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STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI'S SOCIAL IDEAS IN THE RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY OF ACADEMIC CENTRES

IDEE SPOŁECZNE STEFANA WYSZYŃSKIEGO W DZIAŁALNOŚCI NAUKOWO-EDUKACYJNEJ OŚRODKÓW AKADEMICKICH

Streszczenie: Stefan Wyszyński to jedna z najbardziej wybitnych i rozpoznawalnych osób w historii Polski i Kościoła w naszej ojczyźnie. Niniejsze opracowanie nie pozostawia wątpliwości, że Stefan Wyszyński wpisał się złotymi zgłoskami, gdy chodzi o myśl społeczną, która na tle innych odznacza się oryginalnością i ponadczasowością. Myśl społeczna Wyszyńskiego posiada określoną charakterystykę, warunkowaną treścią encyklik społecznych, jak też środowiskiem, w jakim dorastał, rozwijał się i kształtował. Wiele wypowiedzi można odczytać jako reakcję na bieżące wydarzenia depczące godność człowieka, urągające miłości, nie liczące się z wartościami moralnymi w życiu społecznym. Idee formułowane przez Stefana Wyszyńskiego składają się na spójną koncepcję życia społecznego. Jej pogłębienie można odnaleźć w badaniach i publikacjach wielu ośrodków akademickich, spośród których zostały uwzględnione najważniejsze.

Słowa kluczowe: myśl społeczna Stefana Wyszyńskiego, katolicka nauka społeczna, ośrodki badań nauki społecznej Stefana Wyszyńskiego

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Abstract: Stefan Wyszyński is one of the most eminent and well-known persons in the history of Poland and Church in our country. This paper unambiguously demonstrates that he had great achievements when it comes to the social thought, which is original and timeless when compared to others. Wyszyński's social thought has a specific nature, conditioned by the social encyclicals and environment in which he grew, developed and was shaped. Numerous statements can be interpreted as a reaction to current events trampling the human being's dignity, which were an insult to love, and failed to take into account moral values in social life. The ideas put forward by Stefan Wyszyński make up a consistent concept of social life. Its more in-depth analysis can be found in the research and publications of numerous academic centres, and the most important ones have been mentioned in this article.

Key words: Stefan Wyszyński's social thought, Catholic social teaching, Stefan Wyszyński's social thought research centres

Introduction

The group of eminent figures who promoted social thought in Poland must include Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, i.e. a guide in faith and statesman, who faced the difficult challenges of the present time, and passed on timeless ideas. Stefan Wyszyński addressed his in-depth reflections to all sections of society and every person. It is impossible to fully and deeply present Stefan his concept of social life in a short text. For this reason, only certain ideas will be mentioned which are important not only from the historical perspective, but also from the point of view of contemporary challenges. Separately, attention will be paid to centres which conduct research and educational activity based on the analysis of the Primate's of the Millennium teaching.

Selected ideas of Stefan Wyszyński's social thought

What is characteristic of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's teaching is the rich abundance of thoughts directly or indirectly related to social life. Numerous of his statements were of pedagogical nature. Indicating and introducing them will be the main goal of the first part of the text, which will commence with a reflection on Stefan Wyszyński's involvement in the dissemination of the Catholic social thought.

As early as during the PhD studies, Rev. Stefan Wyszyński participated in the "Rebirth" Social Weeks, which were organised on an annual basis. They were an opportunity to get to know the members of that movement, but, first or foremost, they allowed exchanging thoughts and experience. Having gained the doctorate, Stefan Wyszyński was not only a participant, but also a lecturer during the Social Weeks. In the 1930s, he gave lectures on the development of Catholic Action in western countries, or on the importance of the Social Weeks for the understanding and development of the Catholic social thought. He discussed issues concerning the Christian concept of solidarity. Moreover, he talked about contemporary Catholic

