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## **RESPONSIBILITY OF A MAN OF SCIENCE. REFLECTIONS IN LIGHT OF THE TEACHINGS OF JOHN PAUL II**

ODPOWIEDZIALNOŚĆ CZŁOWIEKA NAUKI.  
REFLEKSJE W ŚWIETLE NAUCZANIA JANA PAWŁA II

### **Abstrakt**

Odpowiedzialność – poczucie odpowiedzialności – człowiek odpowiedzialny, to określenia podstawowe w refleksji humanistycznej, akcentujące wartość człowieka, jego wolność i podmiotowość, zdolność postępowania uświadomionego, celowego, wynikającego z przyjętych wartości. Problem odpowiedzialności jest przede wszystkim pewną rzeczywistością w osobie, wewnątrz osoby. Dzięki tej rzeczywistości wewnątrzosobowej można z kolei mówić o społecznym

### **Abstract**

“Responsibility”, the “sense of responsibility” and a “responsible person” are some of the basic notions in the humane reflection, which highlight the value of a human being and their freedom, subjectivity and ability to act consciously, purposefully and in line with accepted values. Essentially, the question of responsibility should be perceived as a kind of an “inner realm” within a person’s mind. This sense is important both for the individual and for their environ-

znaczeniu odpowiedzialności i ustalać w życiu społecznym pewne jej zasady. Dlatego konieczne wydaje się poszukiwanie odpowiedzi, na czym polega i czego dotyczy odpowiedzialność człowieka nauki. Pracownik nauki ma szczególną odpowiedzialność i zobowiązanie, aby dzielić się nie tylko zasobem własnej wiedzy naukowej, ale także bogactwem swego człowieczeństwa. Nauka ma wtedy sens i słuszność, kiedy uznaje się ją za zdolną do odkrywania prawdy i kiedy w prawdzie uznaje się dobro człowieka. Problem uczciwości nauki ma więc zasadnicze znaczenie nie tylko dla wewnętrznej spójności i integralności nauki, ale również dla utrzymania jej wiarygodności i zaufania społecznego.

#### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

człowiek, odpowiedzialność, nauka, nauczanie Jana Pawła II.

ment and subject to inevitable two-way awareness-modeling interactions. This is why we should seek answers to questions about the subject and implications of responsibility of a man of science. The scholar has a specific responsibility and obligation to share not only their resources of scientific knowledge but also the wealth of their humanity. Science can make sense and be meaningful only when it is recognized as capable of discovering the truth and when the good of humanity is put in its center. Hence, honesty on the part of the scientific community is not only crucial to the inherent cohesion and integrity of science but also necessary for keeping it credible and trustworthy.

#### KEYWORDS

human, accountability, science, teachings of Pope John Paul II.

## 1. Introduction

There is no area of social life, no aspect of human coexistence and no sphere of human activity which would not be affected by the obscure concept of responsibility. Responsibility - feeling responsible - a responsible human - these are fundamental expressions within the humanist reflection, emphasizing the value of a human being, his freedom and selfhood, his ability to act in a conscious and intentional manner, transpiring from the adopted values. The value and the need of responsibility has a certain dimension beyond history, as it is present in any conditions of social life. Responsibility is not just the measure of an individual's accomplishment or culpability for his specific decisions and actions. It is also an expression of the moral development, mental and intellectual autonomy, sense of individuality and identity of the self (Michalik, 1998, 20-21). "Anyone", John Paul II claims, "who is trying to understand the secrets of creation and the mysteries of man, must be prepared to open his mind and heart to acceptance of the deep truth that shows in them and «encourages reason to give its permission» ... Dear scholars, you are commanded for a great responsibility. You are expected to serve the good of individuals and the society as a whole, always taking a respectful stance on the dignity of every human being and to the Creation. Every scientific method must be backed by ethics and should be reasonably open to a culture that respects human needs"

