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Maria Grzegorzewska as a moral exemplar for contemporary youth

Maria Grzegorzewska jako wzór osobowy dla współczesnej młodzieży

"It seems so simple. After all, also on the soil a plant will sprout that has been sown: if you sow oats – oats, and not rye, will grow, if you will sow mallow – a mallow will grow, not a sunflower! So goodness generates goodness! "

Maria Grzegorzewska (1996, p. 44)

Abstrakt:

Niniejszy artykuł jest próbą osadzenia fenomenu wzoru osobowego, jaki stanowi Maria Grzegorzewska, w kontekście wychowania młodzieży we współczesnym świecie. Świadectwo życia uczonej oraz swoista orientacja etyczna, klarujące się pod postacią apologii człowieczeństwa, przeanalizowane zostały z perspektywy etyki cnót.

Proces oddziaływania wzoru osobowego przedstawiono zgodnie z teorią społecznego uczenia się, a zatem poprzez naśladowanie, modelowanie oraz identyfikację. Ów mechanizm skonfrontowano ze współczesną koncepcją wychowania, z uwzględnieniem adekwatnego etapu rozwoju moralnego.

Znaczenie kompasu moralnego Marii Grzegorzewskiej, jako potencjalnego wzoru do naśladowania dla współczesnej młodzieży, ukazane zostało na tle aksjologicznej atrofii ponowoczesnego świata. Swoista apologia człowieczeństwa oraz elementarnych cnót stanowić może odpowiedź na specyficzne potrzeby rozwojowe młodych ludzi, wyznaczając stabilny punkt orientacyjny w płynnej rzeczywistości.

Słowa kluczowe: Maria Grzegorzewska, wzór osobowy, wychowanie młodzieży, teoria społecznego uczenia się.

Abstract:

This paper examines the role of moral exemplar of Maria Grzegorzewska in the education of teenagers in the contemporary society. It analyses her biography and moral compass exemplified as an apology of humanity from the perspective of virtue ethics.

The way in which the influence of a moral exemplar is presented is aligned with social learning theory i.e. covers imitation, modelling and identification. It is confronted with the concept of modern education considering the stage of moral development of adolescents.

The importance of Maria Grzegorzewska's moral compass as a potential exemplar is presented in the perspective of axiological atrophy of postmodern reality. A combination of apology of humanity and elementary virtues could provide an answer for particular development needs of adolescents navigating them in volatile reality.

Key words: Maria Grzegorzewska, moral exemplar, education of youth, social learning theory.

Introduction

The story of Maria Grzegorzewska's life seems to be marked by the curse of "living in interesting times". Her life path led her among the continual geopolitical turmoil sweeping across Poland, starting from the period of partitions, through two world wars, to the communist dictatorship. She happened to live in the times marked by unimaginable cruelty. However, in spite of the nightmare of reality, she managed to build internal fortifications that were the apology of humanity. The internal moral compass of Maria Grzegorzewska determines the content and dynamics of her rich biography of a special pedagogue, scientist, social worker and, above all, a person with a truly beautiful interior, struggling for respect of the dignity of every human being.

It is difficult today to find publications that would outline the silhouette of Maria Grzegorzewska in an extensive and comprehensive way, not only as the creator of foundations of Polish special pedagogy, but also as a person filled with ideas and a desire to repair the world with her own hands. The individual threads, from which we can weave the picture of Maria Grzegorzewska, as complete as possible, should be sought implicitly in a wide pedagogical output, which is a reflection of the system of values defining the axiological environment of her individuality.

The important pedeutological message of Maria Grzegorzewska can also be considered one of the most important imperatives guiding her in her life, and is contained in just a few words: "to give a lot, you have to have a lot" (Grzegorzewska, 1996, p. 23). The inner wealth of the individuals constitutes everything that they can give to the world and other people. Although the references to modeling, imitation and identification mechanisms can be sought in vain in Maria Grzegorzewska's works, she sensed in an almost intuitive manner the importance of the personal model for human development, claiming that we desire to learn from those who, with their personality and actions, arouse our soul and leave the lasting traces in it (Grzegorzewska, 1996). The charisma of Maria Grzegorzewska certainly left such traces in the souls of many generations of young people.

The achievements in the field of special pedagogy and her overall social activity undoubtedly deserve admiration and the highest respect. However, her deepest longing for the ideal of humanity, based on emotional intuition and a desire for good, is the most impressive. The simplicity of honesty and cheerful love for the world permeate the works left by her, inspiring the successive generations of young people with the intuitive ethics of virtues, which can be a compass in the vague world of postmodernity.

1. Apology of humanity as a testimony to the life and work of Maria Grzegorzewska

Maria Grzegorzewska was born in 1888 as the youngest child of Felicja nee Bohdanowicz Grzegorzewska and Adolf Grzegorzewski in the village of Wołuczka near Rawa Mazowiecka, in the country manor leased by her father. According to the memories of her long-time co-worker and friend Janina Doroszevska (1972), her early childhood spent in a large and deeply affectionate family in subsequent land estates determined to a large extent the development of her personality. A deep relationship with the surrounding natural environment and the rural community resulted in her interest in life in all its manifestations. The fascination with the simplicity and dignity of working with nature and its influence on the human psychological development resounds above all in her later memoirs from that period. The non-directive way in which little Marylka – especially thanks to the support of her father – gets to know the world is also significant: she observes carefully, draws conclusions and tries to imitate.

