

Professor Roman Pelczar

Let me limit the space of my speech and close it with this group of teachers who taught in mainstream schools. This authority, it did not arise, it did not explode in one moment. Its creation was a process which, in the reality of the Polish lands, began in the second half of the 19th century.

Popular teachers had a very important role to play. It was society that had great expectations of teachers. In the moral sphere, the teacher was to be a person of faith, respecting the faiths of their pupils. This attitude of the teacher should be evident both in their teaching activities and daily life. The teacher's morality was also supposed to express their attitude towards their professional duties, the school authorities, the students of the local environment in which they lived and worked. Public opinion accepted the sense of teaching ethics understood in this way and placed high demands on the profession, especially in the moral and emotional sphere.

In contrast, such exorbitant demands were not placed on the intellectual sphere of the teacher. In order for teachers to fulfil these expectations of society, they should be models of virtue. As fundamental qualities of a teacher, contemporaries mentioned religiosity, morality, justice, and love for children, God and the homeland. In the interwar period, educational and the question of care played an important role in the teaching process, for the implementation of which the ethical attitude of the teacher was important. In the period between 1918 and 1926, issues of ethics of the teaching profession were worked out by the teachers themselves, without much interference from the school authorities. Certain values were also drawn from the non-binding model of national education. In the years 1926-1939, on the other hand, in the then functioning model of state education, the ethics of the teaching profession were imposed by the school authorities and enforced quite strictly. Within the ethical framework, the personal example of teachers was particularly important.

During the interbellum there was a sort of reorganisation of these teachers' colleges, but this did not happen until 1932, during the period of the Jędrzejewicz reform, and it was then that pedagogical high schools and pedagogy began to be introduced, and these teachers' colleges were gradually extinguished. It is also worth noting that the teacher not only acquired specific knowledge and built on it, but they were obliged to undergo continuing professional development. The meetings of the pedagogical councils also had a training character, so the meetings of these councils discussed, among other topics, the problems of state education, timetables, teaching materials, correlation of curricular content, use of teaching aids, reading of pedagogical works by teachers, completion of teaching documentation and analysis of new curricula.

The period of the twentieth century is a continuation of this process of social involvement and political engagement of teachers, because it should be mentioned that teachers were not only socially active, but also became involved in political movements. The people's movement was very popular, and also, for example, the socialist movement. So they also became involved in the political arena, acting as agitators in local communities. The politicians of the time very much emphasised that the role and activities of teachers in these local communities were very much appreciated. One of the exponents of such a positive

opinion of the role of teachers and teachers' activities was Józef Piłsudski. Thank you very much for your attention.

Professor Krzysztof Bochenek

Thank you very much, Professor. I cordially invite our honoured guests to the stage.

Mgr Nina Kitlińska - Director of the John Paul II School Complex in Jasionka

Welcome, and thank you very much for the invitation to this meeting. I see students in the room - I think you are the most interested in this topic, because we are talking about the educational future in our schools. The issue of education in ethics, the moral values that a person who is to become a teacher and wants to become a teacher should have has been raised, because this is also one of the key truths that I want to become that teacher. Apart from the fact that I have those personality traits that the professor mentioned here, nothing has changed. It remains the same: empathy, sensitivity, patience, and the desire to strive for self-improvement. And here the beautiful words of the professor from that interwar period, I even wrote down for myself what this teacher was supposed to be - an animator of social and cultural life, it is still so. It's not just didactics, it is education and it is care.

The next reflection I have taken up here today is that upbringing is still important: without upbringing there will be no education. These are such important didactic elements at the moment, to be able to sell knowledge. So these elements are related to what constitutes a teacher's authority: how we were raised, how we ourselves went through the process of upbringing, what environment we were shaped in, the fact that we have dreams of becoming a teacher, our professional predispositions, and also education.

And here is yet another important question: what kind of group is it and how educated. I turn here to this very branch of education [tertiary] and take this into consideration when building the authority of the teacher precisely during the period of education. It is important for students to be involved in society before becoming teachers. And once you are in school, after graduation, you come to fulfil this role of yours, you have a class, you have students, and you have to, with your personality traits, with your aptitude and with your knowledge, pass on this knowledge to the students in the environment in which you find yourself. That is to say, it is important to have an educational institution in which we can strengthen and develop our authority and an environment in which we can function. Here I have in mind school principals who help to develop the teacher's authority, because this authority, it has to develop, so in a way we acquire it along with our skills, but we start from the fact that we simply have in ourselves this desire to be a teacher, we have only this competence.