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(Jan Paweł II, 2000, 23). Hence, not science as such but a man involved in various ways in conducting or promoting scholarly research is responsible for its scientific quality as well as the consequences of implementing their outcomes in practice. “We consider the standards of strict honesty and careful abiding of the value system typical of science to be an inseparable attribute of a scholar’s work, with its principal inspiration being to increase the verified knowledge resources and sharing that knowledge with others. ... This is because the scholarly system is particularly sensitive even to the slightest signs of dishonesty; as we engage in scholarly research or use the outcomes of such research, we constantly rely on the testimony of others, and therefore we should have confidence in such testimony. Therefore, the issue of scholarly honesty is of primary importance, not only for the consistency and integrity of science but also for keeping it reliable and trustworthy for the people” (Grabski 2009, 37). Hence, it seems necessary to search for an answer to the question about the essence of a scholar’s responsibility and the subject-matter of such responsibility. In that context, my reflections are divided into three parts. In the first part, my intention is to briefly present the broader context of what science (study) is and what its designates are. What I am trying to demonstrate is that the ultimate goal of study is the truth, enabling men to grow. In the second part, I intend to emphasize the need to combine the various intellectual traditions, mainly the integration of science with faith and faith with science. Finally, in part three, I would like to elaborate on the issue of responsibility in scholarly activity. Such a search can support the development of a scholarly culture capable of perceiving “man as a whole”, “all the people”, serving the good and solidarity between people. “The ancillary character of science”, as John Paul II states, “is not only true with regard to man or society, but also, or perhaps first of all, with regard to truth itself. A scholar is not the author but rather the discoverer of the truth. The more faithful his attitude to the truth, the more it will be revealed to him. In order to respect the truth, a researcher or thinker needs to make every effort to explore it and present it to others in the most specific way possible” (Jan Paweł II, 2001a, 12).

## 2. Science and its designates

In the most general terms, we use the word “science” or “study” to identify a certain kind of a mental or mental and physical activity. The intention is cognition, which is incidentally not only perceived in terms of the various epistemological aspects but also in various material contexts. Cognition is considered an essential, innate (and hence impossible to precisely define) mental activity. Within this definition, we distinguish multifaceted cognition and specialized cognition, of which study is one of the variations. Moreover, cognition can be incidental (spontaneous) or planned (systematic), and only the latter is considered scientific (scholarly). In the theory of science, the fundamental type of designates for the word *science* is the objective result of creative cognition. Because of the close link between the action and the product, it is reasonable to use the

word “study” to identify both, i.e. scheduled gradual accomplishment of new cognition and cognition that has already been creatively achieved. In the history of science and in historical studies, the word “science” is generally used to identify the area of culture in which science plays a fundamental role (Kamiński, 1992, 12-19)<sup>1</sup>. “Every science can be characterized by presenting its subject-matter, aspect, purpose, and method. The subject-matter is the area covered and researched. The aspect is the perspective from which science is investigating its subject-matter (and the corresponding aspect of the subject-matter). The method, in its broader sense, is not just the proposition of certain questions and the way to resolve them (to search for answers), but also the very selection of the subject-matter, aspect and purpose of research. Science without a specified subject-matter, aspect, purpose and method has not yet been established as a separate field of study, or has not yet accomplished the necessary level of self-awareness with regard to its character” (Stępień, 1989, 14).

In the theory of science, the fundamental type of designates for the “science” is the objective result of creative cognition. The main intention of scientific methodology is the structured process of accomplishing new cognition. In the history of science (and in historical studies), emphasis is on the area of culture in which science plays a fundamental role. In the determination of science, attention can be drawn to its origin, structure, functioning and area of application (instrumentality). More extensive characteristics of science should not practically be restricted to a single approach only; otherwise, they will deplete the representation of science and fail to represent its various aspects within their mutual relations and appropriate proportions. The following are among the common definitions of science, taking into account one approach only or mainly: (1) linguistic approach; (2) cognitive approaches; (3) subjective definitions (comprising the most universal perspective); (4) historical and sociological approaches. Science should be characterized differently for its particular aspects, taking into account its diverse types as well. Only in this way is it possible to achieve a presentation of the nature of science as such, or of its specific types, which would be sufficiently complete. Hence, the science studies can be structured as follows: (1) studies of scientific cognition; (2) studies of science as a cultural phenomenon (Kamiński, Herbut, 1997, 380-382)<sup>2</sup>. As Piotr Jarczyński notes, the following three fundamental fields of culture are distinguished in the tradition that dates back to Aristotle: *THEORÍA*, *PRÁKSIS*, *POÍËSIS*. Later, *RELIGIO* was added as the fourth field, which the Greeks used to recognize within the *PRÁKSIS*