In 1907, after completing her education at Mrs. Hewelke's private school in Warsaw, she joined a one-year course at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences in preparation for taking up university studies. At that time, Maria Grzegorzewska took her first steps in the social and educational work that was to last throughout her life, engaging in the organization of clandestine classes for workers. Her membership in the groups acting for the idea of independence attracted the attention of the gendarmerie. Therefore, employment as a home-based teacher in Lithuania was found for Maria Grzegorzewska to ensure her safety. Taking up employment was also caused by another necessity – the self-earned funds enabled her to fulfill her dream of taking up studies at the university.

As recollected by Doroszevska (1972, p. 12), "she brought harmony, discipline, and kindness to everyone she met, to every house she entered as a young girl; it left everyone with the impression that serenity, order, »a hand always helpful« was coming in with her". The "helping hand" phrase was particularly important for Grzegorzewska and played a huge role in her life. Many of the art reproductions decorating her room presented human hands touching another human being, carrying with them the emotional charge of one of the most important life values.

A year later, overwhelmed by the passion for "studying life," she began studying at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the University of Life Sciences. However, she did not graduate. It was a materially a very difficult time for Maria Grzegorzewska. Although she took many small jobs, she always noticed in her surroundings someone who needed her money more than she did, and she never hesitated to give appropriate help. Friends and acquaintances described it as a cheerful, cordial, kind and helpful person (Doroszevska, 1972).

Due to an illness, Maria Grzegorzewska had to interrupt her dream studies after two years, and the resultant stagnation in her life turned out to be an extremely difficult

experience for a young person full of aspirations and ideals. The remedy for apathy restoring the thirst for life and activity was the news about the creation of the International Pedagogical Faculty in Belgium by Prof. Józefa Joteyko, where Maria Grzegorzewska started to study in 1913. With the beginning of World War I, the faculty was closed, and Grzegorzewska continued her studies at the Sorbonne in Paris.

The horizons of completely new and deep experiences open up there to Maria Grzegorzewska. Her youthful love for life and all its manifestations is thrown into the world of great art, the latest trends in social sciences and outstanding personalities. At the same time, she gets involved in intensive research, choosing as the initial subject of her interest the aesthetic experience of children and youth. Shortly after the defense of her doctoral dissertation in the field of philosophy, she diverts all her attention to the problem of disability.

The decision concerning a radical change of the previously chosen direction of studies and scientific research was influenced by a special experience in Maria Grzegorzewska's life, which was the visit to the psychiatric hospital in Bicetre. It is impossible now to know the thoughts and feelings that accompanied her at that time, but according to her later words, "the compensation of the harm suffered by the handicapped and the maladjusted" became a manifesto of her entire life (Doroszevska, 1972, p. 18).

Maria Grzegorzewska made her first steps in the implementation of her vocation as a teacher in the class for children with intellectual disabilities at a school in Paris, where she formed the foundations of the methodological solutions developed by her later. However, soon after Poland regained independence, she returned hastily to her homeland, starting a long-standing fight to provide dignified conditions for living and development to children with disabilities.

In 1919, she accepted the position of a clerk for special education affairs at the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education (WriOP) and was faced with an extremely difficult task. Polish education after World War I was left by the partitioners in a catastrophic condition. A high rate of illiteracy, unavailability of schools for children from rural areas, a change in the language of tuition and the lack of adequately qualified teachers were just a few of the problems that she had to struggle with (Hryniewicka, 2015). In a period so difficult for the emerging state, Grzegorzewska's efforts resulted in the establishment of the Special Education Department at the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education, which enabled the development of a network of special education institutions, the National Teacher Institute, and, above all, the founding of the National Institute of Special Pedagogy in 1922¹.

The innovative character of that institution was manifested not only by excellent substantive resources, but first of all by an innovative model of training of special education

¹ In 1976, the National Institute of Special Education was reorganized into the Graduate School of Special Education, and since 2000 has functioned as the Maria Grzegorzewska Academy of Special Education, the oldest pedagogical academic school in Poland.

teachers based on the creative concepts of Maria Grzegorzewska, which were the fruit of the wealth of her personality serving invariably the idea of good and humanity. It saturated Polish special pedagogy not only with thorough specialist knowledge, but primarily with its own humanistic message - "There is no cripple, there is a human being" (Lipkowski, 1972). The boundaries of the branch of science, whose foundations she developed with deep personal involvement in Poland, were determined by everyone's right to happiness, freedom, development of their talents and self-fulfillment (Dziedzic, 1972), endowing everyone, without any exceptions, with the highest human dignity.

At the same time, Maria Grzegorzewska was involved in scientific work, as evidenced by numerous publications on the borderline of special pedagogy and psychology of her authorship, and the "Special School" magazine created by her in 1924, whose editor she remained until her death. The most important contribution to the development of the area of special pedagogy practice was the development and scientific justification of innovative methods of revalidation of children with disabilities, which resulted in the method of work centers (Dziedzic, 1972), still applied in special education. At the same time, throughout her life, Grzegorzewska was engaged in organizing schools and special facilities for intellectually disabled and socially maladjusted children, establishing cooperation with educational institutions for blind, deaf and abandoned children, as well as fighting for equal social rights and access to education for children from areas rural areas and those living in poverty (Dyduch, Strączek, 2014).

With the beginning of the Second World War, a period began, which brought a particular challenge for the most important values in Maria Grzegorzewska's personal and professional life, which she sought with perseverance in the world around her – goodness and humanity. She spent the time of the war turmoil defending the ideals that were the essence of her life. She organized material aid for prisoners of war and prisoners of concentration camps, helped the persecuted Poles of Jewish origin and took part in the Warsaw Uprising (Dycht, 2006). She spent the years of occupation working as a teacher at a special school in Warsaw and a nurse in military hospitals. At the same time, she participated in the secret educational work of the Government Delegation in the teacher education department. The wartime period destroyed almost everything that Maria Grzegorzewska had built over the years of her scientific, pedagogical and social work. Once again, she found in herself the layers of creative power that allowed her – like many other survivors of the war turmoil – to start again the work of her life at the age of 57 years.

