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## **MASTER IN PERSONALISTIC EDUCATION**

## **MISTRZ W WYCHOWANIU PERSONALISTYCZNYM**

## **МАСТЕР ЛИЧНОСТНОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ**

### **Abstract**

*The subject of the article is a personalistic education and placing the teacher-educator in the role of a master. In personalistic education, emphasis is placed on assisting the student in becoming a full person by opening him to the values of truth, goodness and beauty. It was assumed that this upbringing leads to self-education, and is carried out through dialogue and authenticity, and thus it can be effectively carried out only in co-operation: family, school and religious community, understood as guarantor and carrier of absolute values. Implemented at the school level, it should help the student gain a personal insight into the world of higher values and teach him to make the fundamental value of his own choices. As a result, it was found that the teacher is a teacher-educator who enjoys spiritual and intellectual authority, directs his activities to form the whole person, and his goal is to enable the student to formulate independent judgments about reality. The master is a teacher who, having an uncommon level of knowledge and extensive experience in a given field, is able to develop it in others, fascinate as a personal model, inspire, arouse the passion of seeking truth, growing in goodness and love of beauty; give direction to the student's search and discreetly control, and finally enjoy the fruits of working together with him.*

**Keywords:** *Personalism, personalistic model, master, truth, goodness, self-cognition, dialogue, authenticity, upbringing in "personal view", upbringing in the "view of functioning"*

### **Streszczenie**

*Przedmiotem artykułu jest zapoznanie się z tematem wychowania personalistycznego oraz miejsca nauczyciela-wychowawcy, jako mistrza. Przypomniano, że w wychowaniu personalistycznym kładzie się nacisk na wspomaganie ucznia w stawianiu się pełnym człowiekiem poprzez otwieranie go na wartości prawdy, dobra i piękna. Założono, że wychowanie to ma być prowadzeniem do auto-wychowania, dokonuje się przez dialog i autentyczność, a zatem może być skutecznie prowadzone tylko we współpracy: rodziny, szkoły i wspólnoty religijnej, rozumianej jako gwarant i nośnik wartości absolutnych. Realizowane na poziomie szkoły winno ono pomagać wychowankowi uzyskać osobisty wgląd w*

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świat wyższych wartości i nauczyć go czynić z wartości zasadniczą stawkę własnych wyborów. W rezultacie stwierdzono, że mistrzem jest ten nauczyciel-wychowawca, który cieszy się autorytetem duchowym i intelektualnym, kieruje swoje działania formacyjne do całej osoby, a jego celem jest uzdolnienie wychowanka do samodzielnego formułowania sądów o rzeczywistości. W takim razie mistrzem jest ten nauczyciel, który - posiadając w nieprzeciętnym stopniu wiedzę oraz duże doświadczenie w danej dziedzinie - umie rozwijać je u innych, fascynować, jako wzór osobowy, inspirować, budzić pasję szukania prawdy, wzrastania w dobru i umiłowania piękna; nadawać kierunek poszukiwaniom ucznia i dyskretnie kontrolować, a na końcu cieszyć się wraz z nim owocami wspólnej pracy.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *personalizm, model personalistyczny, mistrz, prawda, dobro, piękno, poznawanie samego siebie, dialog, autentyczność, wychowania w „optyce osobowej”, wychowanie w „optyce funkcjonowania”*

### Аннотация

Предметом статьи является персоналистическое воспитание и принятие учителем-педагогом роли мастера. В персоналистическом образовании делается упор на то, чтобы помочь ученику стать полноценным человеком, открыв ему такие ценности, как истина, добро и красота. Предполагалось, что это воспитание приведет к самообразованию и будет осуществляться посредством диалога и аутентичности, и, таким образом, оно может эффективно осуществляться только при сотрудничестве семьи, школы и религиозного сообщества, воспринимаемых как гарант и носитель абсолютных ценностей. Внедренное на школьном уровне, оно должно помочь ученику получить личное представление о мире более высоких ценностей и научить его делать свой собственный выбор, опираясь на фундаментальные ценности. В результате было обнаружено, что учитель является учителем-педагогом, который обладает духовным и интеллектуальным авторитетом, направляет свою деятельность на формирование личности человека, и его цель состоит в том, чтобы дать возможность ученику сформулировать независимые суждения о реальности. Мастер - это учитель, который, обладая необыкновенным уровнем знаний и обширным опытом в данной области, способен развивать его в других, очаровывать своим примером, вдохновлять, пробуждать страсть к поиску истины, воспитывать в атмосфере добра и любви к красоте; давать направление ученику в его поисках и сдержанно контролировать, и, наконец, наслаждаться плодами совместной работы с ним.

