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Axiological Confusion as Challenge for Modern Man*

Key words: axiological confusion, truth, human dignity, manipulation, criticism.

Abstract: The article presents the category of axiological confusion understood as an important trait of reality that can be experimentally experienced by a modern man. The man is losing the ability not only to appropriately grasp one's own human nature and the essence of the moral good, but also the ability of cognitive opening oneself to the intelligibility of being. A modern *homo sapiens* neutralises the need to seek the truth. After all, the truth ceases to be both a transcendental property of being and a superior value that is the very foundation of a rational discourse on the philosophical imponderabilia.

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Axiology is strictly related to morality and simultaneously, a modern man should not only be educated, but also – as Leszczyński wrote – “moral by choice.” Nev-

* Lecture given on 15 October 2016 during the Inauguration of the Academic Year in the King Stanisław Leszczyński College of Humanities in Leszno. The lecture started with the following words: Dear Rector, Dear Chancellor, Dear Professors, Dear Students and All the Invited Guests. Dear Ladies and Gentlemen. I wish to thank the Rector for the honour of allowing me to give lecture at the inauguration of this academic year. The honour is even greater as we are in the King Stanisław Leszczyński College of Humanities, which seems to mean that the space that surrounds us (speaking slightly metaphorically) is filled – or at least should be filled – with the spirit of humanities, i.e. multi-directional reflection on man, which cannot take place without philosophical rudiments. However, this also entails that we are accompanied (at least symbolically) by the spirit of Stanisław Leszczyński – king, patron of the arts – but also a man who – arguing with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, claimed that an educated man “is moral by choice; [that] his virtue is solidified”. Both of these motives can be found, to a certain degree, in the subject matter of our lecture, “Axiological Confusion as Challenge for Modern Man.”

ertheless, how to be “moral by choice” if we live in an axiological confusion, i.e. a state of fundamental misunderstanding pertaining to the substance of the good and evil, the true and the false, the beautiful and the ugly and also the reasonable and the irrational; if we live in a space of misunderstanding pertaining to the human nature, man’s destiny and even the nature of thinking as such? In this place, it is necessary to quote Elżbieta Okońska and Krzysztof Stachewicz, who claim that “according to diagnoses of numerous contemporary thinkers, there has been a <<chilling>> of values and even a process of their equivalence and substitution. Values shine through one another – every value squints from behind another one, we are living (...) at the time of common <<squinting of the values>>; the evil squints from behind the good, beauty from behind the ugliness, womanhood from behind manhood, etc.”¹.

In order to see this axiological confusion, it is necessary to perform a certain philosophical insight. Obviously, danger appears here that the speaker will be locked in a space of abstraction and cut off completely from the reality of life. In any case, most of us are the followers of the motto: *do not philosophise, stop philosophising, be reasonable, stand firm on the ground*². Nevertheless, this is a misunderstanding. Because reliable philosophising is *standing firmly on the ground*. Thus: more philosophy, more thinking! This slogan-like appeal is even more justified as we suffer from a deficit of reasoning these days. I assume that now, some listeners would like to protest and would ask – in their assumption – a rhetorical question: don’t we think, don’t we reason? We have access to information in a scale that human history has not been familiar with. Entering the virtual space, we can penetrate into the mass of information, images, statements, opinions, facts, music compositions, films, etc.

Such a possibility seems to be an important stigma of the modern man who, having clicked the mouse a few times, may find out that $E = mc^2$, that the cosmos is constantly expanding, that cellular respiration takes place in mitochondria and also that it is possible to clone animals and freeze human embryos produced in laboratory conditions. With respect to such knowledge, geniuses of rational thinking, such as Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Immanuel Kant or Pascal seem to be

¹ E. Okońska, K. Stachewicz, *O wartościach i ich ambiwalencji – uwagi wprowadzające*, [in:] *Co się dzieje z wartościami? Próba diagnozy*, ed. E. Okońska, K. Stachewicz, Poznań 2009, p. 17.

² Andrzej L. Zachariasz says that a post-modern “reason is, even if not straightforwardly rejected, than at least negated in its hitherto rights. This has found its’ expression (...) in attempts of negating philosophy as theoretical cognition, science as knowledge finding justification in methods of inter-subjective condition and, in consequence, also rejecting the idea of order (cosmos), negation of all standards of social life, moral codes, ethical codes, etc.” A. L. Zachariasz, *Moralność i rozum w ponowoczesności*, [in:] *Moralność i etyka w ponowoczesności*, ed. Z. Sareło, Warszawa 1996, p. 27.

uneducated or even incompetent. Therefore, is our earlier suggestion about the deficit of modern reasoning erroneous?