as well as social and professional movements in Europe. Since 1929 he belonged to the Polish Catholic Intelligentsia Association created by seniors of "Rebirth", which, undoubtedly, had significant influence on Rev. Stefan Wyszyński's thinking. It manifests itself in Wyszyński's teaching according to which the Catholic must not limit their faith to the private life, but needs to implement its principles in all areas of life. On the other hand, personalism introduced and promoted by Rev. Władysław Korniłowicz, who was a friend of J. Martin, made Rev. Stefan Wyszyński sensitive to another human being, who deserves respect due to the dignity which has its source in God. Rev. Wyszyński met Rev. Korniłowicz in 1919 in Włocławek, but got to know him better in Lublin, where Rev. Korniłowicz taught liturgics and moral theology, conducted a Thomism club, and led retreats. Furthermore, Rev. Korniłowicz closely cooperated with Mother Róża Czacka, and became the spiritual director of the Laski Centre (Czackowska 2013, pp. 46-49). What proved to be extremely valuable in the activity conducted by Rev. Stefan Wyszyński both in Włocławek, and in Laski, which was visited by people with various world views, including socialists and activists of the nationalist Camp of Great Poland, was the knowledge of socio-economic relationships, as well as the system and social teaching of the Church. According to one researcher, Stefan Wyszyński was "similar to a Christian-social activist with a deep intellectual formation, rather than a typical theoretician, an academic detached from the realities of life and focusing exclusively on the theory of problems" (Nitecki, 2006, p. 18).

The full picture of Stefan Wyszyński's involvement in promotion of the Catholic social thought can be noticed on the basis of analysis of all his statements, including the "Pro memoria" notes. One of important issues is the emphasis placed on the significance of moral norms in social life. It needs to be clearly pointed out that respecting moral norms resulting from natural law and the Church's teachings, which pervade also political and economic life, was considered by the Primate to be the fundamental condition allowing full development of social life. According to the Catholic concept, what is characteristic of natural law, instilled by God in the human nature in the act of creation, is its invariability and universality. It is the basis for complying with other rights, including the right to a life consistent with human dignity, the right to freedom and religion. These rights are subjective in their nature, and have a relevant normative basis. They should be complied with in social life. The values included in natural law are a reflection of God's will and His holiness. They are ingrained in each human being. Presenting the fundamental principles of social life, resulting from natural law and based on the Church's teachings, Rev. Stefan Wyszyński was guided, primarily, by people's well-being and took into account their versatile development. He explained that forming unions and communities in order to help one another and perform social service correspond to human being's natural needs and interests (Dziekoński 2021a, pp. 16-17). However, he made people sensitive to the fact that "untruthfulness towards God and the moral principles of Christianity affects family life, social life, economic

responsibilities and the life of the entire Nation (...). Questioning moral principles leads to relativism, to such an attitude nearly in each person who has given in to it, even if only officially, but who is a believer in private life” (Wyszyński 1981, pp. 65-67).

Stefan Wyszyński also said that social upbringing based on the Christian moral principles needs to begin as early as possible. Addressing parents, he admonished: “Don’t close your eyes to huge losses caused by moral slackness, liberated from the imperatives of God’s love and moral order (...). Don’t be fooled by apparent material benefits in favour of which you sometimes choose upbringing without religion. After all, you will later cry your eyes out over all material benefits and savings you have gained today, and they will, a hundred times more, be wasted by your children deprived of moral restraints, to the great detriment of the family and in violation of the public interest. The experience of the nation teaches that countries pay a steep price for apparent benefits related to upbringing citizens without God” (Wyszyński 1991a, pp. 164-168).

In view of the Primate’s of the Millennium teachings, the human being is the fundamental value of social life. He emphasised the human being’s greatness in numerous of his statements – both oral and written ones – indicating, among other things, the sources of its origin and nature. In this regard, the following words are particularly significant: “The human being is God’s greatest work in the natural order. Created in the image and likeness of God, barely lesser than angels, crowned with glory and honour by the Creator – the human being stands between the earth and heaven as the king and ruler of the earth and as the heir to the heaven. Equipped by the best Creator with the riches of reason, will and heart, elevated above the plant and animal world by the beauty, dignity as well as qualities of the body and soul, the human being in all his nature, in his attitude, in his aspirations and destiny is the king of creatures and the blessing of the earth” (Wyszyński 1987a, p. 79).