The moral spine of a teacher and the ethics of a teacher are very important. I would also emphasise the very important role of parents in modern education. The role of a teacher is very difficult now. And it is very important to be able to communicate - to communicate well, to establish the right relationship not only with students but with parents. This is currently a very difficult thing, because probably if we could move back to that interwar period, it would be easier, because the prestige of the teacher was different. And now the challenge is for the modern educator to be able to talk to parents, which is of great

importance in problem solving, because the tools are different for parents. Now the parent bypasses the teacher, bypasses the form teacher; there's the internet, they read the legislation and they know how to formulate a complaint, they know where to go, but they bypass the form teacher in all this, which is not good. I teach my parents where I work and I've always said this, that the most important thing is to maintain the right direction in parenting, which is not to bypass that form teacher, but to solve problems with them, and with the teacher. Reaching out to that teacher, they cannot be overlooked, because that's how you undermine the authority of that teacher, that's how it is.

This is the situation in the modern world, but I think that as teachers, pedagogues, headmasters, professors (and I bow to one professor here, to the next and to all those present here), it is important to pay attention to this, and to do so calmly, of course, because the teacher must represent this calmness, but also conviction with their knowledge and their experience and their rightness in this respect, because this is the most important thing. We can't look at it any other way, because education is where it starts. Upbringing is where it starts. I even quoted myself just now. And here I will finish, because here I think I have developed my idea too much, but it is practical, from my own backyard, but it has occurred to me over the years that these are the most important elements that make up our authority, and needs to be strengthened. Thank you very much.

Dr Anna Pięta-Szawara - Director of the University of Rzeszów Bilingual High School

Good afternoon to you. Thank you very much for the invitation to this meeting today. We are operating in the digital age. What does this change? First and foremost, the fact that we have virtually unlimited access to knowledge. Knowledge no longer requires going to the library for its exploration - going to the library, reading books, accessing those books. Knowledge today is in everyone's pocket. It is at our fingertips, we reach for our phone and we basically have everything on social media. This exchange is very shallow, but we also have opportunities to read serious articles in digital format, serious publications. It is imperative that we as teachers and you as students understand these changes and are able to adapt to them in order to educate and instruct effectively.

Therefore, the first conclusion we can draw is that this authority in the new reality of the teacher is based not solely on knowledge. Although it is essential and, of course, the slightest lapses in this regard are scrupulously noticed by the students and neither does this does serve the purpose of image-building. But first and foremost we must have interpersonal competence.

The second issue is surely that we as teachers must also face the pressure of preparing students for exams that are also binary in nature, such as the eighth-grade exams or the matriculation exams, which measure the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching. We need to prepare students in this way. There has been talk here of these expectations from parents, from society, of what a teacher is supposed to be like, what qualities they are supposed to have, whether they are supposed to be hardworking, whether they are supposed to be a champion and so on. But, ladies and gentlemen, let's also look the other way - that if we demand so much from these teachers, then in order for them to be able to live up to these expectations, they should enjoy authority from the other side, that is, from society in

particular. And this is where what we would call ethos comes in, which is also how a teacher is perceived.

Firstly, I think it is very important how a teacher is paid, what the conditions of their work are, how they are treated precisely from the perspective of their conditions, whether they work in overcrowded classrooms, whether they have insufficient educational resources, whether they have low pay. All these things, of course, hinder an effective educational process and, on the other hand, frustrate the teacher. So it's a problem that definitely needs to be looked at. And if a teacher is working in a difficult environment, in a stressful environment, he or she can certainly have a problem with maintaining relationships.

And then there is the thread that the Director has previously raised. The last, penultimate one perhaps. Parents. Parents and the way they treat education in general, passing on practically everything to teachers. That is, dropping not only the issue of teaching their child, preparing them for exams, but more willingly also of educating and even more willingly instructing teachers how to do so. Parents know how to educate, they know how to assess, they know how to work with the child and they know that, certainly, the teacher has done it wrong. My position is that the principal should absolutely side with the teacher. That's what our offices and other places are for, where we can talk to the teacher face to face. We have plenty of tools, we have opportunities to verify how things really were, but, in front of the parents, it is the principal who is the teacher's absolute mainstay. Therefore, the role of the headmaster is doubly difficult in shaping this ethos, not only as perfect teachers, because we are supposed to be exemplary for our teachers, but we are also supposed to stand by them in order to create, shape and defend what we call the authority of the teacher. Thank you very much.

