature of a human being and the society. It plays the role of a criterion of morality, and, in a way, it is the determinant of the value of human action. The Pope made a radical turn in the social teaching of the Church, i.e. he emphasized that the starting point for the social analysis of the reality is a person endowed with dignity, and not the social and economic aspect. The result of such an approach to a human being is the thesis according to which human dignity is the basis for formulating human rights. Also, John Paul II discussed the social dimension of dignity in which the respect of human dignity, of each person and of the whole person, should be considered not only in the categories of respecting an individual, but also in a broader context of united and harmonious development of all members of the society.

While emphasizing the importance of respecting human dignity, the Pope, in his social and moral teaching, often indicated various threats to dignity in the material and spiritual dimension. Along with huge progress in mastering the world of things, a person has become a slave to the world of matter. Also, certain social relationships make a man enslaved. Instead of the expected harmony, tension and fear is created between a man and products of technology. Spiritual threats to human dignity include, according to John Paul II, violation of the basic human rights, such as the right to religion, to freedom of conscience, to raising children according to their parents' faith and beliefs, and the right to education adjusted to an individual's abilities. Summarizing the Pope's social and moral teaching, Janusz Mariański concludes that it includes two integral elements: the vision of supernatural dignity, which is based on the Christian revelation, and the vision of natural dignity resulting from the observation of human nature.

Mariański started his profound theoretical analysis of human dignity from the attempt to define it. He enumerated its three main areas which became, in a way, orbits around which he moves in further parts of his book. Therefore, in his work we can see that he distinguishes the dignity of a person from the dignity of personality and personal dignity. However, these are not three separate spheres which are totally unconnected with one another. Moving within the area of Christian personalism, Mariański clearly marked the common denominator of the new notions: a person. While taking up his considerations, he indicated that human dignity is a fundamental value, the normative basis of human rights, and the most general value and norm of social order. Each person has their dignity due to the fact that he/she is a subject and a human being. Therefore, a person is born as a rational being who is free and endowed with conscience. A man cannot deprive himself of these properties and no one can take them away from him, which is why this value is inalienable and permanent. A person, in their dignity, is greater than the whole reality around them.

Apart from such principles related to dignity, the sociologist from Lublin distinguishes values such as personality dignity and personal dignity, as well as professional dignity. Personality dignity is expressed in the concentration of human actions and abilities, and it is manifested in various kinds of perfection, especially those that were preserved in a man's morally valuable actions and in his character. Personal dignity refers to feelings and subjective awareness, and it is connected with the dignity of a person. Also, dignity is connected with a specific social role or with the profession of a given person. Social roles or a specific profession make a person obliged to comply with certain norms of behavior which is perceived as decent. Indecent behavior results in the loss of dignity related to a specific social role. Dignity, first of all, refers to people and, in the second place, to their social roles.

A very interesting issue taken up by Mariański is presenting how young people perceive dignity and where they see its roots. Referring to his own studies, he answers the question whether the surveyed young people are aware of the supernatural source of their dignity, or whether they understand it as the result of purely human agreements and treaties. The author provides such answers based on the

utterances of the youth concerning various issues related to understanding dignity: as a value referring to oneself and other people; as a style of moral life; as noninfringement of the dignity of oneself and others and sacrificing oneself for others; as respect, pride and honor; as the basis for human rights; as the equivalent of other values; as the sense of one's value; as the essence of humanity; and as human dignity in the religious dimension.

The utterances of the surveyed people indicate that most of them have a positive approach to dignity, thinking about it in a superficial way and associating various contents with the notion. The youth are aware of the fact that dignity is a very important thing that cannot be taken away from a human being; that it is given to us so that we can respect one another; and that it is the highest human value that cannot be lost. Also, according to the research, in the conscience of the young people, the notion of dignity is generally connected with positive emotional associations, but it refers to individual and social functions and values rather than to its essence. The majority of the surveyed people claim that dignity is a noticeable and experienceable value, but they do not reflect on it much. Moreover, most young people fail to see the connection between dignity and religion. On the basis of the research, Mariański formulates the thesis according to which the youth appreciate people with high sense of one's own dignity. Such people are generally seen as those who respect the rules and principles specifying what is good or bad.