According to Stefan Wyszyński, the human being’s dignity is, therefore, inherent in the human nature, has its source in God the Creator, and in order to deeply understand it, one needs to take advantage of biblical texts and their academic interpretation. What is particularly important is the texts from the Book of Genesis describing the creation of the human being and world (Gen. 1, 26-28; 2, 5-7), as the first attributes of the human being’s nobility were emphasised in them. Creating the human being, God gives a piece of himself. The human being has a vocation to participate in the God’s rule over the world, cooperate with God, direct his destiny and be responsible for his actions. In contrast to other forms of existence, the human being is “somebody” to God. Only the human being is “God’s image”, which grants special or even sacred dignity to him. The idea of the human being as God’s image returns in the Sapiential Books (Sir 17,3; Wis 2, 23), and it was deepened and extended in the New Testament, in the truth revealed by Jesus Christ about the human being’s supernatural childhood and divine fatherhood (Dziekoński 2021b, pp. 512-513). Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński emphasises that “Jesus

Christ taught the humankind to appreciate the human being, demonstrated his great value when he adopted humanity. He lived like a human being on earth and gave his life for the human being. Thus, he laid the cornerstone for social life on earth, which must be based on the recognition of the human being's great dignity. Since the moment when God became the human being there has been no material price which would be higher than the value of the human being" (Wyszyński 1995, p. 132). That statement deserves particular attention, as it directly connects the idea of the human being's dignity or greatness with social issues. One may, indirectly, come to the conclusion that the quality of social life depends on the recognition of the human being's dignity as the utmost value. Stefan Wyszyński was convinced that understanding who we are as human beings, and, consequently, getting to know thoroughly our greatness, uniqueness, the value of unique, one and only life requires the departure from egocentric existence, that is the departure from egoism. It is the human being's dignity, being an inalienable and sacrosanct value, that is the source of other rights and values, including those which are directly connected with social life.

In view of Stefan Wyszyński's statements, the truth about the human being's dignity requires particular promotion in the world dominated by technological development (Dziekoński 2021b, p. 514). "A lot needs to be said about the human being's high dignity – the Primate of the Millennium pointed out – to make people understand that the human being surpasses everything which may exist in the world, except for God! The entire rich and most fanciful world of technical devices, inventions and, undoubtedly, powerful scientific achievements, all the immense wealth of the globe is nothing compared to one tiny rational, free and loving human being. [...] The human being, in his high dignity, surpasses everything which exists on the globe. We have to remember about it today [...]. In particular, when the human being is used for building a new world, new political systems and opportunities, in such a way that he sometimes has to forget that he is a human being, becoming just a cog in the enormous machine of the contemporary industry" (Wyszyński 1987b, p. 135).

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński believed that the human being is the fundamental value of social life, therefore a certain quality of social life is the main condition for respecting the human being's great value. All dimensions of social life, i.e. the political, economic and cultural one, need to correspond to the human being's greatness (Skorowski 2021, p. 107).

What is, in the Stefan Wyszyński's teachings, one of the most important topics directly connected with social life, as is the case with the human being's dignity and greatness, is also love. In his opinion, love, whose source is in God and it is fulfilled when we serve our neighbour, is the fundamental value in building relations with others and the most effective antidote against egoism. God's true love is always an effective lesson in love of the neighbour. According to Wyszyński,

taking care of one another is easier, if the human being is united with God and Christ (Wyszyński 1999a, pp. 479-480).