<sup>1</sup> “What is it that all science shares? Some would say that it is the fact that its claims are true; others said these claims were perceived as true; others still would say that the claims are inter-subjective and verifiable; commonly acknowledged; new; free of assessment; structured; satisfying intellectual needs; yet another group would only discover one common quality shared by scientific claims, namely the fact that they offer intellectual satisfaction” (Tatarkiewicz, 1978, 264).

<sup>2</sup> „Anthropological definitions: science (study) means such human thinking which is characterized by orientation on the problem, criticism, precision, argumentativeness, universality and impartiality, or: science (study) means such a mental and physical activity of a human being that enables the man to understand himself and the world, or: science is the overall body of ideas expressing theoretical learning of a specific area of reality by man - very expressly require supplementation, even though they are typical of the contemporary mentality (except the scientists)” (Kamiński, Herbut, 1997, 381).

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(religion used to be treated as part of morality). The role of reason is emphasized in each of the three areas. THĒORÍA comprises the entire realm of cognition which is called scientific cognition. It is the improvement of reason to learn the truth about the reality in the perspective of truth as such. In order to consider cognition to be scientific, it must have its subject-matter, a method selected according to the subject-matter (for search and justification), and a purpose. The outcome of such cognition must be a collection of structured and justified sentences. The development of science within the THĒORÍA framework can be perceived as a kind of improvement of the human cognition. It responds to a natural desire, typical of humans. If a human being as a personal entity has a reason, the fundamental (natural) activity of that reason is cognition, while in the longer term it is also the realization of our humanity. In this way, truth is a realization of our cognitive potentialities. For human intellect, living means cognition, and cognition is the reconciliation of the essence of cognition with the reality. Such a reconciliation can be spontaneous or random, it can originate from supernatural sources, but it can also be a reflected, methodical activity. The latter variant is science. The ultimate purpose of science developed within the framework of THĒORÍA is the truth, which in turn facilitates the development of the human being. Whereas reason is a significant part of our humanity (we are persons and not things), it is realized through learning about the truth, while science encompassed in the framework of THĒORÍA covers the truth as such. Science in that meaning is a guarantee of the truth to the highest (human) extent possible. Owing to science, man realizes himself in actions which are most certainly personal. Study within the framework of THĒORÍA enables the scholar to discover the limits of science, both from the perspective of the studied object and the studying subject. Study that has been detached from THĒORÍA and reduced to answering a question “to know how” leads to dangerous instrumentalization, both of the real subject, which is the man, and of the object, which is the truth (Jaroszyński, 2002, 326-334).

In the most general terms, science is the human cognition of the world of things and persons in their various activities/actions, methodically organized and rational. Even though cognition, which was scientific, i.e. somehow methodically organized, substantiated, intentional, intersubjectively reasonable, would develop spontaneously in different thinking circles, yet because of its very nature, it had to be expressed in the form of an expressly asked science-forming inquiry. This is because the spontaneity of cognition is not sufficient for the development of science in which we are dealing with a reflectively presented method, adapted to the subject-matter and purpose of the particular science. Generally, three major concepts of science, based on science-forming inquiries, occurred in the course of history: 1) Platonian/Aristotelian, objectivistic, ‘open’ to the entire reality; 2) Kant’s subjectivising concept; 3) A. Comtes sensualistic concept of science (Krąpiec, 1999, 18-29). “Man and his world”, John Paul II states, “or rather the entire universe shows itself to a researcher and scholar as a reality, which can be reasonably described and universally communicated. The contemporary language of science, as it overcomes all barriers, conveys words and images, communicates concepts and designs, theories and evidence of their accuracy to more and more people, allowing

them to grow in terms of their culture and their humanity, to benefit from the achievements of science and their practical applications. It is more reasonable today than it used to be in the past to claim that the universality of the scientific methodology, language and mentality is among the factors that have transformed the world of men. On one hand, the universality of knowledge is a consequence of human beings' overwhelming tendency to learn the truth and, on the other hand, their need to communicate, through which they can convey their knowledge base to each other and use that knowledge to the benefit of more and more of their neighbors" (Jan Paweł II, 1992, 15).