Unfortunately, the crisis of reasoning seems to be quite a common phenomenon; however, being a component of axiological confusion, it often remains unnoticed. A modern man – often irrespective of his education – simply no longer knows what thinking as a typically human activity is. It seems to him that to reason simply means to monitor the screen and to become passively immersed in the flow of visual or audio remarks and devour another set of data³.

In protest against this epistemic myth, it is however necessary to declare: so what that a modern man usually knows that there are pulsars, quasars, black holes, etc. but it was Immanuel Kant (who no idea about them), but who wrote with passion: “Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me” and it was Pascal who claimed that “Man is a reed, the weakest of nature, but he is a thinking reed.” These sample sentences express the genius of the human reason that admires the world and, being fascinated by it, constantly asks: why does it exist and what is the most important in it (what is its’ substance)? These statements are an instruction for us; they show us that reasoning is the negation of sheer receptiveness and means active and critical (!) movement of the mind, engaging the whole person, towards the truth⁴.

However, a modern man commonly doubts the existence of truth. He does not trust himself nor the world. He is observing, like an indifferent and jaded viewer watching sports rivalry; he says to himself: this does not make sense. The race or the rivalry between players does not make sense. Nothing makes sense: life, love, work, family; the existence of the cosmos does not make sense too. Today’s

³ This common conviction forms a part of epistemological misunderstanding in line with which cognition “emerges and is shaped as a result of reciprocal impact of two realities onto each other: the objective external world (nature) and the social world (society and culture) and the subjective awareness of individuals. However, as a process, cognition (...) allegedly should take place in line with the principle of causality. Cognition interpreted in this manner – as that what is subjective – is understood as the result, whereas the objective reality of nature and society is the cause or the primary being” A. Siemianowski, W. Kmiecikowski, *Zarys teorii poznania. Ujęcie fenomenologiczne*, Gniezno 2006, p. 8.

⁴ Being aware of the classic separateness of the distinction between the reason, the intellect and the mind – being guided by the pragmatics of the inaugural lecture – we are content with their certain unification. Cf. J. Herbut, *Intelekt/Rozum* [in:] *Leksykon filozofii klasycznej*, ed. J. Herbut, Lublin 1997, p. 296 et seq. Mieczysław Krąpiec says that getting to know “is, to a certain degree <<becoming>> (in a special objective mode) the item (content) that is familiarised (...)” (M. A. Krąpiec, *Ja – człowiek. Zarys antropologii filozoficznej*, Lublin 1986, p. 173), and that “«speculabile» is an object of strictly theoretical cognition of man who, through the act of cognisance, is trying to get informed about the actual state of affairs (...) [and the truth is – W. K.] the purpose of such cognition and, simultaneously, its’ final criterion of value”. Ibidem. p. 186.

man (Bauman would say man of the liquid reality), immersed in the axiological confusion, resembles a bit Pontius Pilate, who – when talking to Christ – in a well-known scene from the Gospel of St. John or at least from *The Passion* by Mel Gibson – asked rhetorically: *What is the truth?*; it is a rhetorical question, because he does not believe in its' existence⁵.

Yet the modern *homo sapiens*, even the educated and intelligent one, seems to go beyond Pontius Pilate's sadness, doubting the presence of the Truth. The modern *bored thinker* (or, more precisely, a *quasi-thinker*) more and more often adopts the stance that is full of intellectual arrogance and claims: there is no truth, truth does not exist. Even though he may still acquire encyclopaedic knowledge, a stream of information and images, yet internally, he is empty and dead like memory of a camera, whose lens may be directed towards beautiful landscapes, yet the memory, as such, does not perceive such beauty. Such man has internally ceased to ask questions and ceased to search for various *why?* (why did my friend betray me? why is the war waged? why do I participate or do not participate in a religious event? and why, bored with this lecture, am I still sitting in this room?). The why question becomes nonsensical if everything is false and illusory. In this perspective, the essence of the question, the <<dia ti>> (...): «on account of what?», «thanks to what?»⁶, undergoes a radical atrophy.

Can any panacea be advised with respect to such diagnosis? It seems that it is necessary to go back to the sources, to what is banally elementary and, simultaneously, solemn and difficult.