In view of Rev. Stefan Wyszyński's statements, love is part of the human being's nature. It is a unique power which opens people towards others, is the basis of all interpersonal relationships, as well as it gives freedom and internal peace, eliminates anxiety and provides joy. Love is crucial for reconstruction of social life, both at the micro and macro level. The love which Wyszyński calls for is altruistic in its nature (Pyskło 2021, p. 80). The above-mentioned context is reflected in the Primate's following statements: "God's love always teaches us love of the neighbour (...). The bigger the extent to which we are parts of one another, taking care of one another, the more united with God and with Christ we are. But also, the more united with God and with Christ, our head, we are, the stronger with one another we are bound. That is the bond through love" (Wyszyński 1999a, pp. 479-480).

Stefan Wyszyński also points out that everybody needs love, in particular when it is in crisis. That is how the period of communism, which did harm to the value of love, needs to be assessed. Undoubtedly, that context was really close to Stefan Wyszyński, when he wrote: "When the contemporary human being looks into the face of another human being, he, first and foremost, wants to feel and understand his heart and experience his brotherly feeling, his love" (Wyszyński 1999b, p. 392).

According to Wyszyński, love is not just a word, act and truth, but should manifest itself in tangible actions, sensitivity to needs of other people and in all areas of life. No wonder then, that the topic of love was discussed by Rev. Stefan Wyszyński in numerous contexts – in teaching about basic human rights, value of the human life and broadly-understood social life, as well as with respect to various groups: parents and families, teachers and tutors, medical staff, soldiers, laymen and clergy. Stefan Wyszyński, already as an archbishop, in one of his first letters called for coming to the poor's aid. In the subsequent letters sent, in particular, on the occasion of the Week of Mercy, he appealed for help for the poor, hungry, abandoned, lonely, elderly, sick, neglected children, widows and mothers who bring up children. He saw a path towards social equality in it (Pyskło 2021, pp. 83-84).

What is worth pointing out is the fact that Primate Wyszyński looked for possibilities of spiritual support, in order to awake love and make it visible in tangible actions. In this regard, he found the Lent period to be really appropriate for it. At that time, he used to say that "The Lent is an act of brotherhood, justice and return of the Christian peace to the human family (...). During that period, the Church more insistently shows us our brothers and our neighbours, as well as reminds us of the obligations of the Christian love (...). For this reason, during the Lent, deeds of mercy, alms and helping the neighbour – are indispensable conditions for penance, reparation and return to the union with Living God" (Wyszyński 1991b, pp. 215-219).

Cardinal Wyszyński included the main theses concerning the importance of love in social life in ABC of Social Love Crusade:

- “Respect each human being and be sensitive to them.
- Have good thoughts of everybody.
- Always speak kindly of others.
- Talk to everybody with language of love, calm them down and demonstrate kindness.
- Forgive everybody everything, always be the first to make an offer of reconciliation.
- Always act in favour of your neighbour, doing to them what you wish for yourself.
- Actively sympathise in suffering, willingly offering help, advice and consolation.
- Work diligently, sharing the fruit of your work with others.
- Join the social help for the neighbour, trying to notice those in need around you.
- Pray for everybody, including enemies” (Wyszyński 2001, pp. 333-334).

What is worth noticing is the number of the items listed above. There are ten of them. The reader's first association is that it may refer to God's ten commandments. Consequently, one may assume that in such a way Stefan Wyszyński wanted to emphasise general significance of love in the context of social life and indicate which of the items should be considered to be the most important. Undoubtedly, we can find in this list the Christian interpretation of love, which – in one of the most beautiful forms – was expressed by St Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 13. However, Wyszyński's list explicitly took into account the social conditions in which he lived.

What occupies an important place in Wyszyński's lecture on social life is the value of work, which is part of the human being's integral development. This is due to the fact that not only the physical, but also spiritual and moral development of the human being occurs through work. Wyszyński emphasises that the entire human being participates in work, together with all of his skills, defects and virtues. The features which are useful at work include patience, perseverance, endurance and consistency, diligence, conscientiousness and quietude (Łukasik, Koćwin 2013, p. 34). We can gain deeper understanding of those issues thanks to the content of the work entitled “Duch Pracy Ludzkiej”, in which Wyszyński notices that work must not be assessed only in terms of the economic dimension or social prestige. First and foremost, work is the value thanks to which the human being fulfils himself, develops and joins the community with others. These elements are explicitly emphasised in the Catholic social teachings, based on the content of the social encyclicals.

