

RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF PEDAGOGY  
OF THE JOHN PAUL II CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF LUBLIN

Piotr Magier\*

*Abstract*

The aim of the paper is to describe the main stages of development of the Institute of Pedagogy of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and to describe the key scientific achievements of the Institute's academic staff. The content is presented from both historical and theoretical perspective. The author indicated the main stages of development of the Institute of Pedagogy of the Catholic University of Lublin in the context of the development of pedagogy in Poland. The significance of the achievements of the staff of the Institute of Pedagogy of the Catholic University of Lublin was shown in relation to the specificity of personalistic upbringing, especially in the context of the Marxist model of pedagogy dominant in Poland after World War II.

**Key words:** *Institute of Pedagogy of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, pedagogy, Christian personalism.*

The article presents the content from both theoretical and historical perspective. Its subject pertains to the specificity of the scientific output of the Institute of Pedagogy of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin analysed in the genetic angle. The paper introduces an understanding of the views typical of the pedagogical scientific environment of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, their sources and indicates selected aspects of their social and cultural value. The main impact is placed on the achievements of the Institute of Pedagogy of the Catholic University of Lublin in the national pedagogical work in the twentieth century, and especially on the significance for the processes of development of pedagogy and education.

The idea behind the main topic of this paper relates to the role (value, importance) that the scientific community of the Catholic University of Lublin played in the socio-cultural changes in Poland in the 1980s and 1990s, including the role of the Institute of Pedagogy of the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) in initiating changes in Polish pedagogy and education. A particular argument justifying the relevance of the subject undertaken is the fact that the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL), after the Second World War, was the only one in the entire bloc of communist countries to remain an independent centre of scientific research: it was not managed by the communist authorities and to a large extent retained its ideological and theoretical autonomy. Similarly, the Institute of Pedagogy of the Catholic University of Lublin was perhaps the only non-Marxist pedagogical centre in the bloc of countries of the so-called people's democracy. It carried out scientific research based on the concept of Christian personalism, free from the generally binding positivist-Marxist concept of doing science and from the totalitarian model of education and upbringing.

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\* PhD with habilitation, Associate Professor, Institute of Pedagogy John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin – Poland; +48 445 32 53; e-mail: piotr.magier@kul.pl

The above mentioned argument of undertaking this particular topic is supported by the lack of more widely disseminated knowledge about the importance of the Institute of Pedagogy of the Catholic University of Lublin for the development of pedagogy, including the changes in the model of practicing pedagogy in Poland after 1998. This lack of knowledge concerns not only foreign university centres (which may be quite obvious), but also refers to native Polish institutions<sup>2</sup>. The theoretical aim of paper is therefore complemented by a practical one (cf: Kudashov, Chernykh, Yatsenko, Grigorieva, Pfanenstiel, Rakhinskiy, 2017) - to popularise knowledge about the role that the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL played in the promotion of independent research and educational ideas.

The overview of research presented in this paper refers to the hermeneutic and analytical research paradigm. As a result, the answer to the following questions may be obtained: what is the genesis and the most important stages of the historical development of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL?; what are the theoretical achievements of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL?; what are the main theoretical categories which characterise the achievements of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL?

The basic research material consists of theoretical publications and source documents. The research material is considerable in this aspect and covers more than one hundred years of institutional functioning of pedagogy at KUL and publication activity of the academic staff of the Institute of Pedagogy (1918-2022). It includes not only papers analysing the subject matter but also reviews of the state of art - collecting and summarizing the scientific achievements of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL, especially the most recent publications (Rynio, & Skrzyniarz, 2011; Fel, Niewiadomska, & Skrzyniarz, 2016; Nowak, 2018; Braun, Łobacz, & Rynio 2010; Kiereś, Nowak, & Opozda, 2006; Nowak, Ożóg, & Rynio, 2003).

The article consists of two parts: the first one presents an outline of the development of pedagogy at KUL in the light of the pedagogy in Poland in the period from 1918 to the present times. The characterization of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL and its scientific achievements was outlined in relevance to the main stages of the development of the Lublin centre. The second part of the article contains analyses of the theoretical specificity of pedagogy practiced at KUL. The key categories characterising the scientific achievements are discussed herein.

