

Personalism: An Elucidation of the Philosophical Foundations of the Educational Theory of Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm (1875–1951)¹

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Introduction

The former physicist and educationalist Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm (1875–1951) is known as one of the founders of the Dutch academic discipline “pedagogiek,” which we translate to “educational studies” within this article.² Kohnstamm is well-known for his *persoonlijkheidspedagogiek* [pedagogy of personality], which centers the idea of each child becoming a unique personality.³ Kohnstamm’s educational theory is particularly interesting because of its unique coherence with the philosophy of personalism. Although many publications about Kohnstamm and his philosophy of personalism exist, very few of their authors investigate the coherence between his educational theory and the philosophy of personalism.⁴ Moreover, these authors neither make a clear distinction between the personalistic concepts of person and personality nor do they sufficiently examine what these concepts mean in Kohnstamm’s personalism and how they influence his educational theory. The aim of our work is to provide a more extensive analysis of Kohnstamm’s personalism and concepts related to personalism in order to obtain an enriched understanding of the philosophical foundations of his educational theory. Therefore, after a brief account of Kohnstamm’s biography, we provide an analysis of Kohnstamm’s personalism. Furthermore, we pay particular attention to the philosophy of the German-American philosopher and psychologist William Stern (1871–1938), whose work proves an important inspiration for Kohnstamm. Next we explicate three important personalistic concepts, namely the person, the personality, and the associated concept of the I–Thou relation. We end our argument with an account of how Kohnstamm’s personalism influenced his educational theory.

Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm and His Shift to Personalism

Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm studied physics and philosophy at the University of Amsterdam. After a career as a Professor of Physics and working as an unpaid Lecturer in Philosophy, from 1919 Kohnstamm held the newly established Chair of Educational Studies at the University of Amsterdam. In 1932, he was also appointed Professor of Educational Studies in Utrecht. Kohnstamm was one of the first professors of educational studies in the Netherlands and therefore responsible for creating academic content.⁵

During secondary school (1887–1893), Kohnstamm was influenced by the idea that the natural sciences and technology were sources of progress. This so-called materialism and corresponding positivism were based on the idea that reality can be traced back to matter, laws, and patterns, and that insights into these would eventually lead to a greater mastery of reality.⁶ Within secondary schools and universities, materialistic thinking created a major place for mathematics and physics, characterised by explanatory models, patterns, and laws. However, at the start of his academic studies (1893–1901), Kohnstamm distanced himself from materialistic and positivistic thinking. After reading the popular study of Ludwig Büchner (1824–1899), *Kraft und Stoff* [*Force and Matter*] (1855), Kohnstamm was disillusioned by the study's poor evidential value and the dogmatic and one-sided nature of materialism.⁷ During this time an encounter with the Bible shook and changed his materialistic conviction. Kohnstamm's university teachers also contributed to this change in his convictions. Partly owing to their influence, Kohnstamm developed an interest in the search for truth and in scientific theoretical questions, such as whether reality can be fully described.

During his academic studies, Kohnstamm was introduced to the work of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), within whose works he discovered the philosophy of idealism. Kohnstamm appreciated the transcendental nature of Kant's philosophy, namely the possibility to consider values, norms, or ideas as generally valid and, at the same time, as being related to empirical reality. This transcendental nature contrasts with the materialistic conviction wherein no other reality is taken into account.⁸ Kohnstamm interprets idealism as a philosophical theory that starts from a metaphysical world comprising the unchanging and eternal ideas that are related to and influence reality. In Kohnstamm's view, man strives to participate in the metaphysical world through reasoning, generalizing, and conforming to general beliefs and laws.⁹ In this way, actions are influenced and controlled. Kant's philosophy gave Kohnstamm an opportunity to focus on subjective thinking and place man as a unique and moral being in the center of his thinking.¹⁰

The transition of Kohnstamm's worldview from materialistic to idealistic not only is attributable to his own quest for the truth and the influence of his teachers, but also to a scientific revolution within the

academic world. This revolution, known as the *revolt against positivism* in light of the influential study of Stuart Hughes, took place from about 1890 to 1930 and was characterised by an aversion to absolute thinking and opposition to the dominance of causality in mathematics and the natural sciences.¹¹ Within this scientific revolution, there was still a strong commitment to logic and objectivity; however, there was also a constant search for the recognition of the importance of subjective values in science. Moreover, the adherents of this revolution opposed the application of empirical methods to understand human behaviour and sought an answer to the question of the relationship between determination and freedom of man.¹²

In 1907, in addition to his position as Assistant Professor of Physics, Kohnstamm became a Lecturer of Philosophy. In his opening lecture, *Transcendenteel Idealisme* [*Transcendental Idealism*], Kohnstamm discusses his views on science and the validity of causal reasoning.¹³ Further, he rejects materialism, positivism, and monism, or the idea that there is only one general methodology to explain phenomena. Kohnstamm's ideas were based on the work of German, neo-Kantian philosopher Heinrich Rickert (1863–1936). Rickert's work appealed to Kohnstamm because in *Die Grenzen der Naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung* [*The Limits of Concept Formation in Natural Science*] (1896–1902, 2 vols.), Rickert defends the right of transcendental values in the practice of science.¹⁴ Rickert's ideas were in line with Kohnstamm's view that knowledge and science could never be separated from moral values. Moreover, Rickert's theory gave Kohnstamm the opportunity to acknowledge "individual concreteness" and the importance of "history and its meaning" in scientific thought, in line with Kohnstamm's aim to introduce a methodology of science that recognized the free personality and will of man.¹⁵

Kohnstamm's thought of the person as a unique and valuable being, presented in his inaugural lecture *Determinisme en Natuurwetenschap* [*Determinism and Natural Science*] (1908) on the occasion of his appointment as Professor of Physics, became increasingly prominent and gained a central position in his thinking. In his lecture, Kohnstamm set out to demonstrate the close relationship between physical and psychological phenomena. He states that a human being cannot be classified under a law or rule, but each must be seen as an individual and free being.¹⁶ By advancing these ideas on human beings, he turns against the doctrine of determinism, which is the idea that no substantial change in the world is possible.¹⁷ Remarkably, in subsequent years (1908–1913), Kohnstamm also turned against the idealistic worldview without expressing this explicitly or mentioning a development, encounter, or event. He eventually believed that, in idealism, the human being was used as a means of expressing the general value or "the idea" but that idealism itself did not acknowledge what makes the individual personality unique.¹⁸ In other words, idealism did not match his idea of the person as a unique human being.

In 1913, Kohnstamm, who came from a liberal Jewish background, converted to Christianity after a spiritual experience. According to Kohnstamm, his philosophy of personalism was born in that moment: “When I am asked: What does my personalism actually mean, and how did it emerge, I must refer to this moment.”¹⁹ During the years following his conversion to Christianity, Kohnstamm developed his theory of personalism into what he called biblical personalism.