What is one of the important social topics discussed by Wyszyński is also axiology of the homeland's cultural heritage. It is created on the basis of the intellectual,

ethical, religious and aesthetic culture. If one wants to go through life in a truly human way, they have to adopt, accept and internalise a given value system, corresponding to the dignity of the human being and allowing one to fulfil themselves in their humanity. The culture of the nearest surroundings is the space of values which are indispensable for development. This culture has a specific face. According to Stefan Wyszyński, the national culture includes ethical, social and religious values which pass on and make people aware of the entire set of attitudes towards themselves, other people and the world (Skorowski 2021, pp. 108-111).

Stefan Wyszyński contributed significantly to the development of social thought by his vision of Europe as a Christian community. He presented such a view, living in a country where Europe was actually divided. It seems that this is why it was not a topic which could be included into the group of the leading ones, but in the Primate's teaching numerous thoughts concerning Europe in its Christian dimension can be found. The truth about Europe's historical unity, based on a specific value system, focused on the human being's dignity as well as the idea of freedom and responsibility was close to the Primate. What may be the basis of new Christian Europe is only the human being, perceived as the utmost value (Skorowski 2021, 113-115).

Selected centres of research into and promotion of Stefan Wyszyński's social thought

As early as during Stefan Wyszyński's life, his statements and opinions were the subject of analyses, including academic ones². One of the centres carrying out such tasks is Primate Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński Institute, being the continuation of the Primate Institute of the Nation's Vows at Jasna Góra, which was established by the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński on 3 May 1957. The Primate Institute has recorded, prepared, and currently disseminates the sermons delivered by the Primate of the Millennium. It also has Primate's photographs, films about his teaching and archive recordings of his speeches, which are available on the Institute's website. The Primate Institute cooperates with state institutions and Catholic associations promoting the teachings of Cardinal Wyszyński, as well as with the Warsaw Board of Education on organising a competition on the knowledge of the Primate's life and teaching. In co-edition with the Institute of National

2 In this study, I will only refer to the centers that were closely institutionally or personally connected with the figure of Wyszyński and the research on his social thought. This section was prepared in close cooperation with representatives of the institutions mentioned in the text, who provided information verbally or in notes that are presented and elaborated upon in the main text: Beata Mackiewicz – Primate Wyszyński Institute; Prof. Alina Rynio – John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin; Prof. UKSW Rafał Bednarczyk; Prof. Paweł Skibiński – Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw; Prof. Kazimierz Papciak – Papal Faculty of Theology in Wrocław.

Remembrance ii published the following books: in 2019 album “Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński 1901–1981”, in 2020 “Prymas Stefan Wyszyński. Biografia”, and in 2021 “Kazania świętokrzyskie 1974–1976”, whose co-authors are employees of the Primate Institute and University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński (UKSW). The Institute cooperates with schools and universities which bear Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's name. It is a patron of numerous competitions for children and adolescents, participates in academic conferences on the ministry, teaching and heritage of the Primate of the Millennium organised at UKSW.

What boasts rich history of academic reflection on the social heritage of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński is the Catholic University of Lublin, which, doing so, ensures that the passing time does not make the achievements and the very figure of the Primate of the Millennium distant. Thanks to the lectures on the Catholic social teaching and original social thought implemented in the practice of pastoral work, Wyszyński is considered to be a precursor to the Lublin Catholic Social Teaching School. The research into social phenomena initiated by him has been the subject of analyses and reflection by persons of such calibre as Father Mieczysław Albert Krąpiec (1971, pp. 3-17), Apb. Bolesław Pylak (2020), Rev. Czesław Bartnik (1982, 2001), Rev. Stanisław Kowalczyk (2017, pp. 125-133), Franciszek J. Mazurek (1999), Jan Mazur OSPPE (2017, pp. 31-46), Rev. Andrzej Zwoliński (1990), Rev. Stanisław Fel (2017, pp. 89-102), Marek Wódka OFM Conv (2017, pp. 123-140), Alina Rynio (1995; 2001; 2020; 2021, pp. 157-186), Agnieszka Kulik (2016), Magdalena Parzyszek (2010, pp. 333-346; 2012), Czesław Strzeszewski (1976) and many others. The Catholic social teaching as well as Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's relations with the Catholic university and Lublin archdiocese are the topic of conferences, lectures, exhibitions, anniversary academic and general knowledge sessions organised on a regular basis by the Catholic University of Lublin together with the Lublin branch of “Civitas Christiana” and the Zamoyski Museum in Kozłówka.

