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AXIOLOGICAL PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS IN THE WORKS BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF POLISH GENERAL PEDAGOGY: KAZIMIERZ SOŚNICKI AND STEFAN KUNOWSKI

S u m m a r y: This article is an attempt to analyse the axiological aspects of the works by the classics of Polish general pedagogy. Kazimierz Sośnicki and Stefan Kunowski, were the creators of works constituting the foundation of this subdiscipline in our country. Creating general pedagogy as an objectified, meta-theoretical, analytical discipline, they were somewhat obliged to a certain distance towards the matter of values and evaluation in upbringing.

At the same time, each of these pedagogues was the author of an original theory of upbringing, against which one can trace their specific approach to axiological matters and the presence of the latter in upbringing reality. An analysis of the works of the selected pedagogues on the subject of values and evaluation leads to questions about contemporary problems of pedagogy and upbringing practices in this area.

Keywords: general pedagogy, axiology, values

Introduction

The study of axiological matters in pedagogy is part of both the most important theoretical tasks of this discipline of knowledge as well as the social mission of science, within which each of its fields is obliged to perform a service role for the good of all humanity. Guided by this assumption, the presented considerations

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attempted to understand the ways of dealing with these matters by the significant representatives of Polish general pedagogy – Kazimierz Sośnicki (1883–1976) and Stefan Kunowski (1909–1977). The presence of axiological problematic aspects in the works of general pedagogues deserves the special attention of other theoreticians and practitioners of education because this subdiscipline by definition distances itself from entanglement in ideological and political relations, undertaking a meta-theoretical effort to analyse the existing pedagogical theory and searching for regularities/irregularities in upbringing reality².

The structure of the presented analysis includes the following, interrelated issues: the approach to general pedagogy by the selected pedagogue, the author's own theory of education, and the presence of problematic aspects of values in his pedagogical works. The two former serve to outline the context for understanding the latter. Due to the extensiveness of the topic undertaken, the presented material relinquished the presentation of the outline of Sośnicki's and Kunowski's biographies. According to the principles of hermeneutic procedure, the interpretation of biographical themes could shed additional light on their views and axiological choices³. Forsaking this element of conducted analysis, the author still included works that allow access to biographical studies on the life of Kazimierz Sośnicki and Stefan Kunowski in the bibliography.

1. Axiological problematic aspects and its context in pedagogical works by Kazimierz Sośnicki

1.1. Kazimierz Sośnicki's approach to general pedagogy

Kazimierz Sośnicki is the author of a synthetic but significant for the pedagogical subdiscipline herein referred to work *Pedagogika ogólna*, published for the first time in 1946. He devoted it to the following issues: concepts fundamental to pedagogy (upbringing theory, upbringing, auxiliary sciences of pedagogy), matters of approaching the subject of upbringing and establishing the goals of upbringing, character as the "formal side of the goal of upbringing", principles and values as elements "entangled" in achieving the formal side of upbringing, upbringing measures, and the personality of the educator⁴.

What general pedagogy in its essence was for Sośnicki himself we can learn from the article *Pedagogika filozoficzna*, also published in 1946 in the magazine 'Nowa Szkoła', reprinted after years under the changed title *Jak rozumieć*

² Teresa Hejnica-Bezwińska, *Pedagogika ogólna* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne 2008), 19.

³ Heinz-Herman Krüger, *Wprowadzenie w teorię i metody badawcze nauk o wychowaniu* (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne 2005), 142–143.

⁴ Kazimierz Sośnicki, *Pedagogika ogólna* (Toruń: Księgarnia Naukowa T. Szczęsny 1949).

*pedagogikę filozoficzną*⁵. General pedagogy was distinguished here by Sośnicki next to 'general didactics' as a branch of philosophical pedagogy. It is primarily intended to conduct comparative (and not normative) research, which is to be the basis for further pedagogical research. Specific tasks of this pedagogy, assigned to it by Sośnicki, include among others: collecting "issues considered and solved by respective pedagogical systems⁶ in a proper way", arranging them into a "certain scientific scheme", examining their mutual relations, and the process of their formation and disappearance, research on "the meaning and sense of terms and concepts which respective systems use", comparative analysis in this respect, "exploring the sources and reasons for their [terms and concepts – ed. L.D.] understanding", and grasping the developmental aspect of this understanding⁷. This pedagogy is not about "reviewing [...] pedagogical systems", but about extracting the "essence, the deepest sense and character [...] of issues, ideas and concepts" present in these systems⁸.