However, the period of Stalinism turned out to be the most difficult. The effort put into the reconstruction of the State Institute of Special Education was received coldly by the then authorities of the Polish People's Republic. All kinds of activities were significantly limited by the absurd suspicions and restrictions of the communist apparatus of power. Maria Grzegorzewska had to stand up in the defense of humanity once again, protecting people with disabilities and paradigms of special education against productivization and the pressure of communist influences (Hryniewicka, 2015). Along with the political thaw of 1956,

the authorities' reluctance towards Grzegorzewska's activities also weakened. At the end of her life, she received numerous awards and distinctions in recognition of her merits for the education system and scientific successes.

Maria Grzegorzewska passed away on May 7, 1967 in Warsaw at the age of 79. In later memoirs, one of her friends, considering her extraordinary influence, which she involuntarily exerted on the people around her, described it as a fascination with "a person who simply and boldly did her job" (Zawieyski, 1971, p. 8) - served other people (Doroszevska, 1972).

In the preface to the first cycle of *Letters to a young teacher*, one of the most inspiring axiologically manifestos of pedagogical practice published in 1947, Grzegorzewska (1996, p. 7) wishes people who start their professional lives to find "the joy of life, and maybe even happiness". These special words, whose power seems to be intended not only for the young teachers, but also for each individual, sounded only two years after the end of the humanitarian catastrophe of World War II. For the modern reader, they may sound banal and almost naive, but it should be understood how great emotional charge of the concepts of "joy" and "happiness" they brought with them for people with fresh memories of the unimaginable cruelty of war. Can there be joy and happiness in the face of omnipresent evil?

Apparently, Maria Grzegorzewska recalled every period of her life as exceptionally good, remaining in the memory of family members, friends and co-workers as a person always cheerful and full of serenity (Tomasik, 1998). She found happiness in the twists of fate, which in objective reasoning must be perceived as difficult and unfavorable (Doroszevska, 1972). In the face of the great stoic dichotomy, we can desire what depends on us, or what is beyond our influence (Comte-Sponville, Delumeau, Farge, 2008), while becoming a slave to a fickle fate. Maria Grzegorzewska, like a stoic, sought happiness in herself - where it was not a favorable chance of a fickle fate, but could only be her conscious will. She built her happiness on the rock, which had a chance not to fall under the pressure of the war turmoil, communist dictatorship and other adversities.

Nothing depends on a man as much as his own will. The wise man agrees to what happens to him, and is not dependent on him, without giving up action (Comte-Sponville, Delumeau, Farge, 2008). Maria Grzegorzewska (1996) understood happiness as the cheerfulness of the spirit and internal harmony achieved precisely through her own efforts. The work guaranteeing this kind of eudaimonia is marked by longing for the ideal, shaping the human way of life in the smallest details, and the imponderables determining the action of Maria Grzegorzewska were, above all, the interpenetrating goodness and humanity. In moral terms, the effect of action did not count as much for her as the internal impetus that set the path to achieve the goal.

One of the most important issues bothering ancient philosophers was to decide whether happy life is one that brings as much pleasure and joy as possible, or one that is respectable in moral terms. Although at that time the outcome of the discussion brought both sides a win, combining inseparably both aspects of happiness in the conceptual binomial of

"good life" (Comte-Sponville, Delumeau, Farge, 2008), it can be assumed that Maria Grzegorzewska did not despise joy and without renouncing it she was definitely willing to give it up for a virtuous life. According to Grzegorzewska, not the twists of fate in the form of material well-being, various pleasures and entertainment, as well as honors and appreciation, provided a sense of inner serenity and harmony, which she timidly called happiness. It is a constant work on yourself, every day and every moment, to become a person filled with love, kindness and a sense of responsibility as a natural source of good; a person more and more intelligent and deeply fascinated by all manifestations of life.

The message of Maria Grzegorzewska does not take the shape of an ethical framework to which one should adapt, following the strictly defined moral standards. Its meaning is aretological in character. What else could "internal wealth" be, such an important and basic tool for her as a good person, if not a range of virtues?

Although the intellectual retreat towards the ethics of virtues in contemporary philosophy began only at the end of the 1950s (Anscombe, 1958), the earlier informal ethical thought of Maria Grzegorzewska seems to draw from this trend of ancient philosophy. The ethics of virtues rejects the formalist and legalistic approach based on duties, rights and actions that dominates in modern times (Saja, 2015). Instead of direct interest in human actions and the effects of these acts, it begins to be interested in the persons, and especially in their ability to perform morally good acts (Ślipko, 2009), i.e. virtues. The ethics of virtues, therefore, departs from the search for ethical standards to regulate human behavior, recognizing that action is a direct result of the person's internal dispositions. The set of virtues and the presence of specific defects the person has, and therefore what he/she is like, directly determines the individual way of proceeding. It is not necessary to impose moral standards on a man, if the internal moral efficiency regulates his actions. It is therefore necessary to strive to develop the greatest number of virtues.

It can be assumed that the moral compass of Maria Grzegorzewska was based on a similar reasoning. Although in her works she does not fully specify her own ethical thought and is unlikely to have had a chance to become acquainted with the work of contemporary luminaries of aretology, it seems justified to see the threads connecting her with the ethics of the ancient times, who were the first to notice the importance of virtue for the human life.