From 1905 onwards, besides a professorship in physics (1908–1928) and a lectureship in philosophy (1907–1908), Kohnstamm was involved in numerous social and political activities. He became an advocate for democracy and for the freedom of choice and conscience of man. Influenced by these activities, his search for truth and the discovery of the unique and individual personality, the coincidental fact of a vacant position as Professor of Educational Studies led to his switch to a professorship in that discipline in 1919. In his newfound capacity, Kohnstamm wrote his most famous work, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording* [*Becoming Personality*] (1929), the second of the three-volume work *Schepper en Schepping* [*Creator and Creation*]. In this work, he further develops his personalism and his educational theory.²⁰

The Philosophy of Personalism

Personalism is not a uniform philosophy but has many different variations of thought, however all versions consider “the person” or “the personality” as the key category. In contrast with materialism and idealism, according to the philosophy of personalism, there is no system of general valid rules, laws, or values. Personalism acknowledges a unique human being in every individual, and each person is assigned with personal dignity and freedom.²¹ Although the person is the central notion to personalism, the person is not considered as an individual, but as a person in community with other persons. Personalism emphasises the relationship between the person and the other and God as well as the important value of community, and an aspect in which personalism differs from individualism. At the same time, the individual person carries an absolute value and is not subordinate to the community, an area in which personalism differs from collectivism.²²

In his recent study on the origins of personalism, Bengtsson traces the origins of personalistic thinking to the work of the 18th-century German and Christian philosopher Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743–1819).²³ In his work Jacobi reacts to the Enlightenment’s rational thinking which, in his view, had developed into pantheism and atheism, where God is respectively immanent and denied. He also opposes Kantian idealism in which, although not denying God or the divine, God or the divine cannot be known by a person. Kantian idealism does not take into account the individual and free person by emphasising on the pursuit of generally valid values or ideas. Yet, according to Jacobi, a person can have a higher and spiritual experience and an individual and personal relationship with God, who also is seen as a

person. From this personal relationship with God, life can be understood and given meaning. Some later versions of personalism replace God as a person with the idea of the human person or a system of ideas. In the latter case, personalism begins to resemble the idealism rejected by Jacobi, yet is distinguished by its emphasis on the unique meaning of the person and their individual experience. Owing to these differing interpretations of God, significant differences arose between various versions of personalism. However, these versions overlap and enjoy a common European and Christian origin.²⁴ The best-known versions of personalism are American personalism: founded by philosopher and theologian Borden Parker Bowne (1847–1910), and the French school of the Catholic theologian Emmanuel Mounier (1905–1950).²⁵ Also notable is the personalistic philosophy of another contemporary of Kohnstamm, the Russian personalist and religious existentialist philosopher Nikolaj Aleksandrovitsj Berdyaev (1874–1948).²⁶

In his study on personalism, Arie de Wilde distinguishes two waves of personalistic thinking in the 20th century.²⁷ These waves relate to the aforementioned *revolt against positivism*. The first wave took place in the first two decades of the 20th century and was a response to the existing materialistic view on humanity and the mechanisation and modernisation of society. In this first wave, the unique meaning and dignity of the person was emphasised and the limits of reason and rationalisation were indicated. The first wave includes the work of psychologist and philosopher Louis William (Ludwig Wilhelm) Stern (1871–1938), a prominent representative of German personalism and an important source of inspiration for Kohnstamm.²⁸ Stern worked at the universities of Breslau and Hamburg, and since 1934 at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. He is considered a pioneer in the field of developmental psychology and one of the founders of differential psychology.²⁹ Stern explicates his philosophy, which he calls critical personalism, in his three-volume work *Person und Sache: System der Philosophischen Weltanschauung* [*Person and Thing: System of Philosophical Worldview*] (1907–1924). In this work, Stern warns about reducing the person to a sum of physical and psychological characteristics that he calls impersonalism. He argues labelling the person a unique or inspired individual does not do justice to the notion of the person. Stern calls this naïve personalism. Stern's critical personalism originates from a schematic explication and definition of the person. He defines the person as an indivisible whole or a totality, a *unitas multiplex*.³⁰ For Stern, a person forms an inseparable unity of body and mind and comprises countless interdependent traits.³¹

The second wave of personalistic thinking occurred immediately after the World War I and continued until about 1930. It built on the first wave and formed a response to social and economic changes that resulted from WWI, when associated feelings of insecurity and uncertainty led to the people's loss of faith in fixed patterns and systems. This feeling also influences the debate about causality in science that started before

the war.³² During the second wave, the focus shifted from abstract and philosophical topics to the more social-, political-, and economic-oriented applications that were important for society. The stories from the front, the high number of refugees, and the affected economies raised the possibility of living in communion with others. A holistic view of man in society was sought: a view of man that acknowledges the person, a human being, as a totality instead of reducing man to a productive element, a citizen of a certain country, or a subordinate of the (war) economy.³³ The schematic and rational thinking of the natural sciences can be recognised in the first wave of personalistic thinking, as can be seen in the work of Stern; however, schematic and rational thinking was abandoned in the second wave, wherein the more irrational and subjective approaches in the methodology of science were acknowledged.³⁴ Although Kohnstamm focuses on the philosophy of personalism prevalent during the first wave and uses schematic models in his work, his work can be classified under the second wave because of his fierce rejection of the dominance of causal reasoning in science and his emphasis on the person as a unique personality in communion with others.

de Wilde also classifies phenomenology and existentialism, and the emerging attention on the I–Thou relation under the second wave.³⁵ Although the I–Thou relation had already been described by Jacobi, it is seen as a typical product of the development of 20th-century thought on European personalism.³⁶ The focus on the I–Thou relation under the second wave can be explained by the fact that the I–Thou relation reflects a personal relationship with other human beings, the community, the world, and God. This relationship is characterised by subjectivity and does not represent formulas, schemes, natural laws, or causality.³⁷

Kohnstamm's Personalism: Idealism vs. Personalism

In *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspedagogiek* [Pedagogy of the State or Personality Pedagogy] (1919) and *Persoonlijkheid en Idee* [Personality and Idea] (1922), Kohnstamm elaborates on his personalism and applies distinctions between idealism and personalism introduced by Jacobi, although he never mentions Jacobi's name.³⁸ In these publications, Kohnstamm does not explain idealism on the basis of Kant, which was the starting point for Jacobi, but on an interpretation of Plato's doctrine.³⁹ As we described previously, Kohnstamm interprets idealism as a theory wherein the unchanging and eternal idea within the metaphysical world is central. In his explanation, he equates values with ideas characterised by unity and generality.⁴⁰ By presenting idealism as an unchanging law system and emphasising the importance of generalisation, Kohnstamm's interpretation of idealism shows similarities with materialism and positivism.⁴¹

