

**Jarosław Babiński\***

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (Poland)

**Janusz Szulist\*\***

Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń (Poland)

## INTEGRAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROCESS OF SECULARIZATION

**Summary:** The purpose of this article is to demonstrate the threat that secularization poses with respect to the education process. The modern age is characterized by a secular shift in social relations and in the very concept of the human person. The paper points explicitly to the consequences of the materialization and technologization of life and proposes an integral education model as an alternative for the increasingly secularized society. Every human being is endowed with personal dignity and inalienable rights whose complete justification can only be uncovered within the context of revealed knowledge. Personality formation, which outlines the general purpose of education, includes not only corporeal and spiritual factors but also factors of a religious nature that encourage transformation in the sense of achieving ever higher levels of perfection. It is argued that the integral education model can be applied in the areas of learning and work. The touchstone of any human development that takes into account religious factors is humanization, which is defined as making the world more humane in a constant relationship with God.

**Keywords:** integral education, personalism, person, secularization, work, education, learning.

The dynamics of human life are expressed in the process of personality formation, which is referred to as education. In his Letter to Families, John Paul II (1994) describes education as “the gift of humanity (...) a reciprocal ‘offering’” (sec. 16). Personality formation is axiologically oriented: values – pertaining to all aspects of human life – provide an imperative to act, determine the criteria of conduct and, finally, define the purpose of a person’s activities in relation to God and to his or her neighbors. When an individual’s mode of being is interpreted in the context of values (idealistic in character), education represents a process of improvement in the individual and social dimensions that can be described as

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\* Address: Dr. habil. prof. assoc. UKSW, Jarosław Babiński, ORCID: 0000-0002-1358-1516; e-mail: jbabinski@wp.pl

\*\* Address: Prof. dr. habil. Janusz Szulist, ORCID: 0000-0002-0410-0565, e-mail: szulist@umk.pl

rising to progressively higher levels of goodness. Taking into account the holistic character of education, Zbigniew Marek identified the objectives of an integral model of education that relies on a person's natural dynamics as follows: 'Integral education defines certain tasks whose fulfillment makes a person more perfect, more mature, more responsible not only in his or her spiritual and moral dimension, but also in the intellectual, emotional, volitive, social and physical dimensions. This kind of support includes both the cognitive (intellectual) dimension and the emotional and moral (volitive) dimension. It manifests itself in a person's autonomous decisions to choose good'<sup>1</sup>. (Marek, 2017, pp. 33–34) In addition to its holistic frame of reference, another essential feature of integral education – as suggested on the grounds of theology and pedagogy – is the fact that it incorporates an element of reciprocity (John Paul II, 1994, sec. 16), thanks to which an individual's personality can be shaped. Throughout the process of education, bidirectional interactions take place that ultimately lead to mutual enrichment in relation to other people and in correlation with elements of social structures in the form of institutions, laws, etc. (Jankowski, 1997, pp. 73–74; Murray, 2009, pp. 97–99)

### **The reductionism of secularization as a threat to integral education**

The integral model of education that corresponds to the unique manner in which a human being operates in society and (more broadly) in the world is confronted with reductionist trends that attempt to appropriate the overall human experience and impose an ideologized concept of the person and of the institutions that constitute every human being's living environment.

The process of secularization – together with the model of a secular state as an expression of modern thinking, policy-making, culture, etc., that it promotes – should be seen as a one-sided interpretation of reality that alienates spheres of life which are essential to human existence. *Oxford's Dictionary of the Social Sciences* defines secularization as "the process by which sacred beliefs are weakened over time, [and] religion becomes less influential in social life". (*Oxford's Dictionary...*, 2001, p. 431) The origins of secularization can be seen in the differentiation between serving God and serving Caesar that was made in the Gospel (cf. Matthew 22:21), which correlates with the manner in which man

<sup>1</sup> The original language quote: „W tym rozumieniu wychowanie integralne stawia określone zadania, których realizacja czyni osobę doskonalszą, dojrzałą, bardziej odpowiedzialną nie tylko w jej wymiarze duchowo-moralnym, ale też intelektualnym, emocjonalnym, wolitywnym, społecznym, czy fizycznym. Wsparcie takie obejmuje zarówno wymiar poznawczy (intelektualny), jak też emocjonalny i moralny (wolitywny). Jej oznaką są autonomicznie podejmowane przez osobę decyzje o wybieraniu dobra”.