As we speak of the purpose of scientific cognition, we can either consider the motivations (incentives) that incite man to gather scientific knowledge, or the objective results which the research procedure is aiming or should be aiming at; or, finally, the ultimate goal of scientific cognition or the functions of science in the human life. As Jacques Maritain notes, science is good in itself. Like everything else that is created from the energy of the spirit in search of the truth, science is naturally sanctified. Science is like art - both are good in themselves, yet man can use them in a wrong way or for the benefit of the evil, whereas as far as wisdom is practiced as a virtue, man can only use it for good. There probably is no doubt as to the fact that the intention here is not to return to the Middle Ages, nor to reject the enormous and extraordinary developments of science throughout the most recent ages. On the contrary, an important issue for the age we are just entering will be the reconciliation of science and wisdom in a vital and spiritual harmony. Using only the force of science, a scholar is unable to accomplish ontological cognition of nature (Maritain, 2005, 43-49). The most frequent and the most vehement dispute is pending about whether science should ultimately serve theoretical or practical purposes. Summing up the notes about the goal of scientific cognition, first we need to distinguish between the subjective goal (the motivations behind the scholar's activity) and the objective one (the outcomes of the scholar's activity). The objective goal, in turn, should be distinguished from the fruits of science (potential utilization of the scientific results). With its fruits, science is intended to satisfy the needs and expectations of man and his practical life. At the same time, study should not be oriented exclusively towards the fruits. Similarly, social needs by themselves do not automatically constitute science; they are neither sufficient nor necessary prerequisites of the growth of science. Studies serve men through their fruits, not just by catering to material needs. Man himself grows and depends spiritually through science, which benefits his mental health and cultural life (Kamiński, 1992, 198-200). "The goal of scientific knowledge is not inherent in science, as it continues to serve man, i.e. man as a person and the whole humanity, man perceived as mankind, having his unique property: the presence of the spirit (knowledge, consciousness and will), and the ability to act in a conscious, free manner. Science cannot claim nor consider itself to be neutral towards man" (Jan Paweł II, 1992, 16)<sup>3</sup>. Man or his free (personal) action cannot be threatened by science.

<sup>3</sup> "Absolutizing just one concept of science has always led to dangerous degeneration, not only in the cognitive field. Human cognition is broader than the various proposed concepts of scientific cognition. They are extremely important for the human culture, yet they cannot be used without continuous re-

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### 3. The dialog between science and faith

From the very beginning of its existence, science emerges in diverse forms, not just because it can be represented differently, but also because it concerns specific separate areas and is realized in different ways. The issue of the relationship between the world of science and faith can be put forward in two aspects: the content aspect and the attitude aspect. It used to be typically identified in the aspect of content/essence; specifically, attempts were made at reconciling the deliverables of specific studies and the reflection on the mysteries of faith, demonstrating non-existence of any conflict between the two, while at the same time bearing in mind that the contents of the Revelation are not intended to replace scientific research. Today, on the other hand, we need reflection in the aspect of attitudes, i.e. in the perspective of the subject engaged in science, who can often be a man of deep faith. The reality of faith can remind man of the limits of his cognition, about the limitations of the specific studies' methods in regard of the questions about the meaning of human life, about love, or the essence of human existence. Scientific cognition, on the other hand, can influence religious cognition, for example by practicing critical thinking. Unfortunately, the distrust science shows toward faith is still present, and vice versa - religion also has certain concerns about reason. Misinterpreting the Revelation, or excessively defending faith can lead to rejection of any possibility for cooperation between faith and the capability of man's reason (Bała, 2000, 187-189). The human spirit and its personal nature incorporates a continuous drive towards cognition and learning the truth. Hence, when reason is left to its own devices, detached from any direction by the measure of real existence, has lost its sense of purpose, but on the other hand: "faith deprived of its support by reason has focused more on feelings and experience, which poses a threat of its ceasing to be a universal proposal. It is a fallacy to believe that faith can have a stronger effect on a weak mind; on the contrary, faith can then be exposed to a serious hazard, as it can then be taken down to the level of a myth or superstition. Accordingly, when reason is not facing mature faith, it lacks stimulation to focus on the specificity and the depth of existence" (Jan Paweł II, 1998, 48).