In contrast with his interpretation of idealism, Kohnstamm describes his version of personalism as follows: "the ideal of the development of the individual person into an incomparable personality."⁴² According to

Kohnstamm, the thought of the special and individual personality takes central stage. Such a focus on individual personality proves impossible in impersonal idealism, an idea is based on generality, whereby the uniqueness of each personality is ignored. In addition to the person of man, God has a prominent place in Kohnstamm's personalism. God represents the highest personality in Kohnstamm's theory. In contrast with idealism, God is not a distant norm, law, or idea but a personality that manifests itself in this world who wants to have a relationship with the human person. God therefore is seen as a person who leads the human in a concrete and individual way by speaking in and to a person's conscience. In this way, the person knows how to live and what is right. Thereby, the human personality does not merge with God's personality; it retains the person's independence and will. This personalistic idea contrasts with idealism, wherein the person is absorbed into the absolute idea.⁴³

According to Kohnstamm, the main difference between personalism and idealism is that in idealism, values are ideas in the sense of eternal and unchanging forms. Moreover, the individual and the special are worthless; the aim is uniformity. In personalism, Kohnstamm sees the possibility of differentiation in values and the recognition and appreciation for the individuality and distinctiveness of each person. He seems to use his interpretation of idealism better to position his personalism, which ultimately and directly influences the explication of his concepts of person and personality and his educational theory.

The personalism Kohnstamm introduces in 1919 evolves over time. Kohnstamm presents his first interpretation of personalism in the field of educational theory based on the distinction between idealism and personalism. In his lecture in 1919, Kohnstamm distinguishes three forms of educational theory: the educational theory of the state (state pedagogy), individualistic educational theory (individualistic pedagogy), and educational theory of personality (*persoonlijkheidspedagogiek*). State pedagogy is based on one general idea, namely the upbringing and formation of a child to an ideal state-citizen. However, this educational idea requires uniformity and ignores the uniqueness of the child's personality. This theory is also a form of idealism owing to its general validity and schematised approach that does not take individuality and uniqueness into account but assumes a one-size-fits-all approach. For Kohnstamm, state pedagogy represents abstract thinking and uniformity within the school curriculum that holds mathematics in a central position because mathematics offers one general, valid outcome and does not take individual expression into account. In individualistic pedagogy, Kohnstamm attends to individual personality and differentiated upbringing; however, according to him, this theory focuses primarily on the individual person.⁴⁴ In personality pedagogy, Kohnstamm emphasizes both a child's own, free personality and the importance of the child's community. Personality pedagogy is a form of personalism because "the personality" is the key category of thinking and because education

should concentrate on the development of the individual person into an incomparable personality. Kohnstamm's educational theory represents concrete thinking and the possibility of individual expression within the school curriculum, such as the subjects literature, music, and the arts.

The Person in Kohnstamm's Theory

In Kohnstamm's personalism, being a person has an important place for man as well as for God. In the first volume of *Schepper en Schepping: Het Waarheidsprobleem* [*The Problem of Truth*] (1926), Kohnstamm repeatedly states difficulty in defining a person because no definition proves sufficient. Kohnstamm's difficulty fits within the tradition of personalism, particularly in the second wave, wherein static formulas or definitions are neither strived for nor intended. Eventually, Kohnstamm formulates a definition for the sake of recognisability.⁴⁵ In his definition, he mentions numerous important characteristics of the concept of person and derives many of these characteristics from Stern's definition of the person.⁴⁶ Building on Stern's definition, Kohnstamm constructs several levels of existence. He agrees with Stern that every being deserves its own name because it assumes a certain value. For the lowest level, he uses the term "individual," referring to the word "indivisible," an indivisible unity. Based on the first part of Stern's definition, Kohnstamm describes the term individual as "an existing being that despite the multiplicity of parts, forms a real, peculiar and intrinsic valuable unity and despite this multiplicity of parts, forms a whole."⁴⁷ By this Kohnstamm means that one can speak of an individual when describing, for example, the Koh-i-Noor diamond, a gemstone already known during the 13th century, originating from India and currently owned by the British royal family, since this diamond comprises several parts that form a whole and is unique among its kind. The concept of the individual can also be summarised as follows: everything that bears its own name.⁴⁸

Then, Kohnstamm went on to make his construction more complex. He distinguishes a living group from a lifeless group under the category of the individual. The living individuals are distinguished from the lifeless by uniform and purposeful activity [*einheitliche zielstrebige*], a term derived from Stern. The Koh-i-Noor diamond does not fall under this subcategory because it is not alive; however, the category does include grain that germinates or a blackbird that builds a nest. The grain and blackbird are both characterized as living individuals based on the purpose for which they live. When the grain and blackbird are considered self-active, they can both be seen as spontaneous individuals, a subsequent distinction made by Kohnstamm. Here, by "spontaneous" Kohnstamm means the living individual can develop activity without the help or input of others. He calls this, using Stern's expression, self-activity [*selbsttätigkeit*]. Kohnstamm's explanation of the spontaneous individual is consistent with Stern's definition of the person; however, in Kohnstamm's theory, the spontaneous individual is not yet equal to a person. In Stern's definition, the blackbird

and grain may be identified as a person, but calling a blackbird a person does not fit with Kohnstamm's view.⁴⁹ The main difference between the person and all other spontaneous individuals, such as the blackbird and grain, is that the person is characterised by morality whereas spontaneous individuals are not. Although the individual and person have overlapping characteristics, the characteristic of morality is distinctive between the two. In Kohnstamm's theory, the person is a moral individual and distinguishes himself or herself from everything else created, such as animals and plants, which are merely individuals.⁵⁰

Thus, while Kohnstamm extensively follows Stern in the definition of the person, his explication of the human person is clearly different. In Stern's personalism, being a person is not limited to human beings.⁵¹ Stern distinguishes a hierarchy of persons of different sizes, starting with the atom, followed by a cell, plant, animal, human, family, people, humanity, earth, and solar system and ending with the Absolute person or God [*Al-persoon*]. Each person is part of the higher person while, at the same time, the person forms the unity for everything under him. Thus, the human person is part of and subordinate to the family, the people, humanity, earth, and eventually the Absolute person, and forms unity for the lower people: animals, plants, cells, and atoms. All persons mentioned are real persons and have their own value because they are units with a purpose.⁵² In Kohnstamm's personalism, although man is above the atom, cell, plant, and animal, and is a part of higher categories such as family, people, society, earth, or cosmos, he is not subordinate to these higher categories. The human person is the highest created category and "a being of his own nature" owing to the characteristics of moral knowledge. Therefore, man as a person has a separate place in his system and is not just "a part of," or "merging into," or "developing into" higher categories. Based on this important characteristic of moral knowledge, Kohnstamm also takes a stance against evolutionist theory by which the human person is one part of a chain of developments.⁵³