Maria Grzegorzewska perceived virtue in terms of values. This motif permeates all of her work, appearing in different contexts and circumstances: both in letters to friends, personal notes, and pedeutological texts. She said that "one has to hold on to something to live" (Han-Ilgiewicz, 1989, p. 137) and we can sense intuitively that Maria Grzegorzewska "held on to" the passion of growing in her humanity, which absorbed her entire personal and professional life, intertwining with each other invariably on the axiological plane.

It can be assumed that in Maria Grzegorzewska's approach love is the overriding virtue of the human life. All of moral virtues lead to moral goodness, but each of them at a certain special angle. Love is superior to them, because it is both a desire for good and doing good in general (Ślipko, 2009). Maria Grzegorzewska recognizes it as the source and driving

force of the other virtues. The love for life – given to us by God – is a real incentive for the pursuit of moral perfection. According to her, to love means to long for the beauty of the ideal of humanity. Love is for her the triumph of man over evil and suffering – victory is often the only possible option, because it depends entirely on our own will, not on the fortune and fate. In her *Letters to a young teacher* (1996, p. 107), Maria Grzegorzewska writes about love in the following words: "Love is a lever in life, it is like the deepest impulse of our nature to harmony, to order, to connect with people, to a kind respect for their attitudes; it is an impulse to reveal an active relationship that we call goodness. Out of love flows our cognitive truth and concern for human development, and striving for a better tomorrow. Recall, Colleague, the words of Cyprian Norwid: »Love, in you only the rest and the power, and the axis of existence – in your conscience!«".

Inner wealth is achieved by a person motivated by love for life, the world and people. Craving and curiosity about what she loved built Maria Grzegorzewska's passion to explore the world. She described that self-development as the internal "(...) striving to get to know better, to reach deeper, to open our eyes more widely, to understand more, to experience more, to see more clearly and thanks to that project more clearly our way of life" (Grzegorzewska, 1996, p. 51).

Throughout her life, Maria Grzegorzewska wanted to get to know new people caring at the same for many friendships. She was extremely interested in man and his personality (Gwarecka, 1989) – the essence of humanity was a constant element of her research. She constructed her concept based on her own system of values, defining personality as "a specific harmony of the spiritual structure" (Grzegorzewska, 1964, p. 17), as well as the ability to participate and the passion focused on the selected activity (Han-Ilgiwicz, 1989). In this approach, enthusiasm and dedication are particularly valuable regardless of the results of pursuits, which depend on many additional factors. Therefore, it is extremely important to work independently on one's own personality, which is for Maria Grzegorzewska the self-development bringing internal wealth. In order to be oneself, one has to be a somebody – to have their life and world on an immaterial plane, and to serve a cause in which one strongly believes (Grzegorzewska, 1996). The following words of Jan Władysław Dawid² meant a lot to her: "You must be yourself, otherwise you will cease to exist morally" (Grzegorzewska, 1961, p. 110). This "being oneself" meant for her freedom, which she understood as an inner steadfastness, giving strength to resist evil.

The crowning of Maria Grzegorzewska's value system were goodness and humanity. She probably devoted to these imponderities the most space in her writings, recognizing them as crowning of the spiritual effort and inner wealth of man. In *Letters to a young teacher* (Grzegorzewska, 1996), she emphasized that goodness is the greatest value and precious treasure of the world emerging directly from the love of another human being. Good was beauty to her, and evil was disgusting. Beauty was a wondrous goal of searching, and

² Jan Władysław Dawid (1859-1914) – a pedagogue, psychologist, pioneer of educational psychology and experimental education in Poland (Perkowska, 2015).

ugliness a stimulus to action towards a change (Dyduch, Strączek, 2014). Maria Grzegorzewska wrote also about humanity as the richest and most valuable value. According to her, the value of man and his undeniable dignity exceeds everything else in the life of individuals and societies (Grzegorzewska, 1996). Each person is a unique microcosm for her, deserving respect, kindness and understanding. People are different – some have a great moral strength and others are unstable and weak. There are also various secrets hidden in their hearts. An effort worthy of an internally beautiful and loving man is to try to sense and understand instead of condemning and rejecting (Grzegorzewska, 1996).

It was of particular importance for Maria Grzegorzewska to defend the dignity of people with disabilities. The foundation of her pedagogical thought was the slogan: "There is no cripple, there is a man" (Mikrut, 2013), by means of which she challenged the exclusive society unaccustomed with the disabled, the sick and the weaker. She protested against the perception of man through his limitations, interpreting them only as a fragment of the range of traits and properties that define a person. Maria Grzegorzewska has extracted the humanity of people with disabilities from social non-existence, showing their inner value. She used the concepts defining "abnormality" only to the extent necessary in scientific research, organizational and practical activities, while avoiding making such divisions in the axiological area.

She took care to provide people with disabilities with a dignified life and an equal position in the society, focusing as a special pedagogue especially on children and youth. In the understanding of Maria Grzegorzewska, each child deserved the best that the humanity could offer (Dyduch, Strączek, 2014), which is why she tirelessly fought for the availability of special education, revalidation and care.