**Ключевые слова:** *персонализм, персоналистическая модель, мастер, истина, доброта, самопознание, диалог, аутентичность, воспитание через «призму личного видения», воспитание «через призму функционирования»*

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**Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.**

The main subject of the article is a return to the personalistic model in the context of contemporary pedagogical reductionism, and especially the school's abandonment of educational functions. That is why it is so important in this context to include a definition of personalistic education, the definition of its goals, the distinction between education in the "personal vision" and the "functioning vision" and consideration of the educator as the master in the first vision ("personal vision"). The personalists (Romano Gaurdini, Max Scheler, Emanuel Mounier, Janusz Korczak, Teresa Kułłowicz, Janusz Tarnowski) understood education as a process of extracting and arousing the human; the process leading to student's maturation. The process should take place in an axiological atmosphere in which - responding to materialistic and utilitarian cultural tendencies - "be" should be always above "have". The "axiological" atmosphere and the wide horizon are the most interesting and still current in the personalism.

This trend is well reflected in the issue of the Krakow magazine "Znak", entitled: "Education at the crossroads", issued in September 1991, 22 years ago. By the term crossroad Tadeusz Gadacz, the thinker

from the school of priest Józef Tischner, named the situation at that time in the discussion with Anna Radziwił, prof. Janusz Tarnowski, Katarzyna Olbrycht, Piotr Legutki and Karol Tarnowski. Gadacz said that the crossroads means separating education from the transfer of knowledge. On this subject, we all have been complaining about for years. Professor Gadacz, however, added an interesting idea: the Polish school does not reveal good, truth and beauty during education process. It's education is based on adapting to the existing structures and institutional models of life. School is no longer (or yet) a community of "teachers as masters and disciples"; a community in which a teacher - a master who is heading towards truth, goodness and beauty - brings children with him (Gadacz, 1991, p. 62).

The subject of the master interested me. Too little attention is paid to the role of the educator as a master; in fact we probably feel a little ashamed of thinking about educator as a master. Therefore, in the further part of the text, in general, I will show what personalistic education is and then - mainly based on newer literature - I will outline the role of the master and encourage to take it.

**Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated.**

The principles of the personalistic model have been discussed in the devoted entirely to education, groundbreaking issue of the "Znak" from 1991, by among others: Minister Anna Radziwił, Tadeusz Gadacz and Janusz Tarnowski. This article, in order to

create a coherent narrative about personalistic education and the meaning of the master, was written also on a base of statements made by: Zbigniew Herbert, Jerzy Januszkievicz, Rene Girard, Michał Heller, Janusz Stanisław Pasierba and Anna Karoń-Ostrowska.

### **Aims of paper. Methods.**

The inspiration for the article was reflection on the started in 2016 reform of education in Poland. In this reform one a clear return to the balance of teaching, education and prevention can be noticed, but also serious problems with the implementation it to the school. Thus, the main goal of the article is to return to the

personalistic principles of the reform, carried out at the beginning of system changes in free Poland. The main methods used in the article are: presentation of the principles of personalistic education, defining the position of the educator as a master and drawing practical conclusions for pedagogical work.

### **Exposition of main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results. Discussion.**

#### **The essence of personalistic education**

Personalism is rarely spoken these days probably because representatives of this trend, not only in pedagogy, but also in philosophy or psychology, are treated like bores. They are constantly repeating the old theses: on the personal dignity of the student; about bringing up truth, goodness and beauty; about loyalty to values. Most pedagogues are interested in praxis: the use of psychology, specific pedagogical methods and methodological help. We try to keep up with the progress in mathematics and natural sciences or in the humanities. We mainly pay attention to extremely talented students, for whom the school is the most rewarded in various "calculations" and rankings, as well as on the cases that may undermine its authority (drug abuse, aggression, xenophobia, etc.). In the previously mentioned discussion from the "Znak", the philosopher Karol Tarnowski, however, recalled the peculiar "credo" of pedagogics:

"To educate is to help the other become a full man, and therefore help to open up to higher values. These values are best described with the help of the transcendental: truth, goodness and beauty [...]. That kind of education is never ending, because a man can always deepen and deceive his culture" (Wychowanie na rozdrożu, an editorial discussion, p. 53).

There is something basic in this "credo" for everyone. That is why I think, each one of us, educators, should remember his principles and from time to time make an examination of conscience.

The starting point of the personalistic educational model is a clear awareness that the student is a person. Janusz Korczak wrote: "It is one of the most evil mistakes to think that pedagogics is a science about a child, not about a man. There are no children - there are people; but with a different scale of concepts, another source of experience, another feelings." (Korczak, 1987, p. 198, Tarnowski, 1991, p. 69). That is why as an education one should understand, the whole of the ways and processes that help a person - especially through the dialogue and authenticity - is meant to become fully a person who realizes his or her talents and values: truth, goodness and beauty (Schaller, 1977, p. 248- 251). "Personal being, which is the fulfillment of the human vocation, embracing goodness, truth and beauty, participates in values according to their preference: from material values, through spiritual values, to absolute values [...]" (Gadacz, 1991, p. 66).