Marek Plizga, M.A. - Principal of the Cyprian Kamil Norwid Secondary School No. 3 in Rzeszów

Good day to you. I am the principal of the Third High School in Rzeszów. My motto is: teach, educate, care. And this is what my teachers do, including the headmaster, of course, because a headmaster is quite simply a teacher, a teacher who happens to be a headmaster, and that's the way it is.

I would like to start with something different and focus more on pragmatic things. Namely, why is there a shortfall of several thousand people in the teaching profession in Poland? Why? This is an important question and one that could be asked here. Above all, the Ministry of Education should ask itself this question. Why? Why is recruitment to the teaching profession, and I am not of course talking about us, partly negative? People who are, people in the profession - I will say as a headteacher - who should not be teaching young people. Why is that? A teacher must have not only legal security, but also financial security. We know that teachers earn what they earn, and then when people take a break, teachers often make extra money during, say, holidays or whatever. I think that this is something that the Ministry of Education should address immediately.

The next issue is career development, the issue of pensions... People are talking about all of this now. The issue of the minimum pension - simply how will we be paid in retirement? The question of bridging pensions and so on. The next issue is the issue of post-graduate

training. Teachers in Poland are, according to all studies, the best-educated social group. If I were to ask my colleagues, I would think that, on average, each of us would have five post-graduate qualifications. Why? Because we want to influence young people, and if someone needs, let's say, to influence young people and is lacking something, then they are looking for something to, let's say, complete this. Whether it's psychology, let's say, or pedagogy, or something else. I'm not talking about majors that are typically substantive, but ones that can somehow influence young people. We're supposed to be guides, we're supposed to show, let's say, reality and separate good from evil and show the truth. Whatever you want to know, only that one thing you don't know. I consider it a failure of the transformation of our school that we have not taught the young precisely to distinguish the wheat from the chaff. To know how to approach things, to draw from different sources and to be able to compare certain things.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have for a certain period of time, and this is shocking to me, we have so-called alternative facts. Also, as I said, pragmatism, well-educated, prepared staff, who look to the future with peace of mind, because they don't have to earn extra money by tutoring and so on, and can devote themselves to actually, imparting knowledge or accompanying young people. The teacher has a mission, there is a teacher ethos, we have our own laws. This is where I really liked that we are a certain state that stands out. Well we have a Teachers' Charter, it is our codex that simply works. If teachers are properly remunerated, if people with values come into the profession, then I will be very calm about my successors and education in the Republic. Thank you.

Piotr Wanat, M.A. - Principal of Stanisław Konarski Secondary School No. 1 in Rzeszów

A very warm welcome to you. Ladies and gentlemen, today we are rather talking about the professional group of teachers. And what builds the status of any group, including teachers, that is this position, is prestige, power and money. So these are the determinants of social status. Ladies and gentlemen, and here, referring to it in turn, today's watchword is authority. Authority is what we might colloquially call charisma, it's a kind of godsend, it's an attribute, it's some kind of exceptional quality different from other people. And here what teachers, headmasters expect most is calmness, continuity, to give us a moment of peace. The role of the state, systemic solutions cannot be overestimated here. Above all, the state should emphasise this value of education.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is also the role of the State to take care of a modern teacher training system. This is a huge role for the state. The reputation of the teaching profession shaped in the public space is appalling. I am also immersed in this digital world. Social media during the pre-holiday period, the holiday period especially, is such a total vilification of teachers. How much time off they have, how many holidays they have. It is completely irritating. Ladies and gentlemen, the lack of professional solidarity also hurts. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that building up a teacher's authority is a very personal matter. I have listed here probably 20 or so qualities that a teacher should have. First and foremost, however, they should treat pupils seriously and subjectively, set clear boundaries, take an interest in the pupil, support them and be understanding. Please, ladies and gentlemen, I will mention no more here about personal culture, about getting involved.