For modern science to develop, diverse intellectual traditions needed to be merged. Notwithstanding the outcome of the dispute about specific historical reconstructions, it is still a fact that modern science has developed in cultural settings formed by the Christian tradition. Christians are also particularly responsible for its growth and for the intellectual dialog, in which easy unsubstantiated conflicts would be overcome. Such a task seems to be particularly important in the contemporary atmosphere for thinking, in which various forms of anti-intellectualism find support from religious fundamentalism (Życiński, 2000, 8-10). "Science", as John Paul II emphasizes, "is reasonable and legitimate when it is considered to be capable of discovering the truth, and

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reflection on their character, objects and practical applications. When using scientific cognition, one has to be aware of the concept of science one is adapting, and to know that the various existing concepts of science can be used as mutually complementary. ... Any processes or structuring of human cognition cannot threaten man or destroy him as a human being" (Krapiec, 1999, 32).

when the good of man is recognized in the truth. ... In the past centuries, the fighters of modern science would challenge the Church in the name of reason, freedom and progress. Today, as we face the crisis of the meaning of science, various restrictions of its freedom and doubt about progress, the fronts of this fight have been reversed. Today, it is the Church that stands up for:

- Reason and science, recognizing it as capable of learning the truth, where that capability gives it verisimilitude as human perfection;
- Freedom of science, so that science retains its respectability as a personal good of man;
- Progress in service of the humanity, which is needed to safeguard its existence and dignity.

The Church and the Christians are now facing these tasks as they stand in the center of the transformation processes taking place nowadays. The right resolution on the urgent questions about the meaning of the human existence and about action models is only possible through a renewed integration of scientific thinking with the power of faith in search of the truth” (Jan Paweł II, 1986, 622).

The goal of the human search is not just to learn the interim truths presenting in the various fields of study but also to seek the deeper truth, particularly about the human life. Man seeks the truth he does not have. The search for the truth never ends. It begins again with every new human generation and in every specific country. Every human being, from their existential viewpoint, has to find a path leading them toward the truth; these paths vary among the particular cultures and generations; ultimately, they are different for every individual. These paths do differ among each other, indeed, but on the other hand they cannot be contrary to the fundamental truths which are constitutive of the human heart, standing at the core of all the human search for the truth. Faith and reason can help each other, having the mutual function of a critical and at the same time purifying factor, as well as encouragement of further search and deeper insight (Buttiglione, 2003, 260-263)<sup>4</sup>. “The light of reason that facilitates study and the light of Revelation that facilitates faith both originate from the same source. Science and faith travel on two separate and autonomous trajectories, yet for their very nature, any collision between them is not possible. If any clashes occur, they are an indication of a regrettable pathology. For this particular reason, Vatican II recognized the justified

<sup>4</sup> “The search for the truth by a man of faith is realized in a process in which intent listening to the Word, which has entered history, and the search of reason would continuously meet. In this way, faith becomes deeper and purer, whereas thought is also enriched on the other hand, as new horizons are opening for it. ... In fact, there is no great philosophy that did not emerge under the influence of inspiration derived from religious traditions, whether it was the Greek philosophy, Indian philosophy, the philosophy that has developed within the scope of Christianity, or the modern philosophical currents that believed in the autonomy of reason and perceived it as the ultimate criteria of thought, while also maintaining the relationship with the great topics for thought that were transferred from Biblical faith to philosophy in the course of history. One could not imagine Kant, Fichte, Hegel or Schelling without the influence of faith; alas, Marx himself, even radically interpreted, is still within the horizon of hope that he took from the Hebrew tradition. Where philosophy completely breaks off the dialog with the thought of faith, it turns into «empty seriousness», as noted by Jaspers” (Ratzinger, 2003, 99).