The essence of the work of her life was the constant effort to save "The human in man" (Tomasik, 1998). In addition to the distinctive plane of various forms of aid and support, as well as activities for the good of the society, evident in her biography, something else is important – the aspect that is the "soul" of her everyday effort, namely the apology of humanity. Maria Grzegorzewska and her contemporaries came to live in times marked by the atrocities of two world wars, enslavement of the communist regime, poverty and extreme social inequalities. Doubting the essence of humanity and the unique dignity of oneself and other people seems to be a natural threat associated with such experiences. Maria Grzegorzewska's words and activities were a source of encouragement not only for many generations of teachers who were educated at the State Institute of Special Education or inspired by reading the *Letters ...* but also for a wide group of people around her. Her personality and moral courage built on the permanent foundation of the system of Christian values strengthened the human souls around her, defending and praising the beauty of true humanity.

2. The phenomenon of the morel exemplar in the context of moral education

The idea of humanity, which served Maria Grzegorzewska as the internal moral compass, is also the key to understanding the scholar's views on the process of education of children and youth. The purpose of education should be "to deepen humanity in a human being" (Grzegorzewska, 1996, p. 66), which can be expressed in other words as the awakening of the love of human souls, giving rise to an attitude of complete goodness. She understood the process of upbringing as introducing children and youth into the world of values, and the arcana of this art were presented in a special way. She had repeatedly emphasized that we want to learn from those who, through their personality and actions, arouse our soul and leave a lasting impression on it (Grzegorzewska, 1996). Thus, the path to the humanity of the juveniles leads through the humanity of the educators, their inner values and personality. She regarded only the intentional forms of education as a negligible part of the whole process, which she believed is based on unintentional "upbringing, which life itself continues in each of us" (Han-Ilgiewicz, 1989, p. 143).

The quintessence of the thought of Maria Grzegorzewska's concerning education is her saying that has become almost an aphorism: "goodness generates goodness" (Grzegorzewska, 1996, p. 44). According to her pedeutological credo, a teacher who is a truly good man revives the sensitive strings of his pupil's soul, arousing the inner potential of his virtues. She did not agree to upbringing as a planned molding of her pupil's personality according to ready-made patterns and standards by imposing them on him (Han-Ilgiewicz, 1989). She had a deep conviction that the personality of the educators and their inner wealth was more important than intentional educational interactions, grounded in appropriate pedagogical preparation. According to Maria Grzegorzewska's views, the effects of educational work are primarily conditioned by who the teacher is as a human being. A person deprived of goodness will bring up children and adolescents to become good people. It is not enough to talk about values, you cannot explain or order them. Values can be aroused by showing them with one's own attitude and inspiring with them.

The observations made by Maria Grzegorzewska indicate clearly that she intuitively perceived the significant role of the personal model in the process of human development. At the same time, it should be clearly emphasized that she was a moral exemplar of a pedagogue, scientist, social worker and, above all, a woman of unprecedented internal wealth. The innumerable letters she received from her friends and graduates of the State Institute of Special Education, as well as the impressed readers of the *Letters to a young teacher*, are a perfect testimony of how many people recognized Maria Grzegorzewska as a moral authority (Tomasik, 1998). In a similar way, the scholar reaches to the hearts and souls of contemporary readers of her writings.

The personal model is a real or fictitious character that is the object of aspiration, and should therefore encourage or encourages imitation (Kiciński, 2015). Presenting models or being a personal model is considered one of the categories of educational influences (Gurycka, 1998), which are most often understood as a kind of conscious and purposeful interaction that aims to achieve developmental changes in the juvenile's personality

(Rubacha, 2006). Therefore, this process comes down to the fact that man tries to change another human being (Konarzewski, 1982). In order to define the process of supporting moral development, we also distinguish the detailed concept of moral education, the objectives of which include the transfer and internalization of certain values, axiological orientations, hierarchies and value systems, as well as the ability to rely on values in specific life situations. The concept broader than moral education is the concept of education towards values (moral education, axiological education), which, apart from arranging the internal axiological environment of the young man, focuses also on building a cognitive scaffolding that enables not only feeling and accepting values, but also understanding, processing and critical reflection in the axiological field (Olbrycht, 2004, 2012).

In general, intentionality is considered a prerequisite of the upbringing process, which means that all kinds of interventions are deliberately arranged and targeted. Analyzing the concept of Maria Grzegorzewska's education, one can conclude that the effectiveness of conscious and intentional actions is conditioned primarily by the parallel intentional influence of the teachers' personality, assuming, of course, that they will be able to become an authority for their pupils. Therefore, the teacher's role is not so much the transmission as the emission of the axiological attitude. For Maria Grzegorzewska, the unintentional dimension of education, which is the universe of real life situations and interpersonal interactions, is more important. It should be understood that the moral development process never occurs in a vacuum. Thus, the pupil, apart from the influence intended for him, draws from the surrounding socio-cultural wealth, within which he creates for himself the authorities who are objects of his moral aspirations.

In this context, the position of the personal model against the background of a wide range of educational interactions is extremely interesting. It is possible to use the model intentionally (Łobocki, 2006), but the essence of this construct seems to be in its nature designed for unintentional educational interactions. The pupil chooses here his own direction of development, deciding who will be granted the function of the personal model, and thus what kind of person he will be trying to become. The educator may designate the personal models in a planned and intentional way, thus creating for the juvenile an axiological environment of potential possibilities, but it is impossible for him to make a choice. It should be understood that the prerequisite for this type of learning is identification with the personal model based largely on the emotional bond (Bronfenbrenner, 1960, for: Bakier, Harwas-Napierała, 2016), which cannot be achieved if such a model is arbitrarily imposed.