The crowning achievement of this way of practicing general pedagogy by Sośnicki himself was his work *Rozwój pedagogiki zachodniej na przełomie XIX i XX wieku*, in which the author did not focus – as the title of the dissertation might suggest – on historical issues, but emphasized comparative analyses by pedagogical systems and faculties to reveal the meaning of the terms important to them that define educational phenomena and to show the relationships and differences between them⁹.

This way of creating general pedagogy guided Sośnicki also in such works as: *Istota i cele wychowania* and *Teoria środków wychowania*. In principle, such a method should not be combined with the presence of axiological, or even ideological, declarations of a general pedagogue, while it may and should be associated with his metatheoretical analyses of axiological matters occurring in various pedagogical systems.

⁵ Kazimierz Sośnicki, "Jak rozumieć pedagogikę filozoficzną?", in: *Źródła do dziejów wychowania i myśli pedagogicznej. T. III. Księga druga. Myśl pedagogiczna w XX stuleciu*, red. Stefan Wołoszyn (Kielce: Dom Wydawniczy "Strzelec" 1998), 97–103.

⁶ Sośnicki explains the concept of "pedagogical system" as "theory of upbringing", which follows the same concept of education in various fields. It is a concept broader in meaning than "pedagogical direction", which "is limited to one field of upbringing", for example, to general formation. Refer to: Kazimierz Sośnicki, *Rozwój pedagogiki zachodniej na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* (Warszawa: Państwowe Zakłady Wydawnictw Szkolnych 1967), 19.

⁷ Sośnicki, "Jak rozumieć pedagogikę filozoficzną?", 100–101.

⁸ Ibidem, 101–102.

⁹ Sośnicki, *Rozwój pedagogiki zachodniej...*, 7–8.

1.2. The author's own theory of upbringing

Kazimierz Sośnicki, confirming with his scientific works a special commitment to the creation of general pedagogy in the above approach, clearly shied away from creating his own theory of education (with the exception referred to below). He investigated the essence of this phenomenon and analyzed its complexity and specificity in its specific manifestations. In his analyses, he indicated that the essence of the upbringing processes is development, and not a change of any kind (as it is sometimes assumed in the so-called broad definitions of upbringing, in the light of which child-raising activities should also include those that harm human development)¹⁰.

Such an understanding of upbringing clearly guided Sośnicki when, before the Second World War, he was writing his habilitation thesis: *Podstawy wychowania państwowego*. This very work is a special exception in Sośnicki's works, for it is here that we find the theory of state education extensively developed by the author. However, Sośnicki was not creating a detailed program of such upbringing or ideological guidelines in this respect. Instead, he was seeking universals conducive to shaping the process of state upbringing as the very developmental process – beneficial for the development of individual citizens of the state and for its entire communities.

Building the theory of state upbringing, Sośnicki pointed out that the main goal of such upbringing is to create conditions for “full experience of the state ethos”. This ethos is created by the rules and norms regulating the life of the state. The “full experience of the state ethos” consists of: 1) “rational experience”, which consists in “experiencing the most characteristic and deepest properties” of the state and aims at “understanding [its] spirit”, 2) “emotional experience”, expressed in attachment to the state, which does not exclude a “critical position” (because “substantive criticism of the state is in the interest of its development”), and 3) “active experience”, which is demonstrated by the action “fulfilled in accordance with the ethos of good will”¹¹.

According to Sośnicki, a state upbringing is ultimately aimed at a rational, internally accepted and responsibly created act on behalf of the state, which is not some abstract reality, but a community of specific citizens. Such an act should not be automatic, resulting from unreflective compliance with the ethos in force in a given state. Instead, it should be connected with the individual's search for the best shape of the state ethos. Hence, it is desirable here to “strive for such a change in the state ethos, through which the state gains strength and better adapts to changing living conditions”¹².

¹⁰ Kazimierz Sośnicki, *Istota i cele wychowania* (Warszawa: “Nasza Księgarnia” 1967), 7–8.