In *Persoonlijkheid in Wording* [*Becoming Personality*], Kohnstamm criticizes Stern and mentions another important characteristic of the person, namely self-awareness. Kohnstamm considers self-awareness important as this characteristic makes having relationships with other persons possible. This characteristic is also important in his theory to the concept of God as a person. God as a person with self-awareness is important to Kohnstamm because awareness makes it possible for man to have a relationship with God.⁵⁴ Man's relationship with God shows the main difference between Kohnstamm's and Stern's theories. In Stern's theory, God or the Absolute person is not a person with self-awareness, which, according to Kohnstamm, would make a relationship between man and God impossible. For Stern, the highest possible relationship which a man can enter into is a relationship between man and ideas or a set of ideas. Stern's critical personalism therefore seems to lead to a form of idealism. Kohnstamm therefore characterizes Stern's theory as personalistic pantheism or semi-

personalistic. The possibility of a relationship between a person and God forms the centre of Kohnstamm's personalism and key to truth.⁵⁵

The Personality in Kohnstamm's Theory

What does the personality mean in Kohnstamm's theory? From the start of his career as Professor of Educational Studies, the personality is significantly emphasized and forms the key category in Kohnstamm's personalism.⁵⁶ Note that he does not view the personality solely in a psychological sense, namely as a totality of personal traits or characteristics. Moreover, while Kohnstamm puts the personality at the centre of his personalism, he does not present the human personality as the highest ideal. He explicitly distances himself from romantic personalism, as proposed by Nietzsche, in which the human personality is elevated to a cult: self-willed and not bound by a superhuman will or divine commandment.⁵⁷

Although Kohnstamm defines the concept of person, he refrains from defining the personality. According to Kohnstamm, no definition could offer a sufficient representation of the uniqueness of the personality. Any attempt to define or classify the personality therefore results in generalities and harms the personality. In other words, the personality can only be intuitively understood.⁵⁸ Although Kohnstamm does not define the concept of personality, it is discussed in several notions in his theory. We speak to three notions of personality within our argument.

The first notion follows what Kohnstamm repeatedly writes about the personality: the personality expresses the uniqueness of every person. The personality is the uniqueness and individuality of man, that which is never repeated and never returns.⁵⁹ This explanation of the personality corresponds to that of the German philosopher and personalist Nicolai Hartmann (1882–1951), who describes the personality as follows:

What personality is, can only be said in contrast to the person. Because both are not the same. Every person is a person; Personhood as such is therefore a general one, however much the individual persons may be different. ... Personality is that in a person, what he has for himself, does not return to others, the unique and the only thing about a person.⁶⁰

Hartmann also says, "Personality is that in a person, which is not common to others."⁶¹ Although person and personality are related, both Hartmann and Kohnstamm stress the difference between the generality of the person and the uniqueness of the personality.

Kohnstamm attributes individuality to human beings, animals, and plants as well as to things such as a unique diamond. Kohnstamm ascribes morality as a distinguishing characteristic for the person. Subsequently, he links personality to the moral characteristic of the person. The second notion in Kohnstamm's work is related to this characteristic. According

to Kohnstamm, each personality gives unique answers to the questions of right and wrong and the personality characterizes the person in their deepest decisions.⁶² In other words, Kohnstamm interprets the personality as a continuous series of normative choices. The personality makes moral choices, learns, improves, and consequently develops, and it must continuously make new choices. Therefore, Kohnstamm also interprets the personality as “a realm of infinity” or an ideal that is constantly strived for but never achieved by the person because a new choice must always be made.⁶³ That is why Kohnstamm speaks of a becoming personality and not being a personality.⁶⁴ The similarities here between Kohnstamm’s and Stern’s views are striking. Although Stern gives a different explanation to the personality than Kohnstamm, he sees the personality as unique for the human and the becoming of a personality as a task that can never be completed.⁶⁵

To explain the personality, Kohnstamm uses concepts from ethics and theology because these disciplines offer vocabulary for existential phenomena.⁶⁶ However, even on the basis of these disciplines, he cannot define the personality because, for him, the personality remains part of a great mystery. Therefore, the third notion in Kohnstamm’s work is to consider the personality as a reflection of the character of a divine personality, a reflection of God or a being, and part of a great mystery. Kohnstamm considers the personality of man as a derivative or reflection of the personality of God, originating in the idea that man was created in God’s image.⁶⁷ Terms used by Kohnstamm such as “the higher,” “the mysterious unity,” or “primal intuition” are imbued with a mystical perspective. His description of the personality, as mentioned previously, shows similarities to having a mystical individual experience that cannot be expressed in words. This mystery of the personality is also reflected in the highest level of behaviour, as distinguished by Kohnstamm. To explain differences between behaviours of types of creatures, Kohnstamm distinguishes several levels: the inorganic, the vegetative, the animal, the human, and the absolute. The human and absolute levels are attributed to human beings and are related to the characteristic of self-awareness. The human level is characterised by self-awareness and intellectual, moral and aesthetic formation. Kohnstamm calls the highest level the absolute level, in which the personality is involved:

I who becomes aware of his relationship to... the Original Ground, the Whole of Things. Such an experience can only be expressed in religious language. From a pantheistic (idealistic–impersonalistic) or theistic (personalistic) point of view, the attainment of this absolute level can be called: the awareness of our coherence with the All, or our standing before God.⁶⁸

For Kohnstamm, the absolute level is the highest level of experience of man. He utilises abstract and mysterious language to describe this level.

This spiritual experience proposed by Kohnstamm shows similarities with the much more concretely proposed I–Thou relation.

The I–Thou Relation in Kohnstamm’s Theory

The I–Thou relation brings to mind the most famous I–Thou thinker, the Austrian-Jewish philosopher and personalist Martin Buber (1878–1965).⁶⁹ Although Kohnstamm and Buber were contemporaries and their personalistic philosophies appear at about the same time, it is not clear whether Kohnstamm read Buber’s work while he was developing his personalism and educational theory during the 1920s. In a previous study on Kohnstamm’s personalism by Hofstee (1973), he opines Kohnstamm developed his personalism independent of Buber’s work.⁷⁰ Like many other philosophers of the 1920s, Kohnstamm shows an interest in the I–Thou relation but does not refer to names or sources.⁷¹

Both Kohnstamm and Buber can be classified as biblical personalists; the former a Jew who converted to Christianity and therefore came to embrace the New Testament, which Buber did not.⁷² Since the two had what can be called biblical personalism in common, many similarities can be found throughout their theories, including individual responsibility of each person, consequent respect for the individual person, and encounters with the other and reciprocal understanding in relationships. These concepts have their origins in the ideas that man is created in the image of God and that the person is the creature who resembles God and interacts with God within a relationship. In both philosophers’ theories being in a relationship with God can be described as “a mystery.”⁷³