An important moment of the intellectual turn has to be the realisation that the truth simply exists. A today's sophist – often unwittingly referring to ancient Protagoras with his *homo mensura* – who says that *everybody has their own truth*, *there is no objective truth* contradicts himself; his very conclusion is the declaration of objective truth! Thus, he should be reminded that by claiming that there is only falsity and chaos (together with idiots who believe in the existence of truth), but yet.... He is declaring a certain truth. It is already in his brilliant "Theaetetus" that Plato puts forward a supposition that it is impossible, without succumbing to sheer absurdity, to question truth as such (even if it is difficult to find)⁷.

⁵ Cf. A. Adamski, *Koncepcja prawdy jako wybór moralny człowieka*, [in:] *Prawda w życiu moralnym i duchowym*, ed. D. Probuca, Kraków 2009, p. 39 et seq.; Z. Bauman, *Płynne czasy. Życie w epoce niepewności*, Warszawa 2007, 7 et seq.

⁶ M. A. Krąpiec *Koncepcje nauki i filozofia*, [in:] *Wprowadzenie do filozofii*, M. A. Krąpiec [et al.] Lublin 1999, p. 31.

⁷ Cf. *Filozofia. Materiały do ćwiczeń dla studentów teologii*, ed. J. Grzeszczak, Poznań 2010, p. 23 et seq.; P. Kunzmann [et al.], *Atlas filozofii*, Warsaw 1999, p. 35; G. Reale, *Historia filozofii starożytnej*, vol. 1, Lublin 1994, p. 247 et seq.

Another therapeutic motive should be the reminder of man's exceptional dignity. Man is a reasoning animal, i.e. the only being in the universe that is capable of discovering the truth about the complexity of the world and other people. The genius of man's mind has allowed him to construct a complex tool known as the computer and the Large Hadron Collider, to discover graphene, but also to offer answers to questions about the sense of life, nature of friendship or love. Only man is vested with such genius and no other animal determined by its' instincts possesses it, nor even a most sophisticated robot, whose possibilities of operation are designated by the plan of the human constructor. Since man (as a personal being) is a fragment of nature, yet, simultaneously with his reason, will and openness to the Good and Beauty, he goes beyond the entire Universe and is not only capable of typically technical activities, but also reflexive, moral, aesthetic and religious ones; he is even capable of – as Ingarden wrote – giving up life to save his honour⁸.

Yet realising the dignity relying on the fact that man is always a unique person, is not yet sufficient to break away from the axiological confusion. A modern man has to terminate the intellectual laziness. Treatment should encompass awakening of the cognitive passion: to want to know, to want to understand, to want to penetrate into the secrets of being, to want to critically read; to want – and thus reject the eternal trio of “learn, pass, forget”; to want to reject the stance of an intellectual absorber of information transformed into colourful images. Today's man needs to break away from the intellectual apathy and return (or maybe even learn) to reason critically. It is necessary to break away from what is determined in the following manner by Martin Heidegger: “You think as you think, you speak as you speak, you read as you read.”⁹ If man is always a unique person, he is liable for making full use of his mind, and this entails personal reflection and criticism with respect to the dictatorship of the common opinion; criticism, which is rationally justified (grounded) objection, e.g. also in reference to the lecture presented here.

On the concrete level, it means that our awareness should be vigilant when we hear, for example, that animals should be educated (and not trained) and especially that a pupil no longer needs to be educated (*vide*: anti-pedagogy) or that a hamster passes away or dies and that animals have rights analogous to people's rights (*vide*: it is immoral to painlessly put homeless dogs to sleep, but it is moral to put mentally ill people to sleep). *Nota bene*: it was already in 1933 that the act on the protection of animal rights was introduced and a leader of a certain European state said that there would be no cruelty towards animals. There may have been no

⁸ Cf. R. Ingarden, *Książeczka o człowieku*, Kraków 1987, p. 15 *et seq.*; 22 *et seq.*

⁹ Cf. K. Stachewicz, *Człowiek w odniesieniach. Wokół koncepcji Martina Heideggera*, [in:] “Filozofia chrześcijańska”, vol. 1, ed. M. Jędraszewski, Poznań 2004, p. 93.

cruelty towards animals, but there was immense cruelty towards people. This was a promise given by Adolf Hitler in Nazi Germany¹⁰.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, Thinking, being critical and thus slowly emerging from the *axiological confusion*, we may notice that we are prone to intellectual mystification that forces us to say “sponsorship” instead of “sophisticated prostitution” or “professional” instead of “murderer” (vide: “Leon the Professional” starring Jean Reno); this mystification that imperceptibly transforms *tolerance* into *approval* (being an atheist – or a theist – I can only tolerate a person who believes (an atheist), but not approve his/ her beliefs, because it would entail resignation from my own world-view and adoption of somebody else’s ideas as my own)¹¹.