¹¹ Kazimierz Sośnicki, “Ku teorii wychowania państwowego”, in: *Źródła do dziejów wychowania i myśli pedagogicznej. T. III. Księga pierwsza. Myśl pedagogiczna w XX stuleciu*, red. Stefan Wołoszyn (Kielce: Dom Wydawniczy “Strzelec” 1998), 486.

¹² Ibidem.

Therefore, pointing to the values of a liberal state in *Podstawy wychowania państwowego*, Sośnicki was far from adopting the modern approach to liberalism, or even more so to neoliberalism. In his approach, the liberal state takes into account the moral ethos of individual people and the ethos of social groups, respecting them as the forces serving to create the state ethos. With such views, after the Second World War, in new political conditions, Sośnicki exposed himself to the accusation of being a “bourgeois pedagogue” which, in any case, he was not spared due to the publication of the previously mentioned *Pedagogika ogólna*¹³, which was not politically engaged. Meanwhile, both these works were an attempt by Sośnicki to indicate the general regularities governing the process of upbringing in its entirety, and state upbringing in particular; regularities which also included the space for the presence of values.

1.3. Problematic aspects of values in pedagogical works by Kazimierz Sośnicki

In his scientific works, Kazimierz Sośnicki repeatedly took up problematic aspects of values and evaluation. In *Pedagogika ogólna*, Kazimierz Sośnicki revealed the inextricable relation between values and principles and the character of the participant of upbringing. The principles indicate the duties and can act as a motive in shaping the character. In order for them to actually perform the role, they must be considered their own and must acquire “affective colouring”, which is an indicator that the principle has a value of¹⁴ for us. In the work herein referred to, Sośnicki distinguished two basic ways of understanding values: 1) psychological, that is combined with the subjective way of approaching them – with experiencing them individually, and 2) objective, that is independent of human experiences, assuming the existence of invariant values, free of human evaluation¹⁵.

Sośnicki considered the subjective position clearer and less doubtful. At the same time, he convinced the reader that it does not have to lead to relativism because:

Although we do not react with the same feelings to all objects, yet there are undoubtedly such objects which bring about the same emotional reactions in all mentally normal people, and thus everyone assigns equal value also to these objects. So this equal value does not come from the objective side of the object, but from the subjective side of our mental life, which in a normal person is compatible with others. [...] We are convinced that our human nature is not divergent in different people to such an extent that there were no more common evaluations at all for us¹⁶.

¹³ Roman Polny, “K. Sośnicki, ‘Pedagogika ogólna’”, *Nowa Szkoła* 3/4 (1950), 224.

¹⁴ Sośnicki, *Pedagogika ogólna*, 86–87.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, 87.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, 93–94.

Therefore, without denying at the very beginning of the quoted statement the fact of differentiation, or individualisation of human ways of assigning value to respective objects, Sośnicki sees a developmental element in this diversity, a factor introducing changes in evaluation systems¹⁷. Concluding all his arguments in the analysed matter, the author, however, definitely states: “Despite everything [...] there remains a relatively stable core of values, which is not subject to them [to changes – ed. L.D.]”¹⁸.

Taking up this theme again after many years, Sośnicki talks about the phenomenon of “durability of certain values”. Again, he does not combine the indicated property with objective values, but with certain human attributes. He points to examples of such evaluation which, in human history, have been marked by exceptional stability:

[...] maintaining values without change for generations can be explained by the fact that they depend on those sides of the human mental structure that are lasting for human nature. As long as these sides of our nature remain unchanged, so long as the values that depend on these natural experiences are lasting. Such norms as “do not kill, do not slander” etc., are lasting because they are an expression of basic conditions of social life-together based on human nature. Violating them is not permissible under the threat of completely breaking this life. As basic living conditions, they have been traditionally maintained for generations and present themselves as eternal and changeless. But this does not affect at all the subjective origin of all human judgment¹⁹.

By showing the above examples of “permanent norms” (“do not kill, do not slander”), the observance of which is combined with the protection of values such as life and dignity, Sośnicki primarily indicates their social dimension – that their violation destroys “conditions of social life together grounded in human nature”. The quoted author makes this social dimension a measure of the validity of values, a tool for determining their hierarchy. In the work *Teoria środków wychowania*, he writes, “The rank of values is mainly determined by their social importance. Therefore, subjective values important for an individual have a lower rank than values important for the whole of society, nation and state”²⁰.