In *Persoonlijkheid in Wording* (1929), Kohnstamm equates the concepts of person and personality with the I–Thou relation.⁷⁴ He describes the I–Thou relation between man and God as a unique relationship in which both retain their personality and in which responsibility and freedom are safeguarded.⁷⁵ In the I–Thou relation, the personality of man meets the personality of God.⁷⁶ Although this relationship is a mystery, it is no abstraction. He describes it as: “...a complete and concrete experience that we have from God approaching us in Jesus Christ.”⁷⁷ For Kohnstamm, this relationship means a living contact between a person (human being) and a Person (God/Jesus).⁷⁸ Despite his areligious upbringing, he refers in his explanation to an Israelian interpretation of the relation between God and person, an interpretation he shares with Buber.⁷⁹ Kohnstamm presents the “knowing” of God in this relationship as “Israelian knowing,” which he explains as “being in an intimate life relationship.”⁸⁰ This relationship is characterized by love and the practical knowledge to make ethical choices. Kohnstamm contrasts this kind of knowing to *gnosis*, the Greek conception of knowledge. He describes *gnosis* as an idealistic term. For Kohnstamm, this Greek conception means keeping a distance from the object of knowledge, thus emphasising objectivity.⁸¹

Unlike Buber's, Kohnstamm's interpretation of this relationship is explicitly Christian, as it is linked to the person of Jesus Christ. In referring to Jesus, Kohnstamm distinguishes himself from other personalistic movements, leading him to articulate a Christian approach to personalism and, consequently, educational theory.⁸²

Educational Implications of Kohnstamm's Personalism

Kohnstamm's educational theory is characterised by his personalistic interpretations and explanations of the concepts of person, personality, and the I–Thou relation. In this section, we briefly address the main implications of Kohnstamm's personalism for his educational theory.

One implication relates to Kohnstamm's concept of the uniqueness of personality.⁸³ Education must take the uniqueness of every child into account and is thus, in the first place, characterized by differentiation and the desire to develop the child's intelligence, talents, and qualities. Kohnstamm strongly advocates for the teaching of literature, the arts, physical education, and drama, since, in these subjects a child need not relate to a uniform or prescribed answer; on the contrary, diversity and creativity are desired and offer the child the opportunity to express his or her individuality. It is precisely in these subjects that a personality can express itself in a unique way and thus may form and develop. Especially in physical education, Kohnstamm sees the personalist idea reflected in the person as a unity between body and mind.⁸⁴ However, this focus on the uniqueness of the personality should not be confused with an individualistic educational theory. In Kohnstamm's personalism, the person is always a "individual in a community," a balance in which the individual serves the community but never sacrifices his or her individuality for the community.⁸⁵

A second implication relates to Kohnstamm's concept of personality as a continuous series of normative choices. Kohnstamm equates the education of the child and his or her personality with the formation of conscience. According to the philosophy of personalism, there is no given system of laws and norms. The right thing to do differs for every person. One's conscience guides the making of normative choices and limits the kind of subjectivity that may result from a philosophy without a system of laws. In other words, conscience regulates what the person should do under certain circumstances. Therefore, the formation of a conscience is the most important aim of education. In Kohnstamm's theory, upbringing and education mean that parents teach the child to listen to the voice of his or her conscience and to bear responsibility for his or her own decisions and actions.⁸⁶

Kohnstamm's emphasis on conscience education is also linked to his concept of personality, which he equates with the I–Thou relation. For, God is the one who speaks in the conscience and gives a concrete answer to the question of what the person ought to do in a particular set

of circumstances.⁸⁷ It is the parent's task to educate a child to stand in the I–Thou relationship and to listen to God's voice. In this way, the child can live, grow, develop and become a personality in a state which Kohnstamm himself describes as “full of inner peace.”⁸⁸

Although Kohnstamm starts to apply his personalism to school curriculum in 1919, he does not limit educational sciences to school, rather he extends them to leisure time, youth movements, and the family. He especially stresses that the family is the best and most important place for conscience education that takes into account the unique character of the child.⁸⁹ This is because of the simple fact that parents and siblings know their child best. If the school wants to contribute to the development of the personality and the formation of conscience, direct contact and a relationship between the child and the teacher are required. Kohnstamm considers this relationship to be more important than any curriculum or educational plan. The teacher should see the unique personality of the child and, based on this personality, should differentiate between individuals in his or her teaching.⁹⁰

Conclusion

Kohnstamm gives God, whom he regards as the highest personality, a prominent place in his personalism. The individual can find truth in his or her relationship with God, whereupon the personality fulfils its purpose. This interpretation of personalism forms the theoretical basis for his educational theory, which can be summarised as a theory of the development of each individual person into an incomparable and unique personality, reflecting the individual's unique relationship with God.

The main features of Kohnstamm's educational theory can be understood by distinguishing between the three concepts of person, personality, and the I–Thou relation on the one hand, and showing the consistency between them on the other. There is a strong connection between Kohnstamm's explanation of personality as the uniqueness of a person and his plea for education that is characterised by differentiation and the desire to develop the child's intelligence, talents, and qualities. Another feature is his emphasis on education as the process of conscience formation. This is based on his interpretation of the personality as a continuous series of normative choices equated with the I–Thou relation, a relation in which God speaks and guides the person through the voice of the conscience. The family is the most important arena for the formation of conscience, wherein the child is educated to listen to this voice.

Kohnstamm's interpretation of personalism makes his theory manifestly Christian, while also leaving room for more general educational ideas. Kohnstamm intended to write an educational theory based on his personalism that was connected to a Christian upbringing but, at the same time, left room for a non-Christian upbringing.⁹¹ The space

Kohnstamm allows for other beliefs is in line with the pluriform concept of truth for which he stood. He describes his personalism several times as just one approach to the truth. Kohnstamm sees the recognition of other worldviews as a logical consequence of his personalism because it corresponds to the idea that each personality is unique and has his or her own beliefs and interpretations.⁹² Therefore, he does not elaborate on how his Christian education theory should be understood by and worked out for non-Christians.

Our argument mainly addresses Kohnstamm's biblical personalism, ideas which he developed before World War II. After the war, he broadened his personalism by incorporating humanism and a personalist-socialist orientation towards society.⁹³ Whether and, if so, how this shift affects his educational theory requires further inquiry.