In the modern world there are many phenomena in which human dignity is infringed or even consciously questioned. The crucial role in this process is played by economic, social and political conditions. Janusz Mariański indicates that the social teaching of the Catholic Church includes the description of the phenomena from various areas of economic, professional, political and social life, as well as phenomena related to interpersonal relationships, in which human dignity is infringed. From the ethical point of view, the social teaching of the Church evaluates any signs of human degradation and various systems of injustice functioning in social life. At the same time, it perceives a man, seen as a person in their natural and supernatural dignity, as the highest value of the moral and social order.

Situations that threaten human dignity are facilitated by, *inter alia*, subjectivist realism, which is getting more and more popular

nowadays. The truth itself is also falsified, as a result of which a man lives in the so-called fluid society that has no permanent references. The author of the book in question emphasizes that human dignity is a value that is desired and undesired at the same time. On the one hand, we still refer to dignity; we condemn situations in which basic human rights are violated. On the other hand, there are those who perceive dignity as an unnecessary value and aim at removing it since it causes unnecessary conflicts.

Taking into account the above, Mariański believes that we can formulate certain educational recommendations for the future. Social order cannot be maintained without moral values, and morality cannot be replaced with certain economic mechanisms. The accelerated process of changing values involves new chances as well as threats. Those who exert the strongest influence on shaping attitudes that support dignity include the elites of the society, i.e. those who create public opinion. It is important for us to bring up young people for universal moral values. The author notices that, as people, we are not just subjects of modern transformation, but also its creators. Pluralism or relativism of moral values is a fact, and not a norm or an ideal. We need permanent axiological and normative directions, i.e. universal values that resist the process of relativization.

In education oriented at dignity, a human being becomes open to truth and beauty, and tries to be faithful to the adopted values. Moral education, considered from the sociological point of view, leads to such a point in human development in which an individual determines the moral value of his/her actions, i.e. what is right or wrong, honest or dishonest, referring to the principles, aims and ideals perceived as valid in a given culture. Moral education cannot only include teaching students a system of regulations and norms, and encouraging them to comply with that moral code. Such education should, first of all, shape proper moral attitudes of the young generation. The dignity of a person is the foundation of education, which is why moral education gains the qualities of personalist education.

Education for dignity refers not only to the period of childhood and youth, but also to the whole life of a human being. It requires both the influence of organized institutions and the person's own efforts. Janusz Mariański notices that the basic educational idea depends on the adopted concept of a man. In his opinion, moral

education, understood as education for humanity, is based on two fundamental assumptions. The first one includes the belief that a man is called to live in true love, and the other one proclaims that each person achieves fulfillment through a selfless gift of self. In modern education and upbringing, one has to, first of all, take into account the necessity of arousing the student's sense of personal dignity and necessity to respect it. The student must be supported in understanding that he himself and every other person are the highest value. Referring to the utterances of the surveyed young people, Mariański emphasizes that, in terms of education, they focus on the individual transfer of values related to dignity rather than on the message sent by various institutions and social groups. Also, he notices that the youth hardly ever believe that developing faith can be the way to respect and admire dignity.

The Lublin sociologist underlines that a family is the first school of humanity. Family education for the sense of a person's dignity is a process which facilitates building true personality of a child and an adolescent. Also, within a family the processes of socialization occur. As a communion of love, a family is where we start to learn that a person, becoming a gift of self to another person, gives the only proper direction to one's development, and that only in this way a man can truly grow. It is from their parents that children take over various moral attitudes, which are sometimes contradictory to the values promoted in their environments. However, a family is not isolated from other educational institutions. The best conditions that warrant the success of moral education of the young generation will be provided when family and other educational institutions bring up children in a coordinated and non-contradictory manner.

However, the crucial issue to be taken into account in modern education and upbringing is the necessity to arouse the student's sense of personal dignity and concern for respecting it. It consists in supporting the student in understanding that he himself and every other man is the highest value. Also, it is important to remind them that dignity has a normative dimension. That is why, we should support the student in caring for their own moral development, in establishing goals in life, and in discovering the ways to achieve those goals. Falsifying human freedom, and treating it in an absolute manner and without any limitations, threatens human dignity or even

leads to different forms of personal and social enslavement. As a consequence, permissiveness and moral relativism develops, especially the one that infringes the basic values. Freedom is to be analyzed in the axiological horizon determined by the dignity of a human being. Freedom that is fulfilled properly always refers to other values and takes into account responsibility for another person.