¹⁰ A special illustration for our discussion is provided by the statement of Urszula Zarosa that “one of the simplest and most satisfactory solutions for the problem of occurrence of awareness in animals is to accept that they probably experience similar feelings and mental states as people. They consciously experience pain, they can use tools, they learn from prior experiences, they expect future events (...). There are multiple studies describing examples of rationality, intentionality and communication activities or behaviour indicating awareness present in the animal world.” U. Zarosa, *Status moralny zwierząt*, Warsaw 2016, p. 125 et seq. This statement corresponds with the author’s declaration – which appears in the context of violence used by certain organisations that protect animals – that “from the perspective of ethics, even activism with elements of violence may be acceptable (...)”. Ibidem. p. 251. Cf. ibidem, p. 243 et seq.

Cf. https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prawa_zwierzc4%85t, downloaded: 22. 11. 2016; <http://niechcianeizapomniane.org/swiatowa-deklaracja-praw-zwierzat/>, downloaded: 22. 11. 2016. “The general formula of anti-pedagogy,” writes Stefan Wołoszyn “is the principle to support and not to educate” (S. Wołoszyn, *Nauki o wychowaniu w Polsce w XX wieku. Próba syntetycznego zarysu na tle powszechnym*, Kielce 1998, p. 132) and Hubertus von Schoenebeck claims straightforwardly that the principle: “a little man is not a creature that should be educated (he is not *homo educandus*)” should be applied. H. von Schoenebeck, *Antypedagogika w dialogu. Wprowadzenie w myślenie antypedagogiczne*, Kraków 1994, p. 24. The same author proudly writes “I have two children aged 8 and 10 and **they have never been educated.**” Idem, *Rozstanie z pedagogiką*, [in:] *Edukacja alternatywna. Dylematy teorii i praktyki*, ed. B. Śliwerski, Kraków 1992, p. 249.

Cf. also: <http://www.rp.pl/Sluzba-zdrowia/307249819-W-Holandii-rosnie-liczba-eutanazji-psychicznie-chorych.html>, downloaded: 22. 11. 2016.

¹¹ Approval is a “judgement containing a positive evaluation of something from the moral, aesthetic or utilitarian perspective.” A. Podsiad, *Aprobata*, [in:] *Słownik terminów i pojęć filozoficznych*, Warsaw 2000, p. 66 et seq.

Cf. <http://m.deon.pl/inteligentne-zycie/obiektyw/art,416,uniwersytutki.html>, downloaded: 22.11.2016;

Cf. M. Bańko, <http://sjp.pwn.pl/poradnia/szukaj/tolerancja.html>, downloaded: 24.11. 2016.

Cf. M. Łobocki, *Teoria wychowania w zarysie*, Kraków 2006, p. 110 et seq. Piotr Jaroszyński says that tolerance “belongs to the canon of ethical categories promoted by socialist-liberal ideology (...)” P. Jaroszyński, *Tolerancja*, <http://www.ptta.pl/pef/pdf/t/tolerancja.pdf>, downloaded: 22. 11.2016.

In this place, it is worth referring to a slightly more general reflection of Ryszard Wiśniewski, who claims that in the modern times “socio-technique and psycho-technique is taught at marketing courses or public relations courses. Manipulation skills are used to corner the partners of co-existence and communication (...). Marketing manipulation, persuasion and public, intrusive moralising that simplify the world of values are especially prone to axiological and logical babble (...)” R. Wiśniewski, *Bełkot aksjologiczny w komunikacji międzyludzkiej*, [in:] *Co się dzieje z wartościami*, op. cit., p. 164.

In the light of the remarks above, we can experience joy if we are hit by the fact of being manipulated, because it entails certain sovereignty with respect to the axiological chaos, e.g. manipulation through a series of television programmes that practice the metaphysics of the length of one's nails, the number of white and green dots on such nails or potentially the dramatic choice of a tie colour or the philosophy of life of celebrities who experience dramas in relation to the fact that paparazzi caught them without make-up or with a new partner. When working on this lecture I learnt – to the joy and sadness of millions of people – that Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie – can you believe it? – are getting divorced... My irony is obviously aimed at exposing the commonness of axiological sophistry, multi-directional and compromising the dignity of a rational man, which we often fall prey to. Falling prey, we do not even notice that commercials transform us into consumer puppets who feel happy after buying a given cosmetic or a windscreen wiper; puppets, who in the male model shape their minds and bodies through the matrix of metrosexuality and in the female model through the matrix of dimensions of a specific body part. Modern puppets in the awareness-juggling theatre which, in its very premise, depersonalises (freezes) the genius of the human mind, who accept (like passive plasticine) the belief that life has to be easy, nice, pleasant, problem-free, colourful and peaceful. An atrocious belief, untrue and destroying the very nature of man, every man: the one who subjects to it, as well as his environment¹².