Endnotes

- ¹ This work is supported by the NWO (the Dutch Scientific Organization) under grant number 023.010.007.
- ² Ernst Mulder, "Patterns, Principles, and Profession: The Early Decades of Educational Science in the Netherlands," *Pedagogica Historica* 34, no. 1 (1998): 231–246; John Exalto, "Sexual Hygiene: Dutch Reflections on the Adolescent Body in the Early Twentieth Century," *History of Education* 48, no. 4 (2019): 516–528.
- ³ John Exalto, Leendert Groenendijk, and Siebren Miedema, "Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm (1875–1951): Opvoedingswetenschap op Filosofische en Empirische Grondslag," in *Vier Grondleggers van de Pedagogiek: Ph. A. Kohnstamm, M. J. Langeveld, H. F. W. Stellwag en S. Strasser. Pioniers van de Nederlandse Gedragwetenschappen*, ed. Vittorio Busato, Mineke Van Essen, and Willem Koops (Amsterdam: Prometheus/Bert Bakker, 2015); *Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspedagogiek. Rede, op Maandag 3 Februari 1919* (Groningen, Den Haag: J. B. Wolters, 1919).
- ⁴ In chronological order: *Ockert Cornelius Erasmus, Die Personalisme van Kohnstamm as Grondslag vir sy Filosofie van die Opvoeding* (Amsterdam: J. M. Meulenhoff, 1962); Harm Hofstee, *Het Bijbels Personalisme van Prof. Dr. Ph. A. Kohnstamm. Ontstaan en Grondslagen* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1973); Andries Lodewijk Rende Vermeer, *Philipp A. Kohnstamm over Democratie* (Kampen: J.H. Kok); and Exalto et al., "Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm (1875–1951)."
- ⁵ Mulder, "Patterns, Principles, and Profession: The Early Decades of Educational Science in the Netherlands;" Nathan Deen, *Een Halve eeuw Onderwijsresearch in Nederland: Het Nuttsseminarium voor Pedagogiek aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1919–1969* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1969); John Exalto, "Sexual Hygiene."

- ⁶ Ernst Mulder, *Beginsel en Beroep. Pedagogiek aan de Universiteit in Nederland 1900–1940* (Amsterdam: Historisch Seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1989), 11; Henk A. Klomp, *De Relativiteitstheorie in Nederland. Breekijzer voor Democratisering in het Interbellum* (Utrecht: Epsilon Uitgaven, 1997), 7.
- ⁷ Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, *Hoe Mijn “Bijbelsch Personalisme” Ontstond* (Haarlem: H. D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon, 1934), 19.
- ⁸ David Baneke, “Synthetic Technocracy: Dutch Scientific Intellectuals in Science, Society and Culture, 1880–1950,” *The British Journal for the History of Science* 44, no. 1 (2011): 89–113; Arie de Wilde, *De Persoon: Over de Grondslagen van het Personalistisch Denken* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1951), chap. 4 and 68, 223.
- ⁹ Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspedagogiek*, 10–13.
- ¹⁰ de Wilde, *De Persoon*, 68–69; Mulder, *Beginsel en Beroep*, 11.
- ¹¹ H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society. The Reorientation of European Social Thought (1890–1930)*, 3rd ed. (Brighton, Sussex, UK: The Harvester Press Limited, 1979), 183–191.
- ¹² Baneke, “Synthetic Technocracy,” 96–97; Exalto et al., “Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm,” 41; Klomp, *De Relativiteitstheorie in Nederland*, 9–13, 68–70; Mulder, *Beginsel en Beroep*, 11–14; Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, chap. 2; and Ido Weijers, “Philip Kohnstamm: Universeel Intellectueel, Vrijzinnig,” *Comenius* 3 (1988): 259–273.
- ¹³ Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Transcendenteel Idealisme: Rede Uitgesproken op Maandag 21 Januari 1907 Door Dr. Ph. Kohnstamm” (lecture, University of Amsterdam, January 21, 1907).
- ¹⁴ Kohnstamm, *Hoe Mijn “Bijbelsch Personalisme” Ontstond*, 24.
- ¹⁵ Hofstee, *Het Bijbels Personalisme van Prof. Dr. Ph. A. Kohnstamm*, 30–31; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, preface to *Schepper en Schepping: Een Stelsel van Personalistische Wijsbegeerte op Bijbelschen Grondslag*, vol. 1, *Het Waarheidsprobleem: Grondleggende Kritiek van het Christelijke Waarheidsbennustzijn* (Haarlem: H. D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon, 1926); Kohnstamm, *Hoe Mijn “Bijbelsch Personalisme” Ontstond*, 24; Baneke, “Synthetic Technocracy,” 99.
- ¹⁶ Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Determinisme en Natuurwetenschap: Rede op Maandag 26 October 1908 Uitgesproken Door Dr. Ph. Kohnstamm” (lecture, University of Amsterdam, October 26, 1908), 36.
- ¹⁷ Klomp, *De Relativiteitstheorie in Nederland*, 130.
- ¹⁸ Kohnstamm, “Determinisme en Natuurwetenschap;” Hofstee, *Het Bijbels Personalisme van Prof. Dr. Ph. A. Kohnstamm*, 31–36.
- ¹⁹ Kohnstamm, *Hoe Mijn “Bijbelsch Personalisme” Ontstond*, 30.

- ²⁰ Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, *Schepper en Schepping. Een Stelsel van Personalistische Wijsbegeerte op Bijbelschen Grondslag*, vol. 2, *Persoonlijkheid in Wordin: Schets eener Christelijke Opvoedkunde* (Haarlem: H. D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon, 1929). The first volume is entitled *Het Waarheidsprobleem* (1926). The third volume is entitled *De Heilige [The Holy One]* (1931).
- ²¹ Jan Olof Bengtsson, *The Worldview of Personalism: Origins and Early Development* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006); Patricia A. Sayre, "Personalism," in *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, ed. C. Taliaferro, P. Draper, and P. L. Quinn (West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 151–158.
- ²² Dries Deweer, "The Political Theory of Personalism: Maritain and Mounier on Personhood and Citizenship," *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 74, no. 2 (2013): 108–126.
- ²³ Bengtsson, *The Worldview of Personalism*; Johan de Tavernier, "The Historical Roots of Personalism: From Renouvier's *Le Personnalisme*, Mounier's *Manifeste au Service du Personnalisme* and Maritain's *Humanisme Intégral to Janssens' Personne et Société*," *Ethical Perspectives* 16, no. 3 (2009): 361–392; S. H. Han, *Die Wirklichkeit des Menschen im Personalismus* (Martin Bubers, Ferdinand Ebners, Emil Brunners und Friedrich Gogartens (Hamburg, Germany: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2001).
- ²⁴ Sayre, "Personalism," 151–158.
- ²⁵ Bengtsson, *The Worldview of Personalism*; de Tavernier, "The Historical Roots of Personalism;" Erazim Kohak, "Personalism: The Next Hundred Years," *Personalist Forum* 4 (1988): 43–52.
- ²⁶ Having lived in exile in Paris since 1924, Berdyaev was involved in the personalistic journal *Esprit* founded by the aforementioned Mounier and is therefore also classified under French personalism. Berdyaev regards the person as a free existence. As a consequence of that freedom, the person influences society, and person and society serve each other. Berdyaev's philosophy has many similarities with Kohnstamm's personalism, including the centrality in their philosophies of the human person, the emphasis they place on the value of human freedom, their opposition to the objectification of man, and their ideas on the relationship between God and man, a relationship characterised by freedom and love. One point of distinction concerns the value of democracy, on which Berdyaev has a typically Russian view. Berdyaev preferred a kind of corporatism, a form of communism, whereas Kohnstamm was a defender of democracy and democratic rights (de Wilde, *De Betwee*, 98–106; Exalto et al., "Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm;" Piama Gajdenko and E. M. Swiderski, "The Problem of Freedom in Nicolai Berdjaev's Existential Philosophy," *Studies in East European Thought* 46, no. 3 (1994): 153–185). Despite the similarities between these thinkers, there is no evidence that Kohnstamm ever read the work of Berdyaev.