Reading Sośnicki’s works published in the 1970s, where axiological matters are raised, the reader may suspect that Sośnicki went even further in recognition of social and political regulators of values and in a way legalised the position of socialist pedagogy by writing:

[...] socialist pedagogy recognises the relative permanence of values and considers them to be of subjective origin. Values change as the structure of society changes.

¹⁷ Ibidem, 95.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ Sośnicki, *Istota...*, 162.

²⁰ Kazimierz Sośnicki, *Teoria środków wychowania* (Warszawa: “Nasza Księgarnia” 1973), 41.

[...] It follows that the goals of progressive upbringing must take into account the direction of the ongoing change and strive for an upbringing for new values and a new character model, which the future of social development requires. Hence, this goal is the image of the psyche of the man of the new social system, the socialist system and communism²¹.

Referring to such themes in Sośnicki's works, Wincenty Okoń explains that after very strong attacks on *Pedagogika ogólna*, Sośnicki had to pay a kind of "ideological tribute" by introducing socialist pedagogy in his analyses, "but he did not yield"²². This adamant attitude was mainly associated with a critical attitude towards socialist pedagogy in academic practice²³. In his views on the reality of upbringing and the possibilities of creating it, including the recognition of values and their place in human development, Sośnicki was closest to pedagogues of culture. This is visible even in *Podstawy wychowania państwowego* – due to the strong emphasis put in this work on the rank of experience and the active involvement of participants of upbringing in creative and responsible shaping of the ethos of the state²⁴. However, both here and in Sośnicki's further works, there are clearly inspirations from pedagogical sociology²⁵, which sees the causes of "relative changeability of values", and thus also the relative changeability of the main goals of upbringing in social mechanisms.

2. Axiological problematic aspects and its context in the pedagogical works by Stefan Kunowski

2.1. Stefan Kunowski's approach to general pedagogy

The most famous pedagogical work by Stefan Kunowski is the monograph *Podstawy współczesnej pedagogiki*. It is recognised by many representatives of the discipline as a valuable and unique example of practicing general pedagogy in Poland during the period of socialism. The work contains three parts.

The first part – *Introduction to pedagogy as a science* – raises the following matters: the importance of upbringing and understanding of the concepts related

²¹ Sośnicki, *Istota...*, 162.

²² Wincenty Okoń, *Wizerunki słynnych polskich pedagogów* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie "Żak" 2000), 389.

²³ From an informal conversation I conducted with Professor Sośnicki's students (primarily with Professor Jerzy Materne of the University of Szczecin), I learned that as a lecturer, Sośnicki was conducting a lively dialogue with the students ready to implement the model of a socialist school, providing them with many critical arguments regarding this vision of education.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 388.

²⁵ Ludwik Chmaj, *Prądy i kierunki w pedagogice XX wieku* (Warszawa: Państwowe Zakłady Wydawnictw Szkolnych 1962), 275–278.

to it, the development and structure of pedagogical knowledge, the methodological foundations of this science and the sciences cooperating with pedagogy.

The second part – *Comparative pedagogy. Contemporary upbringing systems* – is devoted to the genesis and general and detailed characteristics of contemporary systems of upbringing. Under the latter, the author presented three systems of upbringing: Christian, liberal, and socialist. Despite the passage of years since the publication of Kunowski's work, one can speak of a large validity of the typology presented here. Admittedly, some areas of practice of respective systems have been surprisingly mixed up today (e.g. where the liberal system once dominated, the ideas of socialism and the social state have at least periodically won), or in practice the characteristic properties of these systems have softened or radicalised (e.g. liberalism has drifted towards neoliberalism), but their fundamental diversity – as presented by Kunowski – remains unchanged.

The third part – *Theoretical pedagogy. The process of educational development* – is, in a way, the culmination of the author's effort as a general pedagogue, given that Kunowski distinguished general pedagogy as the "highest section" of all pedagogy. It is to be preceded by three other sections: practical (empirical) pedagogy, descriptive (experimental) pedagogy and normative pedagogy. Against this background, general pedagogy performs the following role: "theoretical or general pedagogy, which as the highest section, covering the entire subject matter seeks, basing on empirical, experimental and normative material, provided by earlier pedagogical research sections, to create a homogenous theory of comprehensive development of man and his conditions, the theory objectively reconstructing the entire upbringing reality"²⁶.