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autonomy and enormous value of scientific knowledge. ... Thus, despite the separation of their specific paths, science and faith find the principle of unity in God. The God that let Himself be known through Revelation is He who has had His impact on the grand book of nature and who mysteriously acts in history through His Providence” (Jan Paweł II, 1993a, 13-14).

In addition to the cognition characteristic of the human reason, which for its very nature is even capable of reaching the Creator Himself, there is another type of cognition, associated with faith. Faith does not enter with the intention to deprive reason of its autonomy or to limit its scope, but only to make man realize that God reveals Himself and acts in these events. A true Christian faith does not stifle freedom or the human reason. Faith assumes the existence of reason and perfects it, while reason enlightened with faith can find the strength to reach the heights of knowing God and the spiritual realities (Benedykt XVI, 2007, 55)<sup>5</sup>. “A clash cannot take place”, as Leszek Kołakowski claims, “if reason performs its duty properly; hence, revelation supports reason, meaning that it controls its activity, gives warnings and reveals errors. The realms of reason and revelation are intertwined, they have a certain common ground... Whereas the contemporary Church does not aspire to be a supervisor of studies, it assumes that the collisions are apparent only, originating from misinterpretation or excessively literal interpretation of the Bible... The Church listens to the voices of sciences, pays attention to them and actively seeks cooperation in various forms” (Kołakowski, 2011, 52-54). Hence the continuously vital awareness of the responsibility of the Church for studying the *signa temporis* and to clarify them in light of the Gospels. These tasks, adapted to the mentality of each subsequent generation, should answer the people’s eternal questions about the meaning of the present and future life, and their mutual relationship.

Among the inherent problems of our existence are not only those relating to faith but also to the world subjected to science completely. First of all, faith is not an enormous edifice of numerous claims about the supernatural world, which would constitute an order of knowledge somehow secondary to science, but it is rather the act of entrusting oneself to God, who gives man hope and trust. This entrusting act is not void of meaning. As we attempt at comparing the contents of faith with the knowledge system, we always have to be aware that every time has its dark places, that we are never able to grasp the whole and therefore, some things must be left unexplained in the particular periods of time, as we lack the appropriate intellectual tools to explain them. A person who wants to restrict himself to knowledge accomplished with strictly scientific methods will experience a reality crisis, he is deprived of the truth. Resignation from the truth and restricting oneself to what can be determined empirically and to methodolog-

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<sup>5</sup> “The contents of the Revelation can never downgrade the discoveries of reason and its rightful autonomy; however, reason should never lose its capacity to reflect on itself and to ask questions, being aware that it cannot attribute an absolute or exclusive status to itself. The revealed truth, showing the mystery of existence in full light, radiating from the very Being as a source of existence, will light up the way for philosophical reflection. In this way, the Christian Revelation becomes a true link and a meeting space between philosophical and theological thinking as they cross-reference each other” (Jan Paweł II, 1998, 79).

ical accuracy - these are the typical qualities of the modern form of scientific approaches. Man moves around his own home only, and perfected observation methods have not encouraged him to exceed the limits of himself or to seek the foundations of the reality; rather, they have made him a prisoner, imprisoned both by these methods and by himself. Fundamental progress takes place when we have observations which cannot be explained by any of the existing models. The important phenomena appear to be those which cannot be integrated into the whole. They enforce further search, until a new context and a new model emerges, broadening the prior horizon and offering a new, more complete vision of reality (Ratzinger/Benedykt XVI, 2007, 17-21). In the same context, Paul Chauchard claims: "nor do we want a closed science, a hermetic world; we want an open world, in which science discovers mysterious structures and the latter are begging for a position for themselves in the metaphysical explanation, as long as we agree not to become ossified in immanence. The idea here is thus the integration of science with faith and vice versa" (Chauchard, 1968, 147). Contrary to common belief, we have to conclude that faith does not encourage inaction; rather, it incites setting out for a journey, taking responsibility for the future.