- ²⁷ de Wilde, *De Persoon*, 77–107; Carel Kruger Oberholzer, “Moderne Persoonsvisies,” *HTS Theological Studies* 13, no. 2 (1957): 45–81, 61.
- ²⁸ James T. Lamiel, *Uncovering Critical Personalism Readings from William Stern’s Contributions to Scientific Psychology* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2021), doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-67734-3; James T. Lamiel and Werner Deutsch, “In the Light of a Star: An Introduction to William Stern’s Critical Personalism,” *Theory & Psychology* 10, no. 6 (2000): 715–730.
- ²⁹ Rebecca Heinemann, *Das Kind als Person: William Stern als Wegbereiter der Kinder- und Jugendforschung 1900 bis 1933* (Bad Heilbrunn: Julius Klinkhardt, 2016); James T. Lamiel, *Beyond Individual and Group Differences: Human Individuality, Scientific Psychology, and William Stern’s Critical Personalism* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003).
- ³⁰ Heinemann, *Das Kind als Person*; Lamiel and Deutsch, “In the Light of a Star;” Lamiel, *Beyond Individual and Group Differences*; and James T. Lamiel, “Introducing William Stern (1871–1938),” *History of Psychology* 15, no. 4 (2012): 379–384.
- ³¹ James T. Lamiel, “Psychology and Personalism by William Stern,” *New Ideas in Psychology* 28, no. 2 (2010): 110–134.
- ³² David Baneke, *Synthetisch Denke: Natuurwetenschappers over Hun Rol in een Moderne Maatschappij, 1900–1940* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2008), 146–149; Klomp, *De Relativiteitstheorie in Nederland*, chap. 1.
- ³³ Baneke, “Synthetic Technocracy,” 100–101; Deweer, “The Political Theory of Personalism,” 109; de Wilde, *De Persoon*, chap. 6; and Sayre, “Personalism,” 151–158.
- ³⁴ Baneke, “Synthetic Technocracy,” 100–101; Exalto et al., “Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm,” 41.
- ³⁵ de Wilde, *De Persoon*, chap. 6; Deweer, “The Political Theory of Personalism,” 109.
- ³⁶ Marinus H. Bolkestein, *Het Ik-Gij Schema in de Nieuwere Philosophie en Theologie* (Wageningen: H. Veenman & Zonen, 1941).
- ³⁷ de Tavernier, “The Historical Roots of Personalism”; de Wilde, *De Persoon*, 165–169; Henri van Praag, *De Zin der Opvoeding* (Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1950), 150–154.
- ³⁸ Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspedagogiek*; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee* (Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1922).
- ³⁹ Kohnstamm also called idealism platonism. Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Platonisme en Personalisme,” *Tijdschrift voor Wijsbegeerte* 16 (1922): 302–311.
- ⁴⁰ Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspedagogiek*, 9; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee*, 15–16.

- ⁴¹ Hofstee, *Het Bijbels Personalisme van Prof. Dr. Ph. A. Kohnstamm*, 57.
- ⁴² Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspedagogiek*, 14.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 20.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ⁴⁵ Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Stern’s Psychologie,” *Pedagogische Studiën* 1, no. 5 (1936): 142–146; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Het Levenswerk van William Stern,” *Pedagogische Studiën* 19, no. 6 (1938): 175–179.
- ⁴⁶ Stern’s definition of the person reads: “A person is an entity that despite the multiplicity of parts forms a real, unique and intrinsically valuable unity, and despite the multiplicity of the parts functions achieves a unifying, goal striving self-activation.” Wilhelm Stern, *Die Menschliche Persönlichkeit*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1923), 5. Translation from Lamiell, “Psychology and Personalism by William Stern,” 129.
- ⁴⁷ “Een Bestaand Wezen Dat Ondanks de Veelheid der Delen, een Reële, Eigenaardige en Eigenwaardige Eenheid Vormt en Als Zodanig Ondanks die Veelheid een Geheel Vormt,” Kohnstamm, *Het Waarheidsprobleem*, 373. Translation by authors.
- ⁴⁸ Kohnstamm, *Het Waarheidsprobleem*, 373; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 70–75.
- ⁴⁹ Kohnstamm, *Het Waarheidsprobleem*, 374.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 376.
- ⁵¹ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 70–75; Cornelius A. Plantinga, *The Personalist Philosophies of William Stern and Philipp Kohnstamm* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1940).
- ⁵² Heinemann, *Das Kind als Person*, 155; Stern, *Die Menschliche Persönlichkeit*, 7–10.
- ⁵³ P. A. Hoogwerf, *De Pedagogiek van Prof. Dr. Ph. Kohnstamm: Met een Inleiding tot Zijn Werken door*, P. A. Hoogwerf, *Bekende Pedagogen*, ed. J. H. Gunning Wzn, P. A. Hoogwerf, and H. J. van Wijlen (Groningen, Den Haag, Batavia: J. B. Wolters, 1933), 120.
- ⁵⁴ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 39–44, 70–75; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Personalisme, Personalistische Psychologie,” in *Pedagogische Encyclopedie*, ed. R. Casimir and J. E. Verheyen (Groningen, Batavia: J. B. Wolters, 1949), 399–403.
- ⁵⁵ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 70–75; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Types and Meanings of Personalism,” *The Personalist* 18 (1937): 167–176; Plantinga, *The Personalist Philosophies of William Stern and Philipp Kohnstamm*, 49–65.