Both the strong influence of Maria Grzegorzewska's personality and the concept of upbringing developed by her prove the validity of the above theses. Józefa Joteyko³, considering the phenomenon of Maria Grzegorzewska's emanation, described it in the following words: "Maryleczka, you are the best person I have ever met in my life - each time

³ Józefa Joteyko (1866-1928) – doctor, a psychologist, pedagogue and a prominent scientist. Privately, the mentor and closest friend of Maria Grzegorzewska (Dycht, 2006).

I meet you, your inner wealth strikes and delights me again " (Tomasik, 1989, p. 36). The key phrase is "strikes and delights me ", which contains an attempt to capture the ethereal moment of accepting a personal model. This phenomenon can be described as an emotional and cognitive fascination of the intensity which arouses the need to become a person similar to the model.

It is impossible to determine objectively the character of the decision-making processes that are responsible for accepting the personal model. The division line runs on the boundary between affection and cognition, separating the spontaneous experience of strong closeness to intellectual structures that enable a fully conscious choice. The pursuit of moral perfection implies the interest in particular moral exemplars (Olbrycht, 2014), which simultaneously constitute a specific definition of the moral ideal. This does not mean that each personal model is a representation of a different system of values. The differences are usually manifested in the exemplification and distribution of axiological accents.

According to Max Scheler's opinion (1987, p. 355) "(...) a personal model is not chosen. One is possessed by it (...) ". Following the morel exemplar is therefore purely emotional and is based on the feeling of love and adoration. The sublimity of these words can be misleading and point to the attitude of unlimited submission to the authority. However, Scheler (1987) emphasized clearly that the personal model should be the driving force of the process of moral growth, and not the object of almost slavish imitation. The role of the personal models is therefore unintentional arousing of the values that they represent, which manifest themselves to the person thanks to the love directed towards them.

Saint John Paul II devoted his postdoctoral thesis to the analysis of the Scheler's concept with reference to the constructed Christian ethics. Agreeing with the importance of the role of the personal model for the moral development of man, he perceived differently the nature of the processes motivating the choice of authority. John Paul II assumed that a person acquires the dignity of a role model due to own actions, and not to "emotional feeling and conscious experience" (Olbrycht, 2014, p. 143). This means that a man should choose personal models in a conscious manner, assessing their behaviors that leads them to moral perfection.

Regardless of the concept adopted, the freedom of the subject to choose or reject a particular personal model is crucial. Pedagogical unintentionality of this process emphasizes the etymological dimensions of the concept of education. The development of the value system is an extremely personal process, of an externally elusive nature, so the intended educational influences are limited here to the ward's contact with the potential ideal. An appropriate background for understanding the concept of "upbringing" in the context of the impact of the personal model seems to be the personalistic approach. Pedagogy shaped in this trend postulates education as a "maieutics" of the person, where the pupil is in a way the creator of the process of his own upbringing, and the educator assumes a collaborative role (Nanni, 2009).

3. Psychological mechanisms of the influence of the personal model

The specific magnetism and the influence of Maria Grzegorzewska's personality on other people, as well as the resulting concept of upbringing, seem extremely interesting from the perspective of research carried out in modern psychology. In his *Moral letters to Lucilius* Seneca writes: *verba docent, exempla trahunt* ("words teach, examples attract") (Olbrycht, 2014), and his words may constitute the essence of reflection arising after learning the life story and views of Maria Grzegorzewska – a moral exemplar and an authority. How, then, should we understand the influence of the personal model on human development? Further considerations presented in this subsection will enable to understand the psychological mechanism that explains this issue.

The basic meaning of the term "personal model" is understandable at the intuitive level, just as awareness of the importance of the role of personal models in the process of education falls within the scope of some kind of colloquial knowledge. The concept of personal model is sometimes considered synonymous with the personal pattern. However, it should be understood that while the personal model is a real or fictitious individual existing in the past or present, the personal pattern is only a highly abstract concept, which consists of an impersonal set of desirable traits. Thus, the personal model is an implementation of the personal pattern (Dyczewski, 1995). It is worth emphasizing that the repertoire of traits characterizing the personal pattern or the supra-individual personality pattern has the status of desirable features, which, however, do not have to be positive. The conceptual scope of "authority" is slightly different, resulting each time from the perception of the person's characteristics not only as desirable, but also as positive (Bakier, Harwas-Napierała, 2016). In the context of psychological mechanisms discussed below in this subsection, the figure of a morel exemplar should be identified with the concept of a model.

The key mechanism explaining the impact of the personal model or the authority is the processes of social learning, which is confirmed by research on, among others, the social genesis of aggression (Bandura, 1973) and pro-social behaviors (Arska-Karyłowska, 1982) and anxiety behaviors (Harwas-Napierała, 1987). The theory of social learning is one of the concepts describing and explaining the mechanism of human development throughout life, based on the assumption that the individual's behavior is shaped by interacting with the environment through observing the reactions of other people and the resulting effects. What is important, not only the behavior observable as a result of social learning is taken into account, but also the importance of internal cognitive states (Turner, Helms, 1999).

It can therefore be stated in a simplified way that the impact of the personal model on human development is reduced to its observation and imitation (Schaffer, 2010). This type of influence can be described as the influence of the model by demonstrating behaviors, attitudes and values that are received, and then absorbed or rejected. This process always takes place during various types of social interactions, whose understanding should be extended also to indirect contacts, established only at the unreal level. An example may be

the situation of the contemporary recipients of Maria Grzegorzewska's message, who mainly use the works left by her and a few recordings.