functions in the order of grace and in the order of power (cf. Genesis 13:1-7). The subsequent stages of divergence between the religious sphere and the secular sphere were marked by the East-West Schism, the Reformation and, finally, the French Revolution, which – in the view of Piotr Mazurkiewicz – was the culmination not only of the separation of church and state but also of the antagonistic positioning of the two entities, marked by the tendency for the institutions of the state to encroach upon the religious sphere. (Dłuska, 2019, p. 151) The French model of separation of church and state is based on two premises. The first premise is Enlightenment liberalism, which is in essence a cult of reason freed from any restrictions (Krukowski, 1997, p. 19), and the second premise is the questioning of (effectively) all monarchical structures of power. From the perspective of the Enlightenment, monarchies were associated with relations typical of the Catholic Church, symbolizing the old order that needed to be overcome (literally: removed) as the primary hindrance to progress in the purely material sphere. (Krukowski, 1997, p. 19; Mariański, 2004, col. 384) Furthermore, in addition to the French model, Benedict XVI also points to the Bolshevik revolution in his reflections on the issue of secularization. (Szulist, 2016, p. 339) Today, as a consequence of the prevailing social trends, there is secularism emerging that consists of the systemic removal of religious elements from the social sphere. Marek Marczewski has identified three phenomena that characterize secularism: anti-religiousness, naturalistic ethics and the absolutization of knowledge. The above phenomena are products of the rationalization and materialization of life that occur within antagonistic concepts of society. (Marczewski, 2012, col. 1377)

A philosophical analysis of secularization and the associated secularism reveals their ultimately reductionist character marked by a disregard for all religious or even immaterial factors. (Mazanka, 2003, p. 28; Babiński, 2014, p. 184; Shook, 2020, p. 1) Paweł Borkowski emphasizes that the model of secularism being promoted today disregards any good that is not associated with the current social structures. (Dłuska, 2019, p. 152) Consequently, the good that exists in the conscience as a place where a human being can experience the Transcendent is simply ignored. (Dłuska, 2019, p. 152) The consequence of this way of thinking is relativism, which entails a unidimensional and situational interpretation of the norms necessary for a person to function in society. This one-sided approach results in the emergence of bizarre ideas, such as the idea of justice without the concept of good. A systemic disregard for religious factors is often tantamount to the negation of an objective moral order that provides a sense of security and a timeless purposefulness of actions that encompasses the entire body of human experiences. (Zecha, 1995, p. 184) What is paradoxical about secularization – from the standpoint of philosophical anthropology –

is the fact that religious elements are being eliminated in the name of freedom of conscience. (Krukowski, 1997, p. 20) However, the exclusion of religious factors is a significant limitation that interferes with the power of conscience to do good, which is, after all, one of the fundamental objectives. (Borecki, 2007, p. 62)

### **The holistic concept of the person in personalism**

Out of the broad variety of propositions that exist in the panorama of human thought, personalism appears to be the philosophical current that best responds to the needs of a modern person and makes it possible to face the current educational challenges that come with the shift towards a one-sided, secularized interpretation. The ideas of personalism are present in theories of education thanks to Emmanuel Mounier, one of the most notable contributors to the personalist movement. (Nowak, 2013, p. 14) The process of education always presupposes some philosophy of the human person. In other words, in order to embark upon the formation of the human person, one must first define who that person is. Among the innumerable propositions that continue to be put forward in that regard, the personalist proposition appears to be the most complete and most universal answer, since ‘where there is no personalism, there is always some reductionism and, by necessity, antipedagogy (totalitarian or liberalistic)’<sup>2</sup>. (Kiereś, 2009, p. 40)

If education is to be interpreted not only as the transfer of information, abilities and skills, but also as the conveyance of the entire cultural heritage that is not passed on biologically, then it seems obvious that *paideia* and *anthropos* (man) are two inextricable aspects of one and the same reality. The history of education is, therefore, the history of man and of specific concepts according to which man is to be understood. (Nowak, 2013, p. 14) Christian anthropology recognizes not only the great dignity of man, but also the frailty of human nature. In addition, personalism reminds us of the exceptional dignity of man among created beings and, thus, of the exceptionality of human life. Man’s perfection and special importance stem from the manner of his creation, beginning with the breath of life received from God: a gift that only man has received. This life goes beyond mere biological existence; it is a spiritual life. This is the way in which the Old Testament emphasizes the unique nature of human life. The Old Testament’s portrayal of God as the giver of human life in all its manifestations and activities is also a starting point for a broader reflection