A profound analysis of varied views on the basic value of a man, i.e. human dignity, based on different concepts of a person, makes it possible for us to get to know the actual status, i.e. what a person is and what threats are facing them. The author of the book in question formulates a very important postulate, i.e. in discussing issues related to human dignity we cannot only maintain the positive law approach, but we have to carry out ontological and deontological analysis of human rights, and create a specific foundation for the protection of human rights. Reliable empirical research helps us answer the basic questions that were also formulated during the Polish change of the political system: what actually is human dignity; what are its modern threats; and what educational directions and means can secure the most fundamental human rights? Janusz Mariański accurately presented various social contexts in which values related to dignity function, the way in which dignity is understood by the Polish youth, the ways of justifying dignity, and the mechanisms of giving or taking dignity away from others in the social and moral sense. Also, he emphasized that the models of life promoted by modern culture facilitate relativization or infringement of the dignity of people who belong to various social layers and groups.

Also, the author of the book suggests that sociological sciences should discuss human dignity in a broader scope, so that it becomes a specific trend in psychology, sociology and pedagogy, which would also contribute to overcoming the moral crisis noticeable in the modern world. This postulate also refers to people who determine the directions of the Catholic Church's pastoral activity. Such people should make sure that their actions focus on proclaiming the truth about the dignity of each person, as well as criticism of the situations that threaten such dignity. Janusz Mariański emphasizes that education for values related to dignity should reflect the fact that dignity also has a normative dimension. That is why, a man should be supported in shaping attitudes that make him obliged to moral

development, establishing objectives in life, discovering the ways to fulfill them, as well as valuating and achieving specific results. The fulfillment of the above-mentioned assumptions directly or indirectly leads to the achievement or at least closeness to the fullness of humanity. Education oriented at values, which is called personalist education, leads to forming a man understood in an integral manner, to developing what is human in him, and to reinforcing the connection with truth and good in him. The acknowledgement of a person's dignity and their being separate from the surrounding world determines the direction of moral education of a man so that he can be not only with others but also for others. This is not only fulfilled through the work of teachers and educators, as well as educational institutions, but also through the activity of the students who enjoy dignity and want to use their natural potential to the maximum.

The analysis of the issues that are valid in the modern world and placing them within the area of the young Polish generation result in the fact that the book by Janusz Mariański is a precious source of knowledge both to the specialists dealing with the issue and to other people who search for the answer to the question of morality and moral education in the context of the globalizing world. The book is an exceptionally valuable source of knowledge for theoreticians who analyze sociological systems and those who wish to follow the most fundamental rules taking into account the personal dignity of a human being. Moreover, this publication can be an important source of knowledge for the people who research the present condition of the Catholic Church and those who determine the directions of its pastoral functioning aimed at building the society on the basis of permanent values among which a man, with his natural and supernatural dignity, plays the crucial role.

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Mariusz Konieczny
St. Adalbert Parish in Tyśmienica
e-mail: mariusz-ko@wp.pl

EDITORIAL ADDRESS:

Studia Paedagogica Ignatiana
Quarterly of the Faculty of Education
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow

ul. Kopernika 26
31-501 Kraków
Poland
e-mail: redakcja.spi@ignatianum.edu.pl

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Dr hab. Andrzej Paweł Bieś SJ, prof. AIK
e-mail: andrzej.bies@ignatianum.edu.pl

DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Dr Krzysztof Biel SJ
e-mail: krzysztof.biel@ignatianum.edu.pl

SECRETARY OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD:

Dr Marzena Chrost
e-mail: marzena.chrost@ignatianum.edu.pl

PUBLISHER ADDRESS:

Ignatianum University Press
ul. Kopernika 26
31-501 Kraków
Poland
e-mail: wydawnictwo@ignatianum.edu.pl
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- 2022, vol. 25, no. 4: Prevention of Child and Youth Violence [issue in English]
Papers submission deadline: 31.08.2022
- 2023, vol. 26, no. 1: Rodziny wielokulturowe [Multicultural families]
Papers submission deadline: 30.11.2022
- 2023, vol. 26, no. 2: Pedagodzy o nowych uzależnieniach [Educators about new addictions]
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