2.2. The author's own theory of upbringing

The crowning achievement of general pedagogy understood in this way was the theory of "upbringing development" developed by Kunowski, classified as one of the so-called contouring theories of upbringing. Some perceive it as a Christian concept of upbringing and it actually harmonises with the assumptions of Christian personalism, but above all it is an attempt to reflect the whole wealth of upbringing activities, an attempt to capture upbringing in its real, complex shape. Kunowski, analysing the earlier views of pedagogues and representatives of other scientific fields about upbringing, provides rational and empirical premises that allow for exposing reductionism in the recognition of man and his needs in known pedagogical concepts. Hence, his finding should be considered logically justified, and that is:

²⁶ Stefan Kunowski, *Podstawy współczesnej pedagogiki* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Salezjańskie 1981), 37.

A full picture of human needs is provided by the contouring theory of upbringing, distinguishing: a) basic layered needs, i.e. biological, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual needs, and b) developmental needs, related to life forms through which the child's own activity passes under the influence of personality factors, and therefore the need for fun, investigation, work, creativity and a deeper worldview experience [...]. Hence, upbringing assistance must periodically change, adapting to the internal situation of the pupil and their permanent needs already acquired (layered needs) and new developmental needs²⁷.

Therefore, upbringing actions must – as Kunowski argues – take into account the complexity of human life, which carries a variety of needs within individual “contours” of a human person (biological, psychological, sociological, cultural, ideological), which constitute the first, fundamental force of upbringing – bios, determining the “natural development of the pupil”. The dynamics of bios is influenced by three successive forces: ethos, i.e. the strength of social impact, agos, understood as “the pupil’s upbringing closeness to the ideal of a new man” and fate, including the course of life events over which man has no influence, but in another the area can become their responsible creator²⁸.

According to Kunowski, the essence of upbringing actions (agos) is to focus “on taking the developing individual out of the animal state of nature and raising it to the state of cultural humanity”²⁹.

Due to the diversity of human needs inscribed in individual contours, upbringing actions must also fulfil various functions – from *sanare*, consisting in upbringing care for human biological development, through *edocere*, focusing on developing intellectual capabilities of the pupil, *educere*, related to work on the morality of the individual, *educare*, focused on the accomplishment of a valuable ideal, and finishing with *initiare*, understood as “initiating and preparing the pupil to meet the fate”³⁰.

Explaining the principle which links these functions with respective contours of human development, Kunowski points to another educational function – *christianisare*, making the Person of Christ the centre of reference for all problems of human development and upbringing. It is therefore a function specific to Christian upbringing. Kunowski indicates its connection above all (but not only) with the spiritual contour of the human person and with the initiatory function of upbringing (initiating “to the concerns of temporal and eternal fate”³¹), and also shows it as a way of fulfilling the latter – the most important for Kunowski and the closest to him. The indication and detailed discussion of this way does not, however, destroy the general nature of the theory of upbringing by Kunowski.

²⁷ Ibidem, 273.

²⁸ Ibidem, 191.

²⁹ Ibidem, 184.

³⁰ Ibidem, 274.

³¹ Ibidem, 278.

2.3. Problematical aspects of values in pedagogical works by Stefan Kunowski

In Kunowski's contour theory, the matter of upbringing to values is essentially linked to the culture contour and the function of *educare*. This function is accomplished by "sensitising the pupil to the experience of cultural values". This sensitisation plays a crucial role in guiding the individual towards the ideal of the "new man"³². This ideal is the main component idea of every educational system, next to "the idea of moralism, regarding the comprehension [...] of good and evil", "the idea of personalism, recognising man as a person" and "the idea of humanism, defining the social accomplishment of satisfying basic human needs"³³.

Investigating upbringing systems, Kunowski observed that the sources of differentiation in the approach these elements (the above-mentioned ideas) on the ground of different systems are in the accents the given system puts, emphasizing its leading idea. In the systems identified by Kunowski, these ideas-values were: in the Christian system – love, in the liberal – freedom, and in the socialist – struggle³⁴. Kunowski points that each of them occurs in each of the analyzed systems but is, however, understood in a different way on its particular ground, and in its own area enters into relations with values different than in the other two systems³⁵. As Kunowski notes, this diversity results in different positions of representatives of respective systems regarding "interpretation of the same upbringing problems"³⁶.

The differences in understanding upbringing matters are not – as Kunowski strongly emphasises – indifferent to the practice of upbringing, and actually to the developmental good of the pupils. Because, as the Lublin pedagogue wrote before the war in a monograph entitled *Introcepcja wartości jako czynnik procesu wychowania*, published after many years under the changed title *Wartości w procesie wychowania*:

There is an amazing regularity in that the development of pedagogical theory, always associated with the emergence of opposites, is useless for practice until there is even an approximate synthesis. The lack of complete synthesis, the state of the greatest disagreement of views and the complete chaos of concepts is the biggest problem of pedagogy, which is therefore almost useless for the practice of the upbringing process³⁷.

³² Ibidem, 277.

³³ Ibidem, 95.

³⁴ Ibidem, 95–96.

³⁵ Ibidem, 96–99.

³⁶ Ibidem, 101.

³⁷ Stefan Kunowski, *Wartości w procesie wychowania* (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls" 2003), 11–12.

According to Kunowski, the greatest chaos in pedagogical knowledge concerns not secondary matters, although important for the course of upbringing processes (such as upbringing methods), but the most important matters – the goals and tasks of this activity³⁸. Looking for sources of this chaos and diversity, Kunowski formulates the thesis that their main cause is firstly the ideological and philosophical differences between the authors, and secondly the complexity of the upbringing process, which always refers to a certain “structure” of a human person – their temperament, individuality, character or personality. Many pedagogues close their goals and upbringing tasks in the area of the abstracted individual structure of the pupil. For example, Rousseau and Tolstoy within temperament, Montessori within individuality, Foerster within character and Hessen within personality³⁹.

Meanwhile, in the process of upbringing, it should be remembered that from its beginning, higher structures can be developed on the basis of lower personal structures. For example, personality as a structure with “spiritual life”, although it is a higher structure – built over sensual life – is already developing in a small child. Their activity is not limited only by “sensual interests”. “The spiritual life of personality” is directed at seeking meaning, but its even more important manifestation is – as Kunowski states – “focusing on value, approaching certain things as good”⁴⁰. Such attitude underlies the entire development process of all personal structures. Whether the process of upbringing development of a person will be interrupted or will continue and “develop into the highest structure” is determined by introception of values, i.e. the “spiritual process of a developing personality, consisting in giving or establishing the feature of ‘value’ and connecting it with a certain thing, purpose or norm”⁴¹.

Looking for a function of the overall process of upbringing, which would constitute the implementation of introception in the desired shape, Kunowski relates it (this function) to the sphere of action (behaviour) of the pupil and states that it should be “implementation into the highest forms of human behaviour, consisting in self-determination”⁴². The theory of human behaviour, which upbringing actions should refer to, cannot exist without the theory of values because “without values, there is no question of behaviour”⁴³. It is not possible to speak of a causal relationship between value and conduct, but it can be assumed that values are a condition of conduct – they enable it to occur. The process that enables the “updating of the function of training the conduct through values” is,

³⁸ Ibidem, 12.

³⁹ Ibidem, 12, 14.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, 15.

⁴¹ Ibidem, 17.

⁴² Ibidem, 46–47.

⁴³ Ibidem, 46.

naturally, introception. It is a kind of “transformer” that triggers a series of changes in the pupil – from values to conduct⁴⁴.

Appreciating the pioneering role of Zygmunt Mysłakowski in making the category of introception of values present in pedagogy and emphasising its importance in educational processes, Kunowski enters into a polemic with his pre-war teacher. He disagrees with him, among others, on the matters of: a) the relative nature of values, b) the shift of the introception process to the latest stage of education, when personality “develops”, and even beyond this period – to the late maturity of a human being⁴⁵, and c) giving values only biological and social character and failure to recognise their objective, transcendent aspect⁴⁶. Assuming the objective character of values, Kunowski emphasizes at the same time the whole-life nature of introception and its primary importance in the course of education⁴⁷. At the same time, he strongly emphasises their realistic nature. That is why he states, “all values without their implementation, without action, cease to be ‘values’, they will not appear neither in the world of the individual, nor the more in the world of humanity”⁴⁸.

Kunowski sought “implementing of rights for introception of values” and formulated them, agreeing in some areas with other authors, for example with the above-mentioned Zygmunt Mysłakowski, quoting after him the stages of “human personal introception”: “1) separation from the social background; 2) forming a positive opinion about oneself (because: ‘introception of self-worth ultimately realises the introception of all value, depending on the liberated spiritual attitude’); 3) experiencing honour as an expression of belonging to a social group; and 4) experiencing personal dignity”⁴⁹. At the same time, Kunowski showed gaps and deficiencies in his contemporary pedagogical knowledge in axiological issues. He tried to complete them in an authorial manner, ultimately formulating “an outline of value introception criteria”. Seeing himself as a pioneer in this field, Kunowski formulated a number of statements provided with extended argumentation, helping theorists and practitioners of education to gain a deeper insight into the complex nature of the educational phenomenon of introception of values⁵⁰.

⁴⁴ Ibidem, 47.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, 49–50.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, 67.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, 50–51.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, 71.

⁴⁹ Ibidem, 83.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, 124–135.

Conclusion

Two outstanding representatives of Polish general pedagogy – Kazimierz Sośnicki and Stefan Kunowski – demonstrated in their works the necessity and importance of raising axiological matters. Sośnicki was convinced of the existence of lasting values, which does not mean for him absolutely nonvariable and unchanging. Kunowski clearly emphasised the need to include objective, unchanging values in upbringing processes.

The differences found in their positions can be explained by the way they understand the concept of human nature, which is so much discussed and increasingly rejected today. Sośnicki, emphasising its individual character, was also convinced of the great similarity between people in the choice of “lasting values” and their interpretation in society.

Stefan Kunowski in his most famous works did not particularly emphasise the category of human nature, but rather used it, entangling it in the language of descriptions and analyses. He considered it an obvious and constructive tool in creating pedagogical knowledge. In his contouring theory of upbringing, Kunowski emphasised the “multiplicity of human nature”⁵¹, which carries various upbringing tasks depending on the already achieved level of development of the individual. Kunowski was convinced of the universality of human nature – the commonality of its structure in relation to all people. This conviction was also in harmony with the conviction about the objective and real nature of values, which a person with upbringing support is able to recognise and make in a way the vectors of their life.

In the light of the views of the pedagogues quoted here, a serious debate about the presence of matters of values in pedagogy and about realistically understood values (which turn into lively interpersonal relations and human activity) in upbringing practice should not bypass questions about human nature. For modern humanists, this is a difficult task in relation to which one should ask: Are pedagogues today interested in a thorough debate about “human nature” and do they see its legitimacy? In the era of particular activity of ecological movements, when the nature of all living organisms is discussed and respected and what is only questioned is the nature of man, will pedagogues still reflect on this field?

⁵¹ Ibidem, 217.

Problematyka aksjologiczna w twórczości reprezentantów polskiej pedagogiki ogólnej: Kazimierza Sośnickiego i Stefana Kunowskiego

Streszczenie: Artykuł ten stanowi próbę analizy aksjologicznych aspektów twórczości klasyków polskiej pedagogiki ogólnej. Kazimierz Sośnicki i Stefan Kunowski byli twórcami prac stanowiących fundament tej subdyscypliny w naszym kraju. Kreując pedagogikę ogólną jako zobiektywizowaną, metateoretyczną dyscyplinę analityczną, byli niejako zobowiązani do swobodnego dystansu wobec kwestii wartości i wartościowania w wychowaniu.

Jednocześnie każdy z tych pedagogów był autorem oryginalnej teorii wychowania, na której tle można prześledzić ich specyficzny sposób podejścia do kwestii aksjologicznych oraz obecności tych ostatnich w rzeczywistości wychowawczej. Analiza twórczości wybranych pedagogów na temat problematyki wartości i wartościowania prowadzi do postawienia pytań dotyczących współczesnych problemów pedagogiki i praktyki wychowania w tym zakresie.

Słowa kluczowe: pedagogika ogólna, aksjologia, wartości

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