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EDUCATION: ITS ETHICAL DIMENSION
AND METAPHORICAL VISUALISATION
IN JOHN HENRY NEWMAN'S
THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY (1852)

Abstract. Almost two centuries ago, in his book *The Idea of a University*, Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801–1890) formulated his vision of university education, given in the light of faith and catholic ethics. This paper attempts to frame Newman's view of a university using the theory of conceptual metaphor as initially proposed by Lakoff and Johnson in their book *Metaphors We Live By* (cf. also Lakoff & Johnson 1999; Lakoff 1987, 1993; and Kövecses 2015; among others). In particular, the paper seeks to establish the main networks of implicational metaphors which, we believe, structure Newman's idea of a university. Principally, there are three main networks of conceptual metaphors underlying our understanding of Newman's vision of a university: LIFE IS A BUILDING; LIFE IS A LIVING ORGANISM; and LIFE IS A JOURNEY. The paper deals only with the first network in greater detail. In the main metaphor LIFE IS A BUILDING, other metaphors referring to university are evoked, for example UNIVERSITY IS A PLACE, FIELD, SHELTER, AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM, A NATION AND A COMBINATION OF COLOURS; KNOWLEDGE IS A PLANT, A REWARD, GOOD, FREEDOM, POWER, TREASURE, ART AND BEAUTY.

Key words: John Henry Newman; university education; ethics; the theory of conceptual metaphor; networks of implicational metaphors.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Anna Sfard's view, the field of education is still “in a state of perturbation, with prospects of a new equilibrium not yet in sight” (4). It seems that in order to reach this new stability it is indispensable to create “a stimulating, challenging and rewarding university experience in a world-class learning community, through sharing a unique fusion of education, research

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and professional practice that inspires students and staff to enrich the world” (*Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*). Seen in this light, it is instructive to search in the past for finding out how educators pursued to achieve the “equilibrium” and what visions of education they had in mind. What is more, some previous methods may serve as a solution to the issue of social and ethnic diversity, and ethical dilemmas that modern educational institutes, particularly the public ones, need to address (cf. *IICE*).

This paper presents, hence, Cardinal John Henry Newman’s (1801–1890) vision of university education, which he formulated, almost two centuries ago, in his book *The Idea of a University*. As a well-recognised English writer, a prominent philosopher, the leader of the Oxford Movement, a theologian, a preacher, and a convert from the Anglican Church to the Roman Catholic Church, Newman was appointed a rector of the Catholic University of Ireland in 1851, known today as University College in Dublin. *The Idea of a University* is a series of lectures concerning the role and nature of education, which he was delivering as the rector between 1852 and 1852. Having retired in 1852 from the rectorship, he was nominated a cardinal in the Catholic Church in 1879 (*Catholic Encyclopedia online*, “John Henry Newman”).

In his idea of education, Newman represents the group of educators who argue for the need of restructuring a concept of pedagogical effectiveness in such a way to make the ethical component its essential and indispensable element (cf. Bárcena et al.). This article attempts to frame Newman’s view of a university. The theory of conceptual metaphor, as initially proposed by Lakoff and Johnson in their book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980/2003), is used as the theoretical framework for the purpose of the analysis here. According to Lakoff and Johnson, we do not have direct access to reality; indeed, concepts that “govern our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane details” (4; and see also Kövecses 1986, 2015) cannot be grasped by our intellect. Our conceptual system, Lakoff and Johnson insist, “in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (4).

2. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF THE CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY

One of the basic claims advanced by cognitive linguistics is that our understanding of the world is shaped by the so-called conceptual metaphors (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 2003; Lakoff 1987, 1993; Ungerer and Schmid).

As defined by Lakoff and Johnson in 2003, conceptual metaphors involve “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another,” and they involve “unidirectionality,” from a source domain to a target domain, but not vice versa (5). What is more, as viewed by Kövecses in 2002, some domains are said to be “abstract, diffuse and lack clear delineation” (20), they need to be metaphorically conceptualized. Thus, the notion of life may be conceptualised in terms of journey, but it does not imply conceiving journey in terms of life (cf. Lakoff and Turner). Of particular interest to us is Kövecses’s (2015) analysis in which he applies a metaphor-based account to religious texts. In contrast to earlier metaphor-based accounts developed by Lakoff and Johnson, Kövecses stresses the importance of cultural context which determines the use of metaphors. Kövecses divides metaphors into two classes: embodied (also called universal) metaphors and culture-related metaphors. Thus, for the concept of love, which is usually conceptualized in many cultures by means of journey, unity or hunting, the universal metaphor which is generated sounds LOVE IS A JOURNEY, UNITY or HUNTING. Instead, the culture-related metaphors account for the variation in conceptualisations across languages, for instance, in some Chinese dialects love is metaphorized in a different way, “love is flying a kite” (Yang qtd. in Kövecses 3).

Conceptual metaphors not only evoke individual and primary mappings, but they may also carry entailments or rich inferences, give rise to relatively complex metaphorical mappings, complex event structure and compound metaphors, and thus bring a more detailed knowledge about the reality (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Lakoff 1993; Murphy 1996; Grady 1997; Langacker 1990).

According to Kövecses (2015), a concept is expected to be represented in the human mind by “a number of other concepts that form a coherent whole, a functional domain, that is, a mental frame (...) forming a (...) network of ideas” (60). While Lakoff and Johnson (2003) add that “the connections may be strong or weak, and the network of connections has an overall structure” (98). These connections may constitute a more or less complex network of entities and relations between them. To be precise, the competition frame, for instance, comprises participants, place, prize, rank, score, venue, and some relations, e.g. win, lose, play, score, defeat, come in, and tie (cf. Kövecses 36).

Finally, it should be stressed that in Lakoff and Johnson’s (2003) view, a metaphor is seen as a kind of “a sense, like seeing or touching or hearing, (...) [provides] the only ways to perceive and experience much of the world.

Metaphor is as much a part of our functioning as our sense of touch, and as precious” (237). That is why the conceptualization of the world via the means of metaphors does contribute significantly to the broader linguistic view of the world.¹

3. CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS

IN HENRY NEWMAN’S *THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY*: LIFE IS A BUILDING AND UNIVERSITY PROVIDING EDUCATION FORMS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A LIFE BUILDING

In order to understand the idea of university as delineated in *The Idea of a University*, we have to unravel the networks