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<sup>2</sup> The original language quote: “Tam bowiem, gdzie nie ma personalizmu, jest zawsze jakiś redukcjonizm i z konieczności antypedagogika (totalitarna lub liberalistyczna)”.

on life in the New Testament. (Gózdź, 2006, pp. 34–36) This portrayal, however, would not be complete since the sin of the first parents upset the internal structure of freedom: ‘The fall takes place in freedom and through freedom (...), as a result of the immaturity of the human freedom’<sup>3</sup>. (Grabowski, 2006, p. 321) It is due to sinfulness that every human person needs education, inner work and grace to choose good, and it is only through educational efforts and self-education that complete self-actualization can be achieved. (Nowak, 2013, p. 23) This begs the question of what specific factors need to be taken into account to ensure an effective process of formation of the human person.

In contrast to the one-sided approach that comes with secularization, integral education addresses all spheres of human life, including openness to the Absolute. Describing the phenomenon of education in his Letter to Families, John Paul II (1994, sec. 16) notes the axiological orientation of the personality formation process. The pope’s attention focuses on two values which determine the integral development of the human person. The first of these values is truth. The authenticity of individual and social life is determined by the ability to follow truth, seek truth and convey truth. (*Compendium*, 2005, sec. 198) In the Christian tradition, the classical concept of truth – based on the correspondence between the real world and its conceptual representation – has been widely adopted. (Galarowicz, 1992, pp. 192–193) The desire to know the truth is a starting point for further efforts to achieve such goals as, for example, the formation of one’s personality – in the sense of ever more fully experiencing one’s own humanity – or the quest to make the world more humane. (*Compendium* 2005, sec. 198) The second of the values referred to by John Paul II (1994, sec. 16) is love, which is a characteristic feature of interpersonal relations. It is in the family that a human person experiences the love that later becomes a constituent of social relations. (Jankowski, 1997, p. 79) Love is a uniquely human principle and value through which an individual can demonstrate his or her personality to the fullest extent possible. An important aspect of love is devotion, the quality that makes it possible to understand the need to participate in the common good of a given community. (Szulist, 2009, pp. 272–273) In his encyclical letter *Caritas in veritate*, Benedict XVI (2009a, sec. 1–3) expressed the view that love (charity) and truth form the basis of a social order for which the absolute point of reference is not only the human being construed in terms of personal dignity and human rights but also – and above all – God as Eternal Love and Absolute Truth. Openness to the Transcendent develops as part of the

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<sup>3</sup> The original language quote: “Upadek dokonuje się w wolności i poprzez wolność (...), z powodu niedojrzałości ludzkiej wolności”.

education process, which – by virtue of its reference to the personal factor – is the most effective antidote to all kinds of crises. (Benedict XVI, 2012) By transcending oneself towards the Absolute while remaining fully responsible for one's neighbors, it is possible to normalize the points of reference and set goals which support the attainment of true individual and common good. (Benedict XVI, 2009b) The reference to God is made within the framework of religious freedom, which “expresses the most fundamental reality of the person”. (Benedict XVI, 2012) Solidarity and freedom complement each other, thus contributing to an even greater commitment towards the complementarily perceived common good. (Benedict XVI, 2009b) Considering the above, a secular interpretation of religious freedom offers only a partial view of the manner in which a person exists in the world.

The mode of existence of God as the Beginning and End of Creation entails a dependency of the human person and other elements of earthly life on the Absolute. The opening of an individual to God that occurs in love and through love finds its expression in selfless service, which is a manifestation of one of the core tenets of personalism. It means placing oneself in reference to God and to other people as well as to oneself in order to advance one's humanity. This obligation stems directly from the human condition: a human person is not absolute, but rather dependent in his or her existence on the Creator. As a result, he or she needs interpersonal references to further self-define and is, therefore a social being. Consequently, a person has certain obligations towards society and should serve it with his or her personal life and spiritual work. Personal life is key to the correct determination of a human person's attitude towards society since it encompasses both the sphere of social obligations and the sphere in which the soul decides for itself before God. A human being's rights and obligations stem directly from human nature. When they act, humans are capable of making sacrifices which are motivated by a rational reading of reality. It is in fact rationality and the possession of a non-material element that determines the exceptional dignity of man among created beings.