- ⁵⁶ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee*; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 70–75.
- ⁵⁷ Kohnstamm, Preface to *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Persoonlijkheidscultus of Personalistische Opvoeding,” *Lichamelijke Opvoeding: Maandblad Genijnd Aan de Studie van Lichamelijke Oefeningen* 1, no. 9 (1932): 217–224.
- ⁵⁸ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee*, 21. Translation by authors.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*; Kohnstamm, “Personalisme, Personalistische Psychologie,” 399–403.
- ⁶⁰ Nicolas Hartmann, “Das Ethos der Persönlichkeit,” in *Abhandlungen zur Systematischen Philosophie* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1955), 311–318 (citation, p. 311). Translation by authors.
- ⁶¹ Hartmann, “Das Ethos der Persönlichkeit,” 313.
- ⁶² Kohnstamm, *Het Waarheidsprobleem*, 372–376; Hoogwerf, *De Pedagogiek van Prof. Dr. Ph. Kohnstamm*, 135, 155.
- ⁶³ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 11, 26; Hoogwerf, *De Pedagogiek van Prof. Dr. Ph. Kohnstamm*, 105.
- ⁶⁴ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 70–78; Kohnstamm, “Persoonlijkheidscultus of Personalistische Opvoeding;” Kohnstamm, *Schepper en Schepping*, vol. 3; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, *De Heilige: Proeve van Een Christelijke Geloofsleer voor Dezen Tijd* (Haarlem: H. D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon., 1931), 52; Hoogwerf, *De Pedagogiek van Prof. Dr. Ph. Kohnstamm*, 34.
- ⁶⁵ Heinemann, *Das Kind als Person*, 156–175; Lamiell, “Psychology and Personalism by William Stern;” Stern, *Die Menschliche Persönlichkeit*, 17; Michael A. Tissaw, “A Critical Look at Critical (Neo)personalism: Unitas Multiplex and the ‘Person’ Concept,” *New Ideas in Psychology* 28, no. 2 (2010): 159–167; and Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Über typen des Personalismus,” in ed. Alfred Adler, *Festschrift William Stern zum 60 Geburtstag am 29 April 1931* (Leipzig, Germany: Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1931), 158–161, 161.
- ⁶⁶ Kohnstamm, Preface to *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*; Kohnstamm, *De Heilige*, chap. 2; Plantinga, *The Personalist Philosophies of William Stern and Philipp Kohnstamm*, 181, 192.
- ⁶⁷ Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspedagogiek*, 14; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee*; Kohnstamm, *De Heilige*, 21–24, 49–56.
- ⁶⁸ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 43–44. Translation by authors.
- ⁶⁹ Martin Buber, *Ich und Du* (Leipzig, Germany: Insel-Verlag, 1923).
- ⁷⁰ Hofstee, *Het Bijbels Personalisme van Prof. Dr. Ph. A. Kohnstamm*, 68, 72, 75.

- ⁷¹ Kohnstamm, *Het Waarheidsprobleem*, 437; Kohnstamm, Preface to *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*; Hofstee, *Het Bijbels Personalisme van Prof. Dr. Ph. A. Kohnstamm*, 76.
- ⁷² Hofstee, *Het Bijbels Personalisme van Prof. Dr. Ph. A. Kohnstamm*, 114–124.
- ⁷³ Also in Berdyaev's theory. de Wilde, *De Persoon*, 19, 84–85, 134.
- ⁷⁴ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, Preface and 70–75; Kohnstamm, "Types and Meanings of Personalism."
- ⁷⁵ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 100–111; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, *Modern-Psychologische Opvattingen Omtrent Godsdiens en Religie: Een Kritisch Overzicht* (Amsterdam: Boekhandel W. ten Have, 1931), 58; Kohnstamm, *De Heilige*, 49–60.
- ⁷⁶ Kohnstamm, Preface to *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*; Also in Kohnstamm, *De Heilige*, 56–60.
- ⁷⁷ Kohnstamm, *De Heilige*, 58.
- ⁷⁸ See also Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee*.
- ⁷⁹ de Wilde, *De Persoon*, ch. IX.
- ⁸⁰ Kohnstamm, *De Heilige*, 6.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 3–9.
- ⁸² Kohnstamm, *Hoe mijn Bijbelsch Personalisme Ontstond*; Kohnstamm, "Personalisme, Personalistische Psychologie," 403.
- ⁸³ Personalism resonates with identity theories because they both assume that the person as a unique individuality. While the relationship between the philosophy of personalism and identity is interesting, it is not the subject of this study. Within the context of this study, we note that identity theories describe how identity develops; see for instance Erik Erickson's identity theory and his ideas on identity crisis. Kohnstamm's explanations of the personality and the educational implications may partly coincide with identity development but differ from the process of identity development.
- ⁸⁴ Ph. A. Kohnstamm, "Persoonlijkheidscultus of Personalistische Opvoeding," *Lichamelijke Opvoeding: Maandblad Gewijd Aan de Studie van Lichamelijke Oefeningen* 1, no. 9 (1932), 217–224.
- ⁸⁵ Kohnstamm, *Staatspædagogiek of Persoonlijkheidspædagogiek*; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee*; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, sec. 27.
- ⁸⁶ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 60; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, "Pædagogiek," in *Scientia: Handboek voor Wetenschap, Kunst en Godsdiens*, vol. 1, ed. A. W. de Groot (Utrecht: Uitgeversmaatschappij W. de Haan, 1938), 209–238.

- ⁸⁷ Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkeidspedagogiek*, 18–22.
- ⁸⁸ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 66–78, 122.
- ⁸⁹ Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkeidspedagogiek*, 24–26; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 132–135.
- ⁹⁰ Kohnstamm, *Staatspedagogiek of Persoonlijkeidspedagogiek*, 25–26; Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm, “Inleiding tot de Psychologie der Puberteit,” in *Brochuren-Reeks “De Jeugd” voor Ouders en Opvoeders. Christelijke Jeugdwerk I, Reeks Lezingen Gebonden in den Cursus ’23/’24 voor de Amsterdamsche Christelijke Jeugdcentrale*, eds. Ph .A. Kohnstamm, A. J. Drewes, P. Stegenga, and A. A. Van Rhijn (Utrecht: G. J. A. Ruys, 1924), 3–15. Personalism also influenced Kohnstamm’s ideas for a new school. Kohnstamm’s ideal school is one where personality is formed and space is given to all kinds of worldviews. Therefore, Kohnstamm argues that school should be a place where children from different backgrounds and diverse worldviews meet each other. Through encounters at school, children might then learn how to respect each other and interact. In this way, the personality would also be developed. For a more detailed analysis of Kohnstamm’s ideas for a new school and its relation to his personalism, see: Marloes Hoencamp, John Exalto, Abraham de Muynck, and Doret de Ruyter, “A Dutch example of New Education: Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm (1875–1951) and his ideas about the New School,” *History of Education* (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2022.2038697>
- ⁹¹ Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 43.
- ⁹² Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid en Idee*, 67; Kohnstamm, “Platonisme en Personalisme,” 309; Kohnstamm, *Persoonlijkheid in Wording*, 120–135; Philipp Kohnstamm, “Towards a New Philosophy,” *Journal of Philosophical Studies*, no. 18 (1930): 159–174; and Kohnstamm, “Types and Meanings of Personalism,” 176.
- ⁹³ For instance, Ph. Kohnstamm, “Idealisme Contra Existentialisme en Personalisme,” *Het Keerpunt* 1 (1947): 659–671.

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