What is worth noticing is the research work conducted at University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. Primate Wyszyński, being the Great Chancellor of the Academy of Catholic Theology, stayed within the confines of that university on numerous occasions, inspiring and directing its academic activity towards the values which constitute a strong foundation of social life. Plenty of his statements were directly aimed at our university, which in 1999, as a result of the transformation into a bigger academic centre, adopted the name: University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. It was important to make people more interested in the research on Stefan Wyszyński in general, and his social thought in particular.

Another important impulse came from Saint John Paul II, who on 15 December 2001, addressing a delegation from University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński in connection with acceptance of the honoris causa doctorate, reminded them that the person of the Patron obliges them to manifest the content of the Primate's of the Millennium life in the university's academic, research, didactic and educational activity (Dziuba 2007, p. 310). The first president of UKSW – Rev. prof. dr

hab. Roman Bartnicki – on 20 June 2005 established the Centre for Documentation and Studies on the Person and Teaching of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, at the same time appointing bishop prof. dr hab. Andrzej Dziuba its director. Since then the number of regular and planned academic and research activities, conferences organised as well as academic publications based on source documents related to the figure of the university's Patron has increased. Furthermore, since 2007 the only Polish academic periodical has been published, devoted to issues connected with the Primate – “*Studia Prymasowskie*”, which was also edited by bishop prof. dr hab. Andrzej Dziuba (Bednarczyk 2022-2023, pp. 18-29). One of the above-mentioned centre's important functions was to explain and promote the thought of Blessed Stefan Wyszyński both in the university environment, and outside it.

In May 2023, the Centre's name was changed to Centre of Blessed Stefan Wyszyński's Thought. Rafał Bednarczyk was appointed its new director. As was the case with the previous formula, currently the Centre is still the only separate academic unit in Poland which performs the task of multi-disciplinary academic reflection whose aim is to deepen the knowledge of Stefan Wyszyński's role for the Church in Poland, and, in general, for our homeland and Europe.

As for the research into Stefan Wyszyński's legacy, big intensification was noticed during the period preceding the Primate's beatification, and in the year when the ceremony took place, which, at the request of the university's governing bodies, was declared the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński Year by the Polish parliament. In that period, numerous academic conferences devoted to the person of the Primate of the Millennium and his social teaching were organised and various academic publications were published. One of them, already mentioned in this paper, was prepared by Rev. Ryszard Czekalski as an editor, and entitled “*Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński. Droga życia i posługi pasterskiej*”. It is an interdisciplinary publication, as it contains papers written by Polish and foreign representatives of various academic disciplines, including social ones (Bednarczyk 2022, pp. 109-112). Another advantage of the publication in question is a list of BA, MA and PhD papers, as well as publications which are based on the research into the legacy of Stefan Wyszyński, conducted at UKSW.