### **The complementary scope of a person's obligations**

One of the most fundamental axioms of personalism is the principle of non-instrumentalization and the non-reducibility of a person. By being faithful to the truth about man, to transcendent values and to God, education empowers man to win a “victory” over himself and in himself. (Goliszek, 2013, p. 54; Hart, 1990, p. 54) Moreover, regarding serving others, parents and educators play a special and instrumental role in the context of education.

We would like to begin with the obligations that a human being has to himself or herself as a person. This may be surprising since there is a general tendency to think of obligations mainly in terms of responsibilities towards others. However, it is also important to acknowledge obligations towards oneself, which are, in fact, extremely simple to formulate and yet paradoxical: a human is to become a human. Having been born as a human being, he or she is expected to achieve perfection through the effort of self-formation. The immediate goal of every creature is to develop in an appropriate manner, and in the case of humans, this development is not as much the result of biological determination as it is the product of one's personal efforts that come from the choices that one has made and the tasks that one has set for oneself. A human being thus has a duty to himself or herself: to strive for self-development and, ultimately, for perfection. This obligation must not be neglected, since to do so would be to deny one's very nature: 'The main characteristic of a human person's life is constant development. We may say that man (*anthropos*) is a creature who knows no stagnation and is never finished, that he is indeed a certain combination of interrupted activities, suspended actions and new initiatives being undertaken again and again'<sup>4</sup>. (Nowak, 2013, p. 20) The natural moral law is not only God's law, but also the law of human reason, whereby the latter – created in God's likeness – recognizes that this order is consistent with the nature of things. In that sense, a person who carries the law in himself or herself is, as an ethical being, autonomous; he or she is – as St. Augustine says after St. Paul – a law to himself or herself. (Augustine, 118)

In its anthropology, Christianity must take into account the original sin and its impact on the deterioration of human nature, which entails the need to work on oneself. For the same reason, M. Nowak writes that 'moral character can only be developed by working persistently on one's own self. This requires careful education. In that respect, religion – and especially the Christian religion – has unparalleled merit'<sup>5</sup>. (Nowak, 2013, p. 19) A personal relationship with the Creator is the source of true development. Hence, the author invariably returns to God, emphasizing the fact that 'only in a relationship with Him can man achieve the fulness of his development and overcome the difficulties and adversities that arise'<sup>6</sup>. (Nowak, 2013, p. 19)

<sup>4</sup> The original language quote: "Podstawową cechą życia człowieka jest jego ustawiczny rozwój. Możemy stwierdzić, że człowiek (*anthropos*) jest istotą, która nie zna zastoju, nie jest nigdy ukończony, że jest właśnie jakimś splotem działań przerwanych, akcji zawieszonych i podejmowania ciągle nowych inicjatyw".

<sup>5</sup> The original language quote: "charakter moralny tworzy się tylko dzięki długotrwałej pracy nad własnym ja. Potrzeba do tego starannego wychowania. Pod tym względem religia, a zwłaszcza religia chrześcijańska ma niezrównane zasługi".

<sup>6</sup> The original language quote: "tylko w relacji z Nim człowiek osiągnąć może swój całkowity rozwój, jak również pokonać pojawiające się trudności i przeciwności".