That is why in the personalistic model, there is such a strong emphasis on cooperation: family, school and religious community, understood as a guarantor and carrier of absolute value. Even if the erosion of

the parental authority is taking place today, it still remains an important factor in the pedagogical process, and in personalistic education. The pedagogue would be happy if he can refer to this authority. A simple example: a long break in one of the gymnasiums, located on the suburbs of a big city. Students are standing in the line in front of the school shop. The first grader holds coin in his hand. A student of an older class arrives, pulls a coin from his hand and takes the younger student's place in the line with the expression of innocent. (The type of harassment is being spread, which involves extorting the type of tribute from first-graders by older colleagues). The school teacher notices the whole scene. He calls the older student to him and asks what happened. Answer is: "- I borrowed from him. "Have you also agreed that he will be standing in line for you? Have you established when the return will take place?" – Teacher asks. Silence, and then the answer: "It is only fifty cents". Because all attempts at dialogue on this subject end in failure, the pedagogue decides to ask for a conversation of parents. Teacher takes long time describing this situation to parents... In response, he hears the same: "It was only fifty cents"... However, further conversation has a sensible shape and both sides manage to reach positive conclusions.

Shaping the reference to truth means in the personalistic model, introducing into the difficult art of getting to know oneself; learning curiosity and creativity; introducing the achievements of the human mind. This is directly connected with shaping the ability to make choices between good and evil, learning the objective criteria of these choices. "To be educated to good is to be able to see good wherever it is, both around us and in other civilizations, and be capable of goodness alone" (Wychowanie na rozdrożu, Editorial discussion, 1991, p.

53). Educating to beauty consists in awakening the ability to admire the world of nature and the heritage of culture and art, shaping good taste, showing the relationship of beauty and good (the ancient Greeks even made the ideal *kalokagathii* [from: *kalós kai agathós*], or "beauty-good").

Educating to values is mainly done through dialogue and authenticity. Dialogue in pedagogical personalism is both a value to which one should be brought up, and the best way to introduce values. It is based on the mutual exchange, on the sharing of ones innermost self, on shaping in the atmosphere of truth (dialogos - truth "between") interpersonal friendship. The dialogue process requires humility and openness from the student, from the pedagogue - the ability to share and the ability to overcome complexes, routine or fatigue.

The basic condition of dialogue is also the authenticity of the partners. In the modern educational process, they are threatened by: being a fashion surrender, "idolism", willingness to be seen ("big brother" attitudes), snobbery. All this is connected with wearing masks, which are the projection of other people's aspirations (the ambitions of parents about child lucrative future). Masks lead to very dangerous process of auto illusion. Education for authenticity will thus consist in experiencing reality in accordance with objective possibilities, in the simplicity of one's self; on waking a personal life (E. Mounier), on breaking the next masks. In the breaking the masks sometimes life itself can be ruthless enough.

The personalists emphasize that the world of truth, goodness and beauty is revealed in the meeting of people. In order for this meeting to take place in the educational process, two conditions have to be fulfilled. Tadeusz Gadacz emphasizes that the first

of these is the distinction between upbringing in "personal vision" and "functioning vision" (Gadacz, 1991, p.66).

For education in the functioning vision, the subject-oriented approach to the student is appropriate. It depends on its formation in accordance with the applicable social system, ideology, fashion (for example for political correctness.) On the other hand, education in the personal sphere is about a student (and not just about his mathematical knowledge or sports results), about opening a wide horizon of values for him (and not only utilitarian or hedonistic values), pulling him towards through an authentic person master, not pragmatics (see the figure of mathematician and psychologist in the movie " Good Will Hunting"). Education in "functional vision" – as Gadacz wrote - "has a non-human character". It would be better to write: the personal element prevails in it, the emphasis is laid on performing duty, obeying norms, adapting to the market, repeating the accepted rules of interpretation, famous Heidegger's thinking how to think, speaking as saying, and writing as writes... In turn in education in the "personal optics" the imitation of personal patterns and masters is decisive. Gadacz puts it in the following way:

"If education in the vision of functioning can be regulations and programs, education in a personal vision should be presented by people whose program is their life. Education in the vision of being a person is a common journey towards truth, goodness and beauty, through successive levels of values. Educator is a master here who reveals these values. His personality is a call to which the student answers [in a freeway] and follows his master on the road to the highest values." (Gadacz, 1991, p. 66).

We are guessing that the second condition for an authentic meeting in the educational process is the "meeting of the master" and

imitation. I would like to take an opportunity to signal how great renaissance in today's philosophy, anthropology, social sciences and literary theory, have the mimesis (R. Girard, 2006).