This is because the mentally enslaved actors – who believe that life has to be nice and easy – often fail to see other people around them. They only notice the functions that are useful for them. Thus, they mentally reduce a doctor to medical competence, a patient to disease, a cleaner to the cleaning function, a student to a reference number and a professor to a machine entering grade in a university system. A parent ceases to be a parent and becomes a service provider, a child becomes a wish-maker (sometimes a very arrogant one, *nota bene* efficiently shaped by the mass media, often prone to moral and intellectual permissivism¹³).

¹² “Commercials and election campaigns (...) destruct the need of axiological order, sense, truth, moral good and aesthetic order. A modern man is more and more often satisfied with the semblance of sense, semblance of truth, semblance of morality.” R. Wiśniewski, *Belkot aksjologiczny w komunikacji międzyludzkiej*, op. cit., 164 *et seq.* The above-mentioned consumer puppets seem to be increasingly embodying the perfect consumer discussed by Zygmunt Bauman. Cf. *ibidem*, *Płynne życie*, Kraków 2007, p. 144. Andrzej Gorlewski aptly notices that “the level of education of youth (...) fills one with fear and anxiety. In the world of young people, the broadly understood anti-values play a significant role. They promote activities of dubious quality (...) that are undertaken without looking at the effects that such activities carry for another man or the society.” A. Gorlewski, *Wartości a współczesne kierunki wychowania młodzieży*, [in:] *Co się dzieje z wartościami?* op. cit., p. 321.

¹³ Piotr Żuk claims that “not only serious newspapers, fighting to survive, have become, to a large degree, similar to tabloids, but also television news programmes have transformed into gossip

The contemporary actor of the axiological confusion seems to solidify and pulls others into the space of falsity. Treating others as the above-mentioned functions changes them into objects and not only depersonalises, but in every non-ethical gesture solidifies in them the false conviction that life – let us repeat it – has to be easy, nice, pleasant, problem-free, colourful and peaceful. Yet this is a modern global lie. Because life simply has to be honest. Brilliant Immanuel Kant talked about “moral law within me” and about the fact that another man cannot be treated as an object. Inka (whose name has stately accompanied the Leszno Roundabout) emphasised it as “behaving properly”, whereas Jacek in the “Rodzina zastępcza” TV series (played by actor Piotr Fronczewski) said: “Only dead fish flow with the current.” This dead fish resembles our modern mentally enslaved actor who does not see and does not want to see the moral good enshrouding tired parents, volunteers in Syria or anybody who honestly performs their work; the actor who flows with the current of negative values of Roman Ingarden, namely injustice, lies, faithlessness, cowardice, iniquity, pride, egoism, vindictiveness or mercenariness completely devoid of respect for other people¹⁴.

Only a reasonable man – in contrast to the more and more common acceptance for the current of evil – will notice the Good which is pervaded by Truth. It is only by being a critically thinking student, professor, cashier that I can notice