What is worth mentioning here is the initiative dating back to a few years ago, aimed at publishing Stefan Wyszyński's notes with comments in the form of “*Pro memoria*”, initiated in 2014 by Warsaw archbishop Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz, Poland's Primate and Gniezno archbishop Wojciech Polak and the UKSW president at that time, i.e. Rev. prof. Stanisław Dziekoński. The project envisaged a critical edition of the daily working notes of Cardinal Wyszyński from the years 1948-1981, stored in the original in Gniezno Archdiocesan Archives. In order to publish that text, a state and church publishing consortium was organised, which included, apart from the Warsaw and Gniezno archdioceses, UKSW, IPN, John Paul II and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński Museum, as well as Primate Wyszyński Institute. In order to ensure the appropriate quality of the work, the project's Programming

Board was established, headed by Bishop Professor Jan Kopiec as the chairman, and the Editorial Team was appointed, with Professor Paweł Skibiński in charge of it. A group of almost twenty researchers from various Polish academic centres work on the preparation of the individual volumes (Kopiec, p. 9). The first volume of that monumental series was published in 2017. By 2024, 13 out of 28 planned volumes had appeared in print³. Currently, editorial work at various stages of progress is underway on 13 subsequent volumes. Those publications are important because they are based on essential sources for variously understood history and for the social history of the Polish People's Republic. However, due to the absence after 1946 of personal publications by Cardinal Wyszyński containing his social reflection, "Pro memoria" has become the basic source allowing us to understand not only the historical fact-finding, but also interpretation of social phenomena performed by Poland's Primate.

Giving one's attention to the figure of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, one must not disregard the Wrocław-based researchers of his teaching and activity. One of the eminent experts of that topic was Rev. prof. dr hab. Piotr Nitecki (1949-2011). It is difficult to enumerate all forms of the Professor's involvement in the promotion of the Church's social teaching, which became his passion and professional life's work. However, in the last period of life he devoted vast majority of time to deep reflection on the work of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. During conversations with colleagues at the Pontifical Theology Faculty in Wrocław, he described, on numerous occasions, his visits and research query of documents at the Primate Institute in his native Warsaw. It was required by his official involvement in the information proceedings for the future beatification of the Primate of the Millennium, as well as the academic project, the work on which was disrupted by his tragic death. In the outline he prepared, he mentioned the important parts of the unfinished study. The Professor's intention was to portray Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński as a statesman, shepherd of the people of God entrusted to him, but also a person with the entire complexity of the human being's nature. The accounts from the second reading of the texts from the Primate's treasure trove were full of, sometimes, surprising, unpublished information, always presented with professor-like faithfulness to the truth and without special effects. What he was particularly interested in was the issue of the Primate's attitude towards the communist ideology and the authorities which served it in the People's Republic of Poland. Until the end of his life he was in charge of the Department of Catholic Social Science and Pastoral Sociology of the Pontifical Theology Faculty in Wrocław, leaving, among numerous books and articles, also a significant collection of studies concerning the life and work of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński.

3 Last publication: Kard. S. Wyszyński, *Pro memoria*, t. 14, 1967, red. R. Kościański, Warszawa 2023.

The above-mentioned centres do not exhaust the full list of the institutions and persons employed by them who study Stefan Wyszyński's social thought. Undoubtedly, what would be interesting is an attempt at following through the achievements of also other academic centres which conduct research into Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's social thought, including the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków and Catholic Academy in Warsaw. However, providing a complete list would require a separate article.

Conclusions

This paper unambiguously demonstrates that Stefan Wyszyński, as a priest, bishop, archbishop, cardinal and Poland's Primate, had great achievements in the area of social thought, which is original and timeless when compared to others. Certain determinants can easily be found in the way in which his concept was put forward. The most important ones come from his closest environment, doctrine of the faith professed, science and experience gained in connection with studies, as well as socio-political conditions. Stefan Wyszyński's reflections are part of the Catholic social teaching, and have their basic source in the popes' social encyclicals. Wyszyński's social thought has a specific nature, which was conditioned by the environment in which he grew, developed and was shaped. Numerous statements can also be interpreted as a reaction to current events trampling the human being's dignity, which were an insult to love, and failed to take into account moral values in social life. The ideas put forward by Stefan Wyszyński make up a consistent concept of social life. Its more in-depth analysis can be found in the research and publications of numerous academic centres, and the most important ones have been mentioned in this article.

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