The impact of the personal model is considered in terms of the mechanism of imitation, modeling and identification. All of these concepts intersect with each other, maintaining an inclusive hierarchy. Identification is the semantically widest category and includes modeling and imitation in its meaning. However, imitation can be understood as an element of modeling. It should also be emphasized that in the context of social learning theory, the personal pattern is defined as a model and both concepts are treated synonymously. In turn, to describe the process of assimilating a personal pattern, the concepts of interiorization and internalization are used (Bakiera, Harwas-Napierała, 2016).

Imitation is considered to be the most fundamental link, identified primarily with the behavioral area. As a result of it, the most external properties of the personal model are reproduced, including the repertoire of the model's behavior (Reber, Reber, 2008). Imitation does not have to be a faithful reproduction of the individual behavioral acts, it may involve a creative transposition of the behavior template.

Assuming that the actual reflection of the behavior of the personal model is understood as imitation, the situation of recreating the intention or experience of the personal model, and thus, symbolically similar activities, is referred to as modeling. The essence of this process is therefore to remember the attitude and value system of the model. In an illustrative manner, imitation can be compared to unreflective reproduction, and modeling to inspiration with, and taking over the internal state of the personal model. The attributes of the set of behaviors are discovered, and thus the internal control states are decrypted and on this basis the axiological universe of the personal model is reproduced (Bakiera, Harwas-Napierała 2016). As a result of modeling, it is possible to acquire new ways of functioning as well as to increase or decrease (abandon) the previously learned ones (Bandura, 2007).

A set of elements necessary for the modeling process to occur can be distinguished. The basic condition is observation of the personal model, including the behaviors and the manifested properties (attitudes, values, views). Attention processes make it possible to capture the individual stimuli that constitute modeling influences. Next, the observed components of the personal model should be remembered so that the information encoded in the form of pictorial or verbal representations could be used during the future behaviors. The next step is to transform these representations into the corresponding behaviors.

The most important element in the context of the concept of personal model are motivational processes. It is well known that a simple encounter with the personal model is not tantamount to accepting it as a model worth following (Bandura, 2007). Modeling takes place only when the desired consequences of the model's behavior are observed. It turns out that we focus not only on the specific actions of the model, but also on the consequences resulting from them. Observing personal models, we therefore construct hypotheses regarding a set of behaviors with potentially successful effects. The consequences in the form

of self-evaluation, and therefore the assessment of own actions, are also motivating. The sense of satisfaction, self-satisfaction and self-acceptance definitely foster the performance of reactions learned by observing the model (Bandura, 1971).

The link connecting the individual elements of the process of social learning is the phenomenon of identification, covering a holistic and long-term identification with the model, and thus the desire to be "identical" (Bakiera, Harwas-Napierała, 2016). Identification is a process related to shaping own thoughts, feelings and actions in accordance with the personal model. The occurrence of a similarity between the learner and the personal model is constituted by the leading role of the model, whose presence is a kind of instruction (Bandura, 1969).

The importance of individual interlocking mechanisms of the influence of the personal model changes with the stage of cognitive development. The order in which these processes are discussed in this article determines at the same time the gradient of their significance. During the adolescence period, the dominant role is played by identification, understood as a fully conscious identification with a personal model. At the same time, this mechanism determines the initial phase of searching for one's own identity in the context of defining the sense of life. During the next stage, described as cosmic, the proprietary vague concepts of the sense of life are created in a chaotic manner. The world of ideals discovered by young people is confronted with the reality, leading to a conflict between the utopian "superego" and the "ego" full of defects, which in turn directs towards moral self-perfection. Ultimately, the stage of mature discovery of the sense of life and the matching formula of one's own attitudes and actions will be achieved (Obuchowski, 1995).

The need to model the moral exemplary during adolescence is associated with the desire to have emotional contact, the desire to experience a relationship with another person and to become similar to that person not only in terms of behavior and appearance, but above all, the lifestyle, attitude and value system. In this particular period, the youngsters are guided by the natural need to search for "heroes" and "adoration objects", combined with a secret dream of reproducing a specific pattern in their lives. The desire to find your own personal patterns is so intense at this age that young people become extremely vulnerable to the influence of the media. The attractiveness and availability of media personalities is highly conducive to modeling the behaviors, attitudes and value systems presented by them. The fundamental danger of the social learning process taking place in this way is the fact that for the young recipients the message created by the media as the reality existing and surrounding them, becomes a "normal" reality, thus determining the socially acceptable area. Young people, still in the process of moral development, are presented by the media with ready-made personal models, which, however, have not been subjected to any axiological verification.

At the same time, moral development leads to the gradual discovery of good as a universal value and full obligation (Buksik, 1997), while moral maturity is equivalent with freedom and authenticity. What is important, however, is the proper understanding of this

freedom, which should never be equated with freedom in the sense of casual chaos or axiological emptiness. According to Maria Grzegorzewska, freedom is the basic condition for developing our own humanity. It is an intrinsic ethical steadfastness that allows to maintain the strength and integrity of our own identity (Tomasik, 1989). Freedom is therefore a guarantee of the existence of a man as a moral subject. The man develops his moral freedom understood in this way in the period of adolescence, going from acting in accordance with the standards set by other people to the autonomy of moral principles and values. Therefore, a young person at the threshold of adulthood should make independent moral judgments in a manner consistent with the internalized system of values and independent of identification with significant persons and their expectations (Harwas-Napierała, Trempała, 2009).

4. The importance of the values delineating Maria Grzegorzewska's personal ethics for contemporary youth

The explication of the phenomenon of Maria Grzegorzewska's personality, considered in terms of the personal model for young people, should be embedded in the broad context of the axiological universe of modern society, taking into account the course of the moral development process.