programmes (...). In this manner, serious debates pertaining to socio-economic issues are shoved aside by the flood of *infotainment*, which, apart from news about crimes, murders and scandals from the life of politicians, also features sentimental stories about weddings, divorces and betrayals in celebrity circles.” P. Żuk, *Homo ludens w czasach kapitalizmu. Infantylicyzacja życia społecznego i prywatyzacja sfery publicznej*, [in:] “Dialogi o kulturze i edukacji”, op. cit., p. 203 *et seq.* Cf. A. Zwiefka – Chwałek, *Casus Dody, czyli nie ma info bez rozrywki. Analiza „infotainment” we współczesnych polskich programach publicystycznych*, [in:] *Homo creator czy homo ludens? Twórcy – internauci – podróżnicy*, ed. W. Muszyński, M. Sokołowski, Toruń 2008, p. 80 *et seq.*; D. Suska, *Mody kulturowe, mody językowe w czasopiśmie młodzieżowych. Uwagi o najnowszej przestrzeni medialnej (dla) młodego odbiorcy*, [in:] “Cudne manowce?”. *Kultura czasu wolnego we współczesnym społeczeństwie*, ed. W. Muszyński, Toruń 2008, p. 380 *et seq.*; A. Jeran, *Związki celebrytów w zwierciadle plotek – Doda i Majdan w polskich serwisach plotkarskich*, [in:] *(Roz)czarowanie? Miłość i związki uczuciowe we współczesnym społeczeństwie*, ed. W. Muszyński, Toruń 2009, p. 329 *et seq.* A conclusion (referring to A. Hill) that “a reality show and programmes pertaining to life style <<make a show out of ethical crisis>> is significant in this respect. There is no clear-cut division between good and bad behaviour here, this is more about constant anxiety concerning ethical problems and cultural standards of conduct through which programmes <<encourage us to enter the sphere of the ethical unknown>>. M. Briggs, *Telewizja i jej odbiorcy w życiu codziennym*, Kraków 2012, p. 56. An example of reflections contained in the lecture may also be a conclusion that “advocates of the hypothesis of the <<debased world>> (...) claim that the impact of television on the viewers is primarily manifested in creating a sense of fear, threat, mistrust and significant helplessness.” D. Lemish, *Dzieci i telewizja. Perspektywa globalna*, Kraków 2008, p. 120.

¹⁴ Cf. R. Ingarden, *Wykłady z etyki*, Warszawa 1989, p. 14, 252 *et seq.*; *Czego nie wiemy o wartościach*, [in:] *Studia z estetyki*, vol. 3, Warsaw 1970, p. 233.

that statements like: “everybody lies and cheats, there is nothing like justice, everybody just thinks about themselves” are simply not true, and they are only used to cover up somebody’s iniquity. If Sergeant Michel Ollis in 2013 sacrificed his life in Afghanistan for a Polish soldier (he shielded him from an explosion with his own body¹⁵), it means that the moral good is a solid, real fact and challenging it is only an expression of mental immaturity. The expression of such immaturity is also the uncritical acceptance of the worship of ugliness. If a child is growing accustomed to – through, by assumption anti-aesthetic, tacky characters from animated films or even vampire-like Monster High dolls – ugliness that fakes beauty, then how is it possible to build sensitivity to the beauty of the world? Or maybe the purpose is to make the man believe not only in the senselessness of good and evil, but also the ugliness of the world and to set him in opposition to the beauty enchanted in the works of art, in the rustle of colourful autumn leaves or in the lustre of loved eyes? A senseless, bad and ugly world is a world that no longer needs the First Cause or the Absolute Perfection that loves such world¹⁶.

Summing up. As we remember, Leszczyński expressed a hope that an educated man is “moral by choice.” I trust that the reflection in which we are participating will make the fulfilment of this expectation slightly more plausible and it will be an obvious thing to combine the didactic imperative with the moral imperative. However, I hope that every participant of today’s inauguration knows very well that a man’s calling is to accomplish wisdom, that is – as suggested by Antoni Podsiad – simply the ability to distinguish between the truth and falsehood, the good and evil, the beauty and ugliness and being guided, in life, by the positive life signposts – also in the course of the current academic year – this is my wish for you and for myself.

¹⁵ Cf. <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/swiat/artykuly/438214,afganistan-atak-na-baze-w-ghazni-amerykanin-ocalil-polskiego-zolnierza.html>, downloaded: 22.11.2016; http://usa.se.pl/nowy-jork/newsy/oddal-zycie-za-polaka-rodzice-nowojorskiego-bohatera-ktory-wlasnym-cialem-zaslonil-naszego-zolnierza_365993.html, downloaded: 22.11.2016.

¹⁶ In this place, the speech culminated in the following manner: Summing up. As we remember, Leszczyński expressed a hope that an educated man is “moral by choice.” I trust that the reflection in which we are participating will make the fulfilment of this expectation slightly more plausible and it will be an obvious thing to combine the didactic imperative with the moral imperative. However, I hope that every participant of today’s inauguration knows very well that a man’s calling is to accomplish wisdom, that is – as suggested by Antoni Podsiad – simply the ability to distinguish between the truth and falsehood, the good and evil, the beauty and ugliness and being guided, in life, by the positive life signposts – also in the course of the current academic year – and this is my wish for you and for myself. (Cf. A. Podsiad, *Mądrość*, [in:] *Słownik terminów i pojęć filozoficznych*, Warsaw 2000, p. 493 *et seq.*; M. Gogacz, *Mądrość buduje państwo. Człowiek i polityka. Rozważania filozoficzne i religijne*, Niepokalanów 1993, p. 5).

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