#### 4. Responsibility in scientific activity

The issue of responsibility "is primarily a certain reality within a person, inside a person. Only such an internal personal reality enables us, in turn, to speak of the social importance of responsibility or to define certain principles of such responsibility in social life" (Wojtyła, 1994, 212). Taking responsibility, being truly responsible is only available to a person who is aware of their actions, and then only if the actions are their own. Man is responsible and should accept responsibility for the entirety of his actions, including both their positive and negative consequences. A prerequisite for the emergence of true responsibility is the conscious freedom to choose that act. As man chooses his own actions, takes decisions he considers the best possible ones, man with his feeling of freedom will reasonably accept responsibility, while at the same time forming his own existence and certifying the quality of his humanity (Ostrowska, 2015, 15-16)<sup>6</sup>. Hence, "culture and creative work", as John Paul II states, "gives people an opportunity to go beyond the material reality and to «humanize» the world that surrounds them. ... This type of human creative activity is specifically expressed in gaining deeper insights and carrying out scientific research. The spiritual nature of this creation requires man to be guided here by his feeling of responsibility; it requires respect of the natural order

<sup>6</sup> "Responsibility (*responsabilitas*) for a human act is always based on the presumption of imputability (*imputabilitas*) of that act, whereas the latter implies its reasonableness. ... reasonableness of an act is a prerequisite of its causative affiliation to the subject, which is imputability, and the latter gives rise to a specific relationship of the act to the person, which is called responsibility. ... The experience of responsibility thus determines the ultimate formation of man's moral personality, to what extent man, by his reasonable actions, realizes the objective value of the moral good in himself, and therefore defines his moral value" (Ślipko, 1984, 385-386).

and, first and foremost, the nature of every human being, as man is the subject and the goal thereof” (Jan Paweł II, 2005, 41).

Responsibility can be understood on a satisfactory level only when it is taken both in its universal meaning and the personal meaning. These two words somehow define the fundamental directions, through which the full measure of responsibility can only be defined. It transpires from the above that man is responsible for the world he lives in, whether it is the world of his family, his workplace, local community, politics, or any other type. That world encompasses the entirety of the relations of the human life. An individual is shown here as a moral subject, who should be responsible for his actions. Hence, the full experience of responsibility requires a palpable combination of these two fundamental references: responsibility for one’s own actions and responsibility for the world. Even more than that, this particular unification is the essence of the right practice of responsibility. “Responsibility for something” is hence in itself first defined against the horizon of specific tasks, whereas new tasks, having their criteria in people’s changing needs and capabilities, create a new responsibility (Schwartländer, 1995, 9-12). Therefore, John Paul II is right to emphasize that “the men of learning and the men of culture have been endowed with a special responsibility for the truth - aiming at it, defending it and living by it. ... Hence the special importance of continuously remembering that authentic freedom of scientific research cannot be abstracted from the criteria of truth and good. Attention to the scholars’ moral conscience and their feeling of responsibility for man is nowadays reaching the level of a fundamental imperative. At this particular level, the fate of contemporary science as well as, in a certain way, the fate of the whole humanity is decided” (Jan Paweł II, 1999, 58-60). Every intellectual, irrespective of his beliefs, is called to perform the *function of critical conscience* toward all that is threatening to the humanity or diminishes the humanity, guided by the noble and difficult ideal of “servitude of thinking”. In the same context, “being a man of learning” obliges a person to pay special attention to the growth of their own humanity, to their ethical sensitivity and acceptance of an integrated concept of man as a person. A deformed or incomplete vision of man makes science easily transformed from a benefit into a serious hazard for man; instead of a subject and goal, man would often become an object, or even a “material”. Attention to the logical/formal correctness of the thinking process does not suffice. Activities of the intellect must necessarily be integrated into the spiritual climate of the indispensable moral virtues, such as sincerity, courage, modesty, honesty, and authentic care about men. The principle of freedom of scientific research cannot be separated from every scholar’s ethical responsibility. In the case of scholars, such ethical responsibility is particularly important. Ethical relativism and purely utilitarian attitudes are hazardous not only to the men of science but also directly to man and to the society (Jan Paweł II, 1997, 161-163)<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> “Man is aiming at a harmonious development of all his capabilities. He cannot do without culture, without ethical values, or without religion. Science contributes more and more to the process of building this harmony, as it attributes its ultimate goals and resources to the good of man. ... The contemporary world gives more and more attention to scholars. Everyone expects the fruits of your research to emerge