The environment of the development of the system of values and ethical attitudes of young people is more and more determined by the expansion of a completely new horizon of phenomena, covering all areas of human activity. The existential and intellectual context of modern times is referred to as postmodernity. Abandoning the Enlightenment paradigms of modernity brings fluidity to the reference points and blurring of all existing boundaries, patterns and authorities existing to date. The postmodern man ceases to feel that "there is a method in this madness", losing the sight of the old structure of meanings and not gaining any other in return (Daszykowska, Rewera, 2010). The axiological universe becomes a programmatic void in the service of the subject's freedom. The postmodern world of unlimited ethical choices wants to be independent of universal values. This relativism results from emotivism, owing to which the system of values and the ethical attitudes resulting from it are an expression of the subject's individuality. In the post-modern world, man is unable to accept a rational method that would enable the construction of a common ethical system (Gruca-Miąsik, 2015).

The concept of postmodernity is of course only a construct by means of which an attempt is made to describe the unprecedented processual changes. Therefore, the above characteristic should not be interpreted as a literal diagnosis of the current state of affairs. It is only a perspective of the dominant tendencies that shape the modern world. There is no doubt, however, that the continually growing area of axiological freedom, understood as the abandonment of previously established meanings and rules, obliges us to explore on our own. Striving for freedom, we get a void in return, which we want to fill. Could we learn to live in a world without frames and meanings?

Young people want to choose their own values and forms of their implementation. Interestingly, this does not mean that the effect of these axiological peregrinations differs radically from what is commonly recognized (Olbrycht, 2004). Research shows that despite some changes, traditional values of a universal nature are still important for young people (Gruca-Miąsik, 2015). It can therefore be concluded that the area of the key modification that the currents of postmodernism have managed to achieve in the moral development of young people is the process itself, not its effect. It is extremely important for young people to discover through their own effort what is important in their life, and they are ready to accept only such a system of values as their own. In this context, the structure of the personal model appears as an educational influence tailored to the needs of modern times. Regardless of the concept of the criteria for adopting a personal model, it is undoubtedly a fully autonomous decision. Thus, by saturating the young man's axiological space with real authorities, the trap of simple relativism and pragmatism in his own ethical references can be avoided, while maintaining the necessary space of freedom and the sense of authorship of his own life.

In exchange for the rejected ethical codes, a postmodern man is offered a compass in the form of responsibility (Jawor, 2013) or empathy (Sareło, 2004). The authors of the paper want to extend that repertoire of superior values, which takes the form of an internal imperative, by adding the Christian values, and in particular humanity, which was proclaimed and presented by Maria Grzegorzewska's own example. Since this kind of moral compass is more adequate for the contemporary man than the normativity of the existing ethical systems, it may be assumed that the aretological properties of Maria Grzegorzewska as a personal model will prove compatible with the axiological needs of the youth, especially because research indicates that young people still highly value the so-called personal virtues (Świda-Ziemba, 2010). The ethical credo of Maria Grzegorzewska, embodied in several key virtues, has a simple and essential form. Humanity, love and goodness were defined only by the heroism of her life, allowing the readers of her writings to feel intuitively the meaning and scope of these values rather than to analyze them in a rational way.

The moral compass in Maria Grzegorzewska's life was love for people. This outstanding educator was not forced to refer to moral norms, because the feeling of this personalistic love indicated her directly the proper way of acting. According to the aretological formula of evaluation of actions, the conduct is morally correct and worth imitating if motivated by an appropriate virtue (Saja, 2015). Such an approach, based on the internal dispositions of the moral subject rather than on the rules and evaluation of action, seems to be much closer to the emotivism of modern youth. It is possible that in the world of intense changes it is easier for a morally maturing a young man to ask what he should be like than how he should act.

The name of the patron of this paper may be the answer to this question. Looking at the silhouette of Maria Grzegorzewska outlined in the paper, it is not difficult to notice that choosing her as a personal model results from identification based on an emotional bond.

Analyzing the psychological mechanisms of the impact exerted by a personal model, it can be noticed that the motivation for the symbolic modeling of the axiological attitude of Maria Grzegorzewska are the consequences of the resulting procedure. Obviously, all the achievements regarding the improvement of the life situation of children and young people with various disabilities and the help given to all those who need it in both material and existential dimensions are the immediately visible results. For a young person, the potential perspective of positive changes in made the world or life of other people may be extremely appealing and attractive. What is also important, is another aspect of the consequences of the moral attitude adopted by Maria Grzegorzewska, namely the achievement of a sense of personal happiness. In her memoirs, she characterized every period of her life as exceptionally happy (Doroszevska, 1972), and it should be remembered that fate had brought her an uneasy existence. Who would not like to find happiness beyond what is impermanent and wasted, in what comes out of us and depends on us? The specific eudaimonia achieved by Maria Grzegorzewska, coming from internal enrichment and developing her own dispositions to do good, fascinates and arouses an irresistible urge to identify with her.

Conclusion

Is it possible to talk about humanity and kindness in such a way that the words become alive and go straight to the listener's heart? Only a few, unfortunately, are endowed with such gift, and the attempts made are often woven from platitudes. Values only told about are the constructs so abstract that they become almost empty in meaning, until they are implemented in a personal model. To "learn" goodness, and therefore become a good person, one has to experience it and see it in another man.

Having experienced the life mission of Maria Grzegorzewska, a young man independently discovers the universal values in a way that prevents him from giving up. It is not enough to speak about virtues, it is impossible to order them, but they can be "infectious" through a personal model, because, as Maria Grzegorzewska wrote (1996, p. 44), "goodness generates goodness".

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