In addition to obligations towards oneself (which are, ultimately, obligations towards the Creator), one also has obligations towards society, which largely consist of the duties of one's state. Morality relies, among other things, on the diligent performance of the duties that arise from one's vocation and, above all, on the love of one's neighbor and God. This is an extremely important responsibility. As modern researchers emphasize, due to the significance of the educational process to individual development in the personalist view, great hopes are attached to education – as expressed by the different variations of personalism. These hopes, however, are far from utopianism and ideologization, and are instead based on real foundations. (Nowak, 2013, p. 20) The noble mission of an educator is linked to the definition of education, according to which 'to educate is to create a human being'<sup>7</sup>. (Jeleńska, 1930) In other words, education means releasing the potential that already exists in a person. (Nowak, 2013, p. 21) Every human being possesses a special, unique personality and has the right to explicate it, although that right is not absolute. (Babiński, 2013, p. 10) An educator's duty and obligation is, therefore, to accompany the pupil in discovering and expressing his or her own potential. The child's personality is of primary importance in education and pedagogy. It does not instantaneously become an adult's personality, since personality is not as much given to a human being as a gift as it is imposed upon him or her as a mission to grow and become mature. (Frączek, 1997, p. 68; Zacharuk, 2009, pp. 56–57) This is because the objective of the educational process is not to abolish individuality, although self-fulfillment must respect some general principles which are interpreted in reality as being generally applicable and stemming from the nature of things, or from natural law. (Babiński, 2013, pp. 10–11) The educator's service also helps develop an attitude of service in the pupil by endowing the latter with the ability to find the right balance between the individual and the communal, between individuality and personhood. While there is a relationship of dependency between the master and the pupil in the education process, this relationship has nothing to do with hierarchy or servitude. The educator has an obligation to ensure that the pupil is always treated as a subject and is thus able to make decisions concerning his or her future at each stage of development. This process was aptly described by John Paul II, who wrote that "education is thus a unique process for which the mutual communion of persons has immense importance. The educator is a person who 'begets' in a spiritual sense. From this point of view, raising children can be considered a genuine apostolate. It is a living means of communication, which not only creates a profound relationship between the educator and the one being educated, but also makes them both

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<sup>7</sup> The original language quote: "wychować oznacza stworzyć człowieka".



sharers in truth and love, that final goal to which everyone is called by God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (John Paul II, 1994, sec. 16). Furthermore, education has a veritative character in that it helps one discover the truth about one’s nature: ‘Personalism as the philosophical basis of education fully examines the intricacies of human existence, taking into account all its spheres: intellectual, moral, mental and social’<sup>8</sup>. (Adamski, 2001, p. 5) The goal of personalistic education is, therefore, to ensure the comprehensive development of a human being both as a person and as a member of the human community. (Adamski, 2001, p. 5) As noted by M.A. Krąpiec, a human being can only develop within a community, that is, within a family or within a larger social grouping such as a nation, a state or the Church. (Krąpiec, 2001, p. 19)

An attitude of service is inscribed in the very idea of personalism. As part of the education process, an educator, parent, or minister does not fulfill his or her own goals, but rather serves the pupil so that the latter can develop, discover his or her individuality and strive for perfection. (Kiereś, 2015, p. 11) In that context, the tenets of modern personalism are not only consistent with the tenets of modern pedagogy but also extend further, since personalism also looks at the child from the perspective of immortality. M. Ryś points out that a good parent is a parent who loves his or her child and accepts the child the way he or she is. Such a parent is capable of working with the child, understands the child’s needs, gives the child judicious freedom as appropriate considering the child’s age and abilities, respects the child’s autonomy and recognizes the child’s dignity as being equal to that of all human beings. (Ryś, 2011, pp. 176–177)

### **The social implications of integral education**

The axiological orientation of integral education is characterized by the fact that the process of human development takes place in two major areas: learning and work. The holistic character of these areas – also incorporating religious factors – is an effective barrier against secularization, which by its very definition eliminates the timeless persistence of the values that integrate individuals in the internal and external dimensions. Thus, learning is regarded as the first important area of personality formation. Importantly, learning in this context does not mean merely fulfilling government-mandated compulsory schooling requirements. The duty to learn is, in a way, inscribed in the human person. Historically, this idea can be traced back to the ancient concept of formation – the Greek *paideia* –

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<sup>8</sup> The original language quote: “Personalizm jako filozoficzna podstawa wychowania, w pełni rozpracuje tajniki ludzkiej egzystencji, biorąc pod uwagę wszystkie jej sfery: intelektualną, moralną, psychiczną, religijną i społeczną”.

and the subsequent concepts of education that developed in the later periods. These concepts have always been included in their agendas and desired to convey certain elements that comprised a given civilization, culture and tradition. For this reason, the education process should be regarded as a manifestation of anthropogenesis. In this context, it is worth emphasizing a special trait of personalist pedagogy in that it underlines the fact that the most important goal of education is to empower the pupil to take responsibility for his or her own development. The pupil is regarded as the primary and fundamental factor in the education process, and the educator may only accompany and assist him or her in that process. In addition, it has been noted that the family plays an important role in the above process as a community-building factor. (Kiereś, 2015, pp. 21–22)

With the crisis of the very foundations of education that is now being observed, one might ask about the fundamental understanding of learning and education, since the existing models are now judged to be outdated and unproductive, and thus obsolete from the standpoint of social and economic expectations. (*Wstęp*, 2013, p. 7) This manifests itself in the tendency to link education explicitly and inextricably to one's career path and deprecate the "less practical" fields of education that do not contribute directly to economic growth. As a result, the culture-shaping ideas that have been developed in universities since the Middle Ages are losing their importance in the modern world. What is more, there is an increasing tendency to disregard an individual's actual circumstances and needs. (*Wstęp*, 2013, p. 7) However, personalist education should take into account in its assumptions both internal factors (i.e., those intrinsic to and characteristic of a given person) and external factors (e.g., environmental considerations) that affect the education process so that the pupil can be guided to respond positively to both the former and the latter. (Nowak, 2013, p. 23)

In this context, the vision of education as the process that prepares a human being to fulfil his or her further life goals and thus to self-improve in eschatological terms – as proposed by personalism – appears to be of key importance. The primary assumption is that tasks must be adapted to a person's stage of life and abilities. Another theme that runs through the proposed models of education built in the spirit of personalism is the explicitly articulated idea that a human person is to be educated for the future. In this case, however, the future is not meant solely or primarily in terms of professional or financial success. This goal is consistent with that formulated by John Paul II, according to whom education means raising one to be a person. (Jan Paweł II, 1989, p. 36) Education and schooling should enable a human being to self-create and self-justify as a person, to come out to the world and prove oneself in a variety of social interactions

understood as interpersonal relations and a mutually ‘fruitful circulation of blood’<sup>9</sup>. (Nowak, 2013, p. 30)

Referring to the crisis of education that is now being observed (and analyzed from a variety of standpoints), Tadeusz Gadacz reminds us that Plato – the author of one of the fundamental archetypes of European education – taught that any great crisis is, in its essence, a personal crisis. School is no longer a community of teachers and pupils, and the educator is no longer seen as a master who has already embarked on the path towards truth and is now guiding his disciples along that path. (Gadacz, 2001, p. 87) Instead, school has become a place where curricula are followed rather than a place where pupils are introduced to culture. However, culture is a realization of values that engages the entire human person, including his or her knowledge, emotions and will. Values, in turn, are merits on account of which things deserve respect, such as pleasure, usefulness, refinement, beauty or moral goodness. Our knowledge of values and the meanings and importance that we ascribe to them all affect our activities and give them a purposeful direction. These activities – stemming from the values that we have adopted – are referred to as culture and expressed in creative work, and the products of that creative work are knowledge, art and moral and religious life. They depend on a person’s commitment and internal quest for self-improvement and on the influence of the social environment. Thus, we can confidently say that in the education process, a young person is, first and foremost, invited to engage in spiritual work that includes, without limitation, the process of gaining knowledge.

Today, an unprecedented incidence of emotional and mental issues can be observed in children and young people. Naturally, there is no single answer to the question of what causes such issues, but the most frequent reasons given are the rapid progress of civilization (including unrestricted access to the Internet) and lack of interest from parents. Other factors commonly cited by researchers are school stress and excessive demands placed on young people. At least the latter problem could be eliminated by allowing schools – or rather educators – to follow each child and adapt the requirements to his or her actual individual needs and abilities. In fact, this has consistently been one of the demands of personalism since education and schooling should enable a human being to create himself or herself as a person. (Nowak, 2013, p. 13)

Another aspect of the integral model of education is work as a continuation of learning and, in some cases, a practical application of what one has learnt. The personality formation process does not end in adult life but rather changes its character and form – as is the case in the workplace. Today, there is a general

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<sup>9</sup> The original language quote: “owocny obieg krwi”.

tendency to think of work in terms of a professional career only, but the word needs to be understood more widely as a great commitment to fulfilling one's obligations and participating responsibly in the life of one's community. This means that there is no such thing as a more privileged or less privileged obligation, since all human activity – manifesting itself in the effort of self-improvement, social involvement, inspiration with everlasting values or contribution to the development of culture – is ultimately a service to God and an aspiration towards Him. (Babiński, 2013, p. 246) In that manner, progress is made towards building noble humanity and thus towards establishing the Kingdom of God on earth.

A human being's responsibility is to fulfill his or her life's vocation in the history of the world by advancing towards a realm of culture, reason and spirit, which is a realm of true freedom and noble humanity. This is the fundamental goal of education. Education is not about cultural goods since they lose their significance in the absence of human beings. And it is not about work, either, since work cannot have a value in and of itself and be the ultimate goal of history, its role being rather to guide a human being towards further development. Human development must take place in an eschatological perspective and be open to the "next world". Only then is it possible to clearly see the significance of not only material possessions but also spiritual values.

Work gives sense to one's life, but it does not do so in and of itself, but rather through its content and the purpose that it serves; in and of itself, it is devoid of meaning. If an activity itself is believed to be valuable, this is due to the fact that it brings advancement in one's personal life. It teaches discipline and responsibility, makes it possible to overcome character flaws and helps develop competencies and talents. This is particularly true today: as work has changed its character and become a "career" for many people, workaholism is becoming an increasingly important issue, and excessive dedication to work more and more frequently ruins people's health and interpersonal relationships. In that context, personalism's proposition to regard work not only as a means of earning money and achieving economic stabilization, but also as a reality that creates specific values, should be seen as relevant and original. The purpose of a person's life is to become a valuable, good, honest and noble human being. A person who has not achieved the above goals has failed in his or her mission, even if he or she has gained admiration from the entire world.

Integral education in the sphere of work does not occur at the individual level alone; it also takes place within a framework of community references. Therefore, in the field of work ethics, attention is drawn to the humanization of the social organization of work. Maintaining the primacy of the subjectivity of human labor, as was John Paul II's call in his encyclical letter "Laborem

exercens”, not only offers a solution to contemporary social issues, (John Paul II, 1981, sec. 6) but also contributes to overcoming the materialization and technologization of life as trends which systemically disregard all forms of spirituality or even religiousness. Solidarity in the workplace determines man’s integral development (Paul VI, 1967, sec. 14) and thus makes the world more humane. Theistic factors further reinforce the combined references that, in essence, protect a human being’s personal dignity at each stage of development. (John Paul II, 1987, sec. 40)

### **Conclusions**

A modern person faces a multitude of challenges. In the context of the Christian tradition, a major challenge comes from secularization as a process that entails a reductionist concept of the person. Preoccupation with material factors and achievements of human perception alone narrows the perspective of progress and, as a consequence, distorts the truth about humanity. In that respect, the integral education model offers an effective remedy by widening the scope of personality formation to include the supernatural sphere as a place in which material possessions act as tools. In that manner, it intensifies the dynamics of human behavior focused around the values of truth and love, which Benedict XVI regards as being the foundation of the kind of social life where spiritual and material factors are mutually complementary. The absolute character of truth and love as values which are identified to the greatest extent with God gives rise to the attitude of service: a form of selfless activity aimed at maintaining the priority status of the human person in the social order. The complementary experience of social life manifests itself in the recognition of human rights and obligations. The interdependence of rights and obligations contributes to the humanization of the world by promoting solidarity between individuals in permanent reference to the common good. The integral education model – representing, in fact, an unconditional concern for the dignity of every human being – is primarily applicable in the spheres of learning and work. The practical aspect of any theory only retains its personalist character if it takes into account the entire human person – including the enriching reference to God as a Person.

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## Wychowanie integralne w kontekście procesu laicyzacji

**Streszczenie:** Przedmiotem analiz w niniejszym artykule są zagrożenia, których źródłem jest postępująca laicyzacja procesu wychowania. Zjawisko zeświecczenia stosunków międzyludzkich, jak też samej koncepcji człowieka cechuje współczesność. Wskazuje się tutaj wprost na konsekwencje materalizacji i technologizacji życia. Model wychowania integralnego obecny w personalizmie stanowi alternatywę dla laicyzującego społeczeństwa. Człowiek ma godność osobową i niezbywalne prawa, których pełne uzasadnienie można odczytać dopiero w kontekście nauki objawionej. Kształtowanie osobowości, określające w ogólności dzieło wychowania, uwzględnia nie tylko czynniki cielesno-duchowe, ale także religijne, mobilizujące do przemian w sensie osiągnięcia coraz wyższych stopni doskonałości. Obszarami, w których postuluje się model integralnego wychowania, jest nauka i edukacja oraz praca. Rozwój człowieka przy uwzględnieniu czynników religijnych opiera się na własnych kryteriach w humanizacji, będącej czynieniem świata coraz bardziej ludzkim w ciągłej relacji do Boga.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wychowanie integralne, personalizm, osoba, laicyzacja, praca, edukacja, nauka.