### **I. Socio-cultural background of Institute of Pedagogy KUL**

The research and university education in the field of pedagogy conducted at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin falls into three historical periods, crucial for the development of Polish pedagogy. These include: the period before the Second World War, the period from the end of the Second World War to the early 1980s and the period from the social and political changes of the 1980s and 1990s up to the present times. Distinguishing between these periods is based both on the criterion of social and political conditions in which science functioned in Poland, and on criteria within science

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<sup>2</sup> It may be thought that this situation is related to the marginalisation of the achievements of Christian pedagogy, still present in the pedagogical discourse in Poland in the first decade of the 21st century, (cf: Stępkowski, 2010: 11-15), as well as the process of idealization of the communist era in the post-war period (cf: Bureś, 2018).

- that is the specificity of the development of pedagogical academic centres ( Cf.: Łobocki, 2010: 15-21; Śliwerski, 2007: 18-20.).

The first period is marked by the dates: the end of the First World War (1918) and the outbreak of the Second World War (1939). This was the time when both Catholic University of Lublin and the Institute of Pedagogy, which operated within the university, was established and developed in both institutional and theoretical sense. The University of Lublin (renamed from 1928 to: Catholic University of Lublin and since 2005 bearing the name: John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) was established in 1918 as a Catholic university (the inauguration of the academic year took place on 8 December 1918) thanks to the efforts of Rev. Idzi Radziszewski (1871-1922). The administrative, financial and personnel support was provided by the Imperial Spiritual Academy in St. Petersburg where I. Radziszewski was employed until 1918. As a result of political changes, especially the rebirth of the Polish State (1918) and the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (1917), Radziszewski decided to return to Poland and establish a higher education institution in the service of the reborn state and the Church ( Karolewicz, 1996: 22-26).

The legal framework for the functioning of the University of Lublin was systematically sanctioned by decisions of both Catholic church and state authorities. For the first time, on 27 July 1918, at a committee meeting of the Polish Episcopate chaired by the Visitor of the Holy See, Achilles Ratti (1857-1939) - later Pope Pius XI, the project of establishing a Catholic university in the reborn Poland was accepted. The official founding act was issued by the Congregation for Seminaries and Universities on 25 July 1920, and then renewed by Pope Pius XI in 1923, 1926 and 1929. The legal acceptance of the diploma of the 'secular' faculties was officially granted to the University of Lublin on 28 June 1922. At that time, by a decision of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, an Examination Commission was established at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv to grant university diplomas to the Faculty of Law and Social and Economic Sciences. The Act on Academic Schools of 1933 officially recognised the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) as a 'private academic school', and the Catholic University of Lublin was granted full state rights on 9 April 1938 by a resolution of the Sejm and a decision of the President of the Republic of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki (1867-1946). As a result, KUL was the fifth higher education institute in the independent Poland conferring all degrees and covering the following faculties of education and research: Theology, Canon Law, Law and Social and Economic Sciences, Humanities and the Pedagogical Institute (Karolewicz, 1996: 28-33).

From the very beginning, the scientific and didactic activity of KUL was aimed at educating the intellectual and social Polish Catholic elite, functioning in the spirit of rationalisation of faith (combining faith and logic reasoning). In this context, pedagogy, from its very inception, was treated as a strategic discipline, determining the political, cultural and social shape of the reborn state (Nowak, 2018: 15). The main activity of the Catholic University in Lublin reflected in this aspect both the social needs and the intellectual tendencies prevailing in the Catholic Church at that time. Their doctrinal foundations were described in Pope Leo XIII's (1878-1903) encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (Leon XIII, 2003) of 1879 while their theoretical assumptions were developed by Catholic thinkers such as John Henry Newman (1801-1890) and Cardinal Désiré-Joseph

Mercier (1851-1926), among others. In the pre-war period, it was the collaboration with the Catholic University of Lovanium (Belgium) that mainly defined the theoretical and scientific principles of the activity of the Catholic University of Lublin. The result of this collaboration was embedded in the research conducted at the Catholic University of Lublin based on the philosophy of St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). This involved not only the development of the system of neo-Thomistic philosophy itself but also its application to various specific disciplines including pedagogy (Karolewicz, 1996: 19-22).

The beginnings of pedagogy at KUL are identified with the inauguration of a teacher training course (1918) and then (1920) with the employment of Dr Zygmunt Kukulski (1890-1944) and the establishment of the Department of Pedagogy (Wolk, 2018: 46; Skrzyniarz, 2016b: 150-151). Pedagogical research conducted at KUL at that time focused on the problems of the history of upbringing (especially on the activities of the Commission of National Education established in 1773, *de facto* the world's first ministry of education), on general pedagogy (theoretical and methodological foundations of pedagogy and education) and on issues of school systems including the Lublin region (See, inter alia: Kukulski, 1923; Kukulski, 1927a; Kukulski, 1927b; Kukulski, 1939). Graduates of the Pedagogical Institute of KUL from 1933 were awarded a Master of Philosophy degree in pedagogy (Skrzyniarz, 2016b: 14).

In addition to the pedagogical research carried out within the Pedagogical Institute, philosophical and theological research on upbringing was practised at the university. Particularly noteworthy in this aspect is the scholarly activity of Fr Jacek Woroniecki OP (1878-1949) who developed an original conception of upbringing referring to the work of St Thomas Aquinas. This concept is presented in a systematic form in a three-volume work entitled: "*Catholic Education Ethics*" (Woroniecki, 1995) which included a proposal for integral and personalistic education based on the category of moral virtues (See for example: Mazur, Kieres, Skrzyniarz., & Plazińska, 2019; Wistuba OP, Magier, & Marczewski, 2022).

The second period of pedagogy at KUL falls between the end of the Second World War and the moment of socio-political change - the early 1980s. It was a time of the consolidation of communist power in Poland, the closure of non-Marxist centres of scientific, social and educational thought including efforts to closing down the Catholic University of Lublin. These tendencies were reflected in the systematic restriction of the scientific and didactic activities of the University: the development of academic staff was hindered, the possibility of publication was restricted, and cooperation with foreign centres was prohibited. The research of the Pedagogical Section conducted since 1944 at KUL within the Department of Pedagogy and the History of Education, representing Christian, integral and personalistic thought based on the values of freedom and human dignity, openly contradicted the totalitarian character of the Polish state. As a result, in 1953 the Ministry of Higher Education (Order of the Minister of Higher Education of 29 June 1953) closed the enrolment for pedagogical studies and in 1956 the Pedagogical Section at the Catholic University of Lublin was definitively forbidden (Skrzyniarz, 2016b: 14-15).

The administrative relic of pedagogical studies at KUL comprised only the general university, interdepartmental pedagogical agenda led by S. Kunowski (1909-1977). It fulfilled primarily didactic, service functions for students and academic staff

of the faculties of theology, philosophy and humanities. In terms of research, S. Kunowski continued the personalistic and Christian educational thought, thus exposing himself to constant harassment and obstructions in his scientific development (refusal to grant a professorship) and in the popularisation of the results of his research (Skrzyniarz, 2016b: 15-16).

As in the pre-war period, educational issues were also considered at KUL by representatives of scientific disciplines other than pedagogy. In the field of philosophy, it found its continuation in research works conducted in the spirit of J. Woroniecki's work: Mieczysław A. Krąpiec (1921-2008), Feliks Bednarski (1911-2006), Henryk Kierész (1943-), Andrzej Maryniarczyk (1950-2020). On the other hand, in the field of theology (pastoral theology), specific research on upbringing in the family was initiated in the 1970s by Rev. Prof. Piotr Poręba (1908-1991). Based on the legacy of S. Kunowski, he created the first Department of Family Pedagogy in Poland focusing research on problems of empirical research of upbringing in the family as well as on the promotion of the Christian model of marriage and family (Tomkiewicz, 2006: 49-54).

The third period of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL falls on the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. Selective, partial acceptance of the theoretical concept and pedagogical research conducted at KUL emerged along with the social and political changes in Poland. Their beginnings date back to 1981 and are related to the activities of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity". Taking into account the nationwide workers' protests, the communist authorities agreed to the establishment of a Faculty of Social Sciences at KUL with Section of Pedagogy functioning under its structures (Skrzyniarz 2016b: 14-15). Its creation was entrusted to Associate Professor Teresa Kukulowicz (1925-2014), a sociologist who had collaborated with Professor S. Kunowski since the 1950s. Initially, the staff of the Pedagogy Section consisted mainly of professors of related disciplines (sociologists, psychologists, historians, philosophers). In the course of time, research and teaching activities were based on graduates of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL and graduates of pedagogy of other universities in Poland and Europe (Nowak, 2018: 263-348).

Since then, the steady systematic development of the Institute of Pedagogy, both administratively and academically, can be clearly observed. It is expressed primarily in new research specialisations developed by the Institute's academic staff. Another indicator of the Institute's development is the various research projects conducted both in Poland and in cooperation with many universities in the world ([www.kul.pl/wspolpraca-instytutu-pedagogiki-kul,art\\_12932.html](http://www.kul.pl/wspolpraca-instytutu-pedagogiki-kul,art_12932.html) [18.11.2022]; [https://www.kul.pl/udzial-w-projektach-miedzynarodowych,art\\_93054.html](https://www.kul.pl/udzial-w-projektach-miedzynarodowych,art_93054.html) [18.11.2022]). As importantly, the academic staff of the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL are members of the national scientific institutions that decide on the functioning of this discipline of knowledge in Poland: the awarding of degrees and the recognition of professional diplomas in pedagogy. Specific areas of research and education conducted at the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL include the issues concerning anthropological, ethical and axiological foundations of education; the Cued Speech method of communication with deaf people- Kazimiera Krakowiak (1946-) (Krakowiak, Domagała-Zyśk, & Podlewska, 2012: 141-179), Edmund Bojanowski's (1814-1871) educational system - Maria Loyola Opiela (?) (2020: 172-

190), issues of social care and the generation of author's concepts of prenatal pedagogy Dorota Kornas-Biela (1949-) (Kornas-Biela, 2009; 2013: 193-206), the concept of open and personalistic pedagogy - Marian Nowak (1955-) (Nowak, 1999) and Christian pedagogy - Alina Rynio (1954-) (Rynio, 2021).

## **II. Theoretical specificity of research conducted at the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL**

Despite the multifaceted and dynamic development, pedagogical research and the educational process conducted at the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL invariably refer to the concepts of Christian personalism. Regardless of the field, they focus on the following categories: person, human dignity, integral upbringing. Their theoretical foundations are embedded in anthropological, ethical and social concepts of academics such as Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), Emmanuel Mounier (1905-1950), Romano Guardini (1885-1968), Jacek Woroniecki, Karol Wojtyła (1920-2005) (John Paul II), Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński (1901-1981), Stefan Kunowski. They comprise the following main theses and scopes: 1) the conviction of the genetic and systemic relationship of pedagogy with philosophy; 2) the thesis of the normative character of pedagogy based on Christian anthropology; 3) the implementation of the model of integral education.

1) In spite of the administrative, theoretical and methodological autonomy that pedagogy possesses, its specific element relates to the conviction of the tight connection with philosophy in the genetic, historical, theoretical and methodological aspect. Bearing in mind this approach, philosophy is treated not only as an auxiliary discipline of pedagogy but as a founding discipline of pedagogy. Disregarding the multithreaded historical relationship of pedagogy and philosophy, it is acknowledged that the output of philosophy substantively defines pedagogy in terms of ontology, theory of cognition, anthropology, ethics, axiology. In these scopes it also constitutes the basis and criterion differentiating the various models of pedagogy: experimental, normative, critical, hermeneutic, structuralist, reflexive (Nowak, 2008: 236-256). It is assumed that the fundamental questions posed in the field of pedagogy are essentially philosophical questions. They refer to the subject matter of the essence of man, the nature of moral good and evil, the essence of exploration, the genesis and validity of values (Kunowski, 2001). Thus the prevailing statement evokes that it is impossible to practise pedagogy independently of philosophical determinations and demands to reject philosophy as a science for auxiliary pedagogy lead to its reduction to hidden, unconscious theoretical, methodological, ideological or world-view dependencies. In such a view, pedagogy loses its autonomy. It becomes a science subordinated to psychology, sociology, natural sciences, ideology. It is used only as a tool for the implementation of the scientific research of these sciences to practice or as a tool for indoctrination (Bronk, 2003: 63-68).

The base concept for pedagogical research conducted at the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL pertains to Thomistic personalism developed in the so-called Lublin School of Classical Philosophy. Within its framework, categories such as ontological realism, theoretical-cognitive realism, rationalism, maximalism, aretological conception of morality, conviction of the personal dignity of man,

integral conception of upbringing ( Cf. Bronk, & Majdanski, 1991-1992: 367-391) are indicated as generative for pedagogy.

The starting point for pedagogical reflection based on Thomistic personalism is the conviction of the existence of a reality independent of a man's mind and the thesis of the possibility of its certain, rational cognition (discovery). Such an approach treats pedagogy as a science which on the basis of empirical and intellectual cognition discovers the regularities of upbringing (education). Discovering truth about upbringing first of all refers to exploration of the nature of the human being - the subject of upbringing. It is recognised that even the smallest errors in the anthropological aspect result in significant errors in educational models and educational practice. Importantly, anthropological knowledge in pedagogy is not limited to the psychological, social or biological level. Its fundamental scope remains the philosophical knowledge of man, describing and explaining his nature, his essence. Striving to discover the constitutive elements (qualities) of humanity is supposed to protect pedagogy both from psychologism, sociology, biologism and ideologisation and, above all, it is supposed to enable discovering the most essential, general, universal regularities of upbringing (Kiereś, 2015: 65-90).

The system of Thomistic philosophy which sets the basis for the concept of personalistic pedagogy practised at KUL, despite its rational and cognitively optimistic character, also contains a conviction about the limited cognitive possibilities of human cognition. Contrary to the dominant contemporary post-positivist views, various areas of reality that are not subject to exploration (the Absolute, the soul) are pointed out while constituting a "mystery" (Jeziorański, 2022: 26-29). Recognition of their existence enforces an attitude of cognitive humility on the one hand, and on the other opens pedagogy to humanistic knowledge and to the achievements of civilisation and culture in the broadest sense. This is especially valid for worldview and religious content which, although confessional, by definition have a limited scope of rational justification and thus also universal acceptance. Therefore, they are irreplaceable in the normative and teleological aspects of pedagogy. They have an essential, inalienable and generative function in pedagogical theory in terms of the creation of norms, principles and assessment criteria in upbringing (Kiereś, 2015: 131-144).

2) An important element determining the theoretical specificity of pedagogy practised at the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL is the recognition of pedagogy as a normative science. It is believed that just like any science also pedagogy in the first place realizes cognitive functions (goals): descriptive and explanatory, in fact it cannot be reduced to description and explication. By definition, it should transcend the level of cognitive objectives and pursue practical goals: to generate evaluations of the explored educational reality and contain postulates for its melioration<sup>3</sup>.

It is emphasised that the normative and postulative nature of pedagogy grants the value of a practical (applied) science. Their result is the coherence of pedagogy as a

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<sup>3</sup> "Therefore, the formal subject in pedagogy must be the developmental good of the human being not currently conceived, but realized in the future, oriented towards the future, thanks to which the human being can fully perfect himself and reach the end of the developmental process" (Kunowski 2001: 39).

scientific discipline. Scientist approaches typical of Anglo-Saxon and Francophone models of doing pedagogy (educational science) based on positivism reject the possibility of normativity of science. When adopting physicalism, they do not allow the possibility of judgements and postulates as they treat them as non-scientific elements, not present within science. Thus, scientific approaches not only exclude the humanities - including pedagogy practised in a humanistic manner- from the group of sciences but also respect its methodological coherence. Without an evaluative-normative level, pedagogy becomes a collection of loosely related research conducted in different models (psychological, sociological, naturalistic). To practice pedagogy in a descriptive model does not guarantee its impartiality, objectivity. On the contrary, it is treated as an "escape" from the problem of the identity of pedagogy and thus leads to crypto-objectivity, to the appearance of axiological neutrality of the knowledge of upbringing (Bronk, 2003: 47-76).

Meanwhile, pedagogy as an applied (practical) science practised in the humanistic model, according to Wilhelm Dilthey's (1833-1911) postulates, by definition contains a specific set of normative and postulative contents (Dilthey, 1982: 290-311). Their source may comprise not only inquiries carried out in the field of normative philosophical disciplines such as ethics, axiology, philosophical anthropology, but also the content of cultural and worldview provenance. On their basis, norms, evaluations and aims of upbringing are created.

3) The last element specific to the pedagogical scientific community of KUL is the integral concept of upbringing. It is perceived as a continuation of the classical model of education. It is regarded as the heir of the Greek educational tradition of "*paideia*" and the Latin idea of "*humanitas*" (Chlodna-Blach, 2020).

The underlying thesis which results from philosophical reflection on human nature constitutes the conviction of the personal dignity (value) of every human being. It is acknowledged that both educates and educators possess a personal dignity that belongs to the human being irrespective of the stage of development, psychological characteristics, specificity of the body's functioning and the social and cultural context of life. Man and his nature are the starting point for the design of educational activities. Other elements conditioning them such as social needs or economic or political conditioning are treated as secondary to the overarching category of human dignity (Łuczynski, 2018: 18-59).

The principle of respect for human dignity is referred to as "the personalist norm". It is expressed in the injunction to treat the human being as an autotelic goal of action and in the prohibition of treating anyone as a means for achieving goals other than the good of the individual. It stands against to treating a human being in an instrumental manner. As a result, any upbringing that does not respect the personal dignity of man - that does not serve man - is considered as reductionism, anti-upbringing, an action aimed at objectification (Nowak, 1999: 319-322).

The integral conception of upbringing is based on the conviction that upbringing (education) should take into account all dimensions of the ontic structure of man. Thus, it is related to biological, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual and religious aspects. Education should not be limited to any of these aspects. On the contrary, not only should it include all of them but also take into account the need

for their interaction and coexistence. Only by taking into consideration the demand for integrity can the harmonious development of the pupil be guaranteed. It is also a guarantee for the respect of the personal dignity of the human being (the pupil) which, as mentioned above, defines the essence of the process of personalistic upbringing (Nowak, 2018: 6-27).

Setting the concept of Thomistic personalism as the basis for upbringing introduces the fundamental thesis of the potentiality of human nature to the scope of pedagogical inquiry. In this view, upbringing is an activity that corresponds to the natural human striving for development - the actualisation of the potentiality of nature. Genetically speaking, upbringing is not justified by needs or social system, ideology or even individual plans and desires. Its rationale is autotelic and transcends psychological, social and cultural conditions<sup>4</sup>.

Integral upbringing should be implemented in all educational institutions and environments. In particular, it should be initiated by the family which according to personalism is recognised as the basic, natural, initial and multifaceted environment for upbringing and care. Other institutions such as the school, peer groups and the Church can only carry out their tasks under parental consent and in close cooperation with them (the so-called principle of subsidiarity). Their task is not to replace or compete with the family but to make up for any shortcomings (Wilk, 2002: 6-35).

The requirement for integral education is perceived as a challenge of particular importance in the present times. Namely, it is widely recognized that on one hand the education conducted in the pragmatic-intellectual model is dominant, and on the other hand, the spread of liberal education is becoming more prevailing. The pragmatic-intellectual model of education is supposed to serve the progress of civilisation, while liberal education is supposed to be a consequence of the spread of liberalism and postmodernism in Western culture. It is thought that progress and freedom, while important, should not dominate education, must not detach it from the holistic understanding of development. Pragmatic, technocratic and liberal education do not exhaust the demand for the integrity of education. They should be combined with an education based on responsibility, respect for the life and dignity of the other, respect for spiritual and religious life. In particular, the neglect of education in the moral, spiritual and religious aspects is recognised. Generally speaking, the secularisation of culture has led to the removal of these aspects outside the scope of educational work and to an exclusion due to their personal, intimate nature. Including them within the scope of education is considered to be an outdated, anachronistic approach or a manifestation of totalitarian thinking (Kunowski, 2000: 60-62, 106-107).

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<sup>4</sup> "Subjectivity or causality belongs to man by nature, thanks to it man is an autonomous being but it is [also - P.M.] granted to man. Its actualisation makes man - as K. Wojtyła puts it - a self-possessing and self-determining being. It is actualised spontaneously due to innate inclinations and in the field of human culture, both in its social context and in the individual life of each man" (Kiereś, 2015: 97).

### **Conclusions**

Historically speaking, the existence of a personalist scientific community at the KUL in the period between 1945 and 1989 especially the activities of S. Kunowski and T. Kukołowicz, saved Polish pedagogy from permanent Marxist ideologisation. Additionally, it created opportunities for overcoming the crisis of pedagogy that emerged in Poland after the fall of the communist system. Back in the 1990s, it provided an opportunity for overcoming the theoretical and methodological chaos among Polish pedagogues that for decades were developing in the conviction of the exclusive validity of methodological naturalism and Marxism as the theoretical basis of pedagogy (Urbaniak-Zajac, & Kos, 2013: 8-14; Kiereś, 2015: 145-149).

In the course of time, the concept of personalistic pedagogy practised at the Institute of Pedagogy of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, although marginalised during the communist period, found its supporters in various academic centres in Poland. Nowadays, it has developed in the form of a specific nationwide scholar community with the Institute of Pedagogy of KUL playing the generative role. As a result, the personalistic pedagogical environment creates a unique, widely recognizable scientific output, accompanied by practical educational activities. Currently, promoting the idea of personalistic and Christian upbringing provides an alternative to various educational concepts. It has an impact not only on the level and content of pedagogical research but also on the dynamism of educational practice implemented by the state as well as by the Catholic Church in Poland.

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