Of course, they should recognise weaknesses and strengths, but above all they should be an expert in their field. True, today school is no longer the only source of knowledge. It ceased to be one a long time ago. Today, that source of knowledge is the internet, artificial intelligence, in many cases. We therefore have to accept that a teacher is not the Alpha and the Omega, that they have the right to make a mistake, to stumble, and that we should never get into that situation. Today, living in a culture of error, we should grant everyone the right to make a mistake as an instructive experience from which we should learn. We students and parents. Building cooperation and relationships is also very important.

Openness to new ideas. Cooperation with parents is probably one of the more difficult areas, one of the more difficult aspects of our work, apart from grading (because teachers don't like that either). A lot of people don't like to be assessed or evaluated. Ladies and gentlemen, today we have to be open to parents' suggestions, but above all we have to treat these parents as partners. Above all, we need to build a school community based on mutual communication, supporting each other. Of course, we have school specialists, or rather female specialists for the most part, who help us very, very much in this aspect.

Our role, ladies and gentlemen, as educators, no matter what stage of education we are at, is to wisely accompany these young people as they grow, ladies and gentlemen, into adulthood, because, after all, during this period, when they are teenagers, they are building their own identity in separation from their parents. Thank you very much.

Prof. Krzysztof Bochenek - University of Rzeszów, Head of the "Ethos of the Teacher" project

When I thought about the directors' debate a month ago, I did not expect it to be so fruitful. On the other hand, at the end I hope we will hear from an even younger director, an aspiring director and my PhD student.

Dr Magdalena Bobro

Good afternoon, and welcome to you. I would like to thank you, like my predecessors of course, for the opportunity to say a few words about the authority, ethos and work of the teacher. The concern for the education of the younger generation has been with us since the dawn of time. A term that is inextricably linked to the process of education is authority. Of course, I believe that this is also a component of the larger word ethos, which is the watchword, here the key word, of the project in which we are involved.

If we look through a cultural-historical lens, we see that the previous speakers have also mentioned this, the teaching state, the priestly state, lawyers and other such important figures. When you heard that someone was a teacher or a lawyer, you already knew what kind of person you were dealing with. Today it is different.

If we look at this problem from a general perspective, we can certainly see such a coherent message in the literature, that an ethos is a certain set of values that binds a group of people together, is such a glue. Nowadays, unfortunately, such myths, which we encounter simply in everyday life, are the apotheosis of work, the cult of sport, the cult of things, which threatens to depersonalise man, the eroticisation of culture, the magic of advertising, the

pursuit of luxury, which is characterised by excessive consumerism. In the general aspect, every human being, and especially teachers, should strive to develop themselves, to present the highest possible level of this personal culture, to broaden their horizons of thought, while in the intellectual sphere they should take care, develop virtues such as logicity, accuracy of thinking, criticism, the formation of their own conscience, deepening their knowledge of morality, and, of course, above all, not only talking about it, but showing with their own lives that these values are lived .

Which is what anti-pedagogy, or anti-methodology, is all about. In other words, to support the pupil, or even no longer the pupil, but even one's own children instead of bringing them up. That is, ladies and gentlemen, a very dangerous trend of excluding upbringing in the family in general. And this is, unfortunately, what we are encountering, because parents are coming to schools and saying that they cannot cope with their children. This is the aftermath of this stress-free upbringing, this simple recognition that the child knows best and should be allowed to do everything, because then they are happy. You shouldn't put any demands on them, you shouldn't set any standards for them, you shouldn't ask them to do anything at all, because it simply stresses them out.

And we don't want that.

We should make demands, respect the uniqueness and originality of our pupils, be innovative, and adapt our methods of working with different pupils, because we have also heard from the previous speakers today that we have different pupils and we simply cannot treat them all the same, because one has greater possibilities, greater opportunities, greater talent, while another does not, and we need to learn certain things from them, to help them simply flourish. That is, we can't just give them a free hand, but we also have to make demands of them. And we also can't demand nothing from them, not give them a certain amount of room for improvement, just require dry information from them. The student is supposed to be involved, and so should the teacher. Thank you very much.

Prof. Krzysztof Bochenek - University of Rzeszów, Head of the "Ethos of the Teacher" project

Thank you very much Magdalena. You even inspired the directors, so I am proud of my PhD student. I am proud of everyone who persevered to the end. Everything is on the project website, there will be both a broadcast and photos. I invite you to our next meeting and thank you.