Responsibility of a man of learning is further revealed in the ability to open new realms, to set new paths in the immeasurable field of all that is available for cognition but not yet known. In the opinion of John Paul II, the advancement of science is only possible through persistent and hard work, and is the outcome of sacrifice and honesty, which bring honor to every true scholar. In view of the increasing level of specialization in the particular disciplines, fundamental questions concern the meaning of the body of knowledge gathered in these disciplines and the search for links between scientific knowledge and the almost unlimited abilities of human intelligence. Scientific research and specialized studies, extended with epistemological reflection on the meaning of science, certify to the human mind's tendency towards learning more about the reality and discovering all the dimensions of truth. A sign of maturity of a specific study discipline is that it asks itself a question about itself and its relations with the broader system of knowledge. Hence, resisting the anti-scientific and irrational currents, which are dangerous for contemporary culture, the scholars themselves should demonstrate the reasonableness of scientific research and its ethical and social viability. Integrated growth requires both intellectual and technical, moral and spiritual qualifications and virtues. The truth about man is discovered together with the truth about the world he lives in (Jan Paweł II, 1990, 15)<sup>8</sup>. "The search for truth involves enormous dignity and responsibility. A scholar helps convey the knowledge gathered by mankind, for the price of intensive research, which is a source of satisfaction but also disappointment at times. He teaches and communicates the truth, thus contributing to the process of strengthening social values. ... At the same time, universities themselves have to respect the freedom of study, research and scientific search aimed at discovering the truth. The truth requires absolute acceptance. Facing the truth, man achieves its fullness, as he is a being called to knowledge" (Jan Paweł II, 1987, 23) Exactly through the broadest perspectives offered by the various forms of cognition is it possible to avoid the risks involved in the growth of scientific research and implementation of its outcomes inconsistently with the true good of man.

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as a higher concern for man and nature, for increasing the living standards and perfecting the social structures, building and strengthening peace" (Jan Paweł II, 1991, 33).

<sup>8</sup> "An intellectual who is only faithful to the principles of method and to reason used properly excludes from his research all these external elements that could influence him or, in other words, everything other than the subject-matter of the research. On the other hand, to make his actions fully credible, a researcher must consider the requirements originating from the logic of science itself in his work. What I mean here is the faithfulness to what is the reality he studies, the continuous self-discipline and freedom of egoistic advantages, the readiness to cooperate, due to which his own results can be compared with those of his peers, up to disputing them if they encounter competent criticism" (Jan Paweł II, 2001b, 781).

## Conclusion

Recognition of man's personal dignity and its importance takes place not only in the field of faith. It is also available to natural reason, capable of distinguishing true from false and good from evil, considering freedom to be a fundamental condition of human existence. If all university research requires true freedom and cannot exist without such freedom, it also requires the university people to become affiliated to their work and to such virtues as objectivity, personal responsibility, method and discipline, competence. "Science is a holistic vision of man and his history; it is a harmony of integrated synthesis of random realities and the eternal Truth. ... Experience tells us of the importance of true masters, not just for conveying knowledge and study methods, but also for the deep passion for truth, a moral commitment that stimulates research work" (Jan Paweł II, 1993b, 547). Commitment to study is not an activity which only concerns man's intellectual sphere. In fact, it consumes man as a whole. Hence, one of the characteristics of university work and the intellectual world is that everyone is more than anywhere else condemned to reference to his own responsibility in the directions to which he leads his work. "An academic teacher", as John Paul II emphasizes, "is a master. He does not convey knowledge as though it were an everyday object or a consumer good, but he primarily sets up a relationship characterized by wisdom, and even though a personal meeting is not possible, considering the large numbers of students, yet such knowledge becomes the word of life. The lecturer teaches, which in the original meaning of the world is an essential contribution to the building of personalities. He also educates, which according to the ancient Socratic tradition means his assistance in discovering and development of every individual's capabilities and gifts. Finally, a teacher forms a person in accordance with the principles of humanism, which does not narrow formation down to the accomplishment of necessary professional competences, but rather integrates them with a solid and transparent vision of the meaning of their own lives" (Jan Paweł II, 2002, 6).

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