### **To not be afraid of being a master**

Of course, the "master" is a big word, and in today's world, especially in the world of school, no one likes "big words". However, it is worth to look sometimes in our memory and think: who do we really remember, in addition to our relatives, friends from the world of childhood and youth? Who influenced us the most? They were certainly "significant people (for us)" that we imitated or wanted to imitate - perhaps a fictional hero, or people we have really met: teachers, instructors, guides. Usually, but not always they are liked and appreciated, and always in the process of life, "people who are significant (for us) ", "masters".

The master is a spiritual and intellectual authority, and he stays in this position even when ideologies fall and the rules change (Gadacz, 1991, p. 66-67).

About the master and his students one can say, as Yevtushenko in his poem "On the bridge": "Somewhere down there have fallen governments, / somewhere else - someone speaks from above / but they / - here - / do not care / as the Seine cloudy waters" (Pasierb, 1972, p. 236-239).

The Master directs his appeal to the whole person, and his goal is to enable the pupil to become independent in formulating judgments about reality. The master does not lead to "holy peace", and the pupil does not get good grades because his thinking is in proper order and that he does not interfere with the teacher. "Education in the vision of being" is creative and open. How - compiling here a few recent thoughts from the text of T. Gadacz (1991, p. 67-68) - do not think about " Dead Poets Society" with the great role of Robin Williams?

Anna Karoń-Ostrowska, also a philosopher from the circle of Józef Tischner, wonders if one can be a master without students (2000, p. 12). And responds: apparently it seems that can't. The master (and not only in Polish) is also called someone who has achieved perfection in fulfilling his vocation, in achieving efficiency, in his work. However, it involves some positive self-knowledge (it can be also, unfortunately, an illusion of self-knowledge), a desire to give, share experience.

Michał Heller in the book "How to be a scholar" ("Jak być uczonym") seems to complement this idea. He emphasizes that it is sometimes worthwhile to look at our work "from outside"; all of us - at every level - are threatened with certain "knowledge pretentiousness". We can see then - Heller emphasizes - that we are only a link in a long chain and that previous links are well remembered. This previous links are our teachers, maybe our Master, to whom we owes a lot. Then there is the next link - our students. Didactics cannot only be a nuisance to your own research. Students should be given a lot of time and attention. And it is needed not only to ensure good co-workers in the future, but also

for ascetic reasons. Let's recall the question: <Who is a neighbor?>. The neighbors should never be looked far away "(2009, p. 47-48).

Let's take a look on our problem with Karon-Ostrowska... Everyone who is a teacher or a professor; who teach how to achieve something in a given field (both physical and intellectual) – is a master? The answer is obvious: not everyone. "What must happen to become a master? - asks Karoń-Ostrowska. And she answers: in "Love and responsibility" Karol Wojtyła compares this experience to spiritual fatherhood and motherhood: spiritual birth is an expression of a person's maturity. So one should be looking for others, especially young people, who will take what one want to give them. The relatedness born in such relationships is often stronger than blood relatedness (2000, p. 14-17). The master transmits what he knows by who he is; he speaks with himself and at the same time invites people to put their feet in the traces left by him. The master can therefore only be the one who really met the student on his way; who can accept it and who is not afraid to learn from the student.

## **Conclusions.**

What are the characteristics of a master? With an uncommon knowledge and extensive experience in a given field, he is able to develop it in others, to fascinate as a personal model, to inspire the student with the passion of seeking truth, growing in goodness and love of beauty; give direction to his research and discreetly control, and finally enjoy the results of working together with him (Chlewiński, 1996, p. 67-73). About Jerzy Jarnuszkiewicz, an outstanding Polish sculptor, his students used to say: "I know it not from a professor, I know it thanks to the professor."

The master also knows how to respect the individuality of the student by developing talents and predispositions and eliminating gaps. In practice, this means: kindness and willingness to help, but mainly sharing his own time; joy of contact with students and their successes; not imposing views and decisions; unwilling to being the life guru of students; setting requirements, based on the abilities of the student, his personal and family situation and predispositions.

"Educator, who is a master - Tadeusz Gadacz will write directly - can open his home and invite a student. He finds for them a

place in his life ethos. The school thus becomes an extension of the home. For the educator-guardian, the school is just a kind of a storage room in which some functions are performed, but where one does not live "(1991, p. 68). Herbert would add a few more verses to this point: perhaps about the "power of taste", maybe

about the old masters, who "lived without names", "raw gentleness / delicate strength" and "the sight that forgives and should not forgive". The taste, humility, raw gentleness and being in the paradox of forgiveness "taught how to [...] persist in the world like a thinking stone / Patient in-different and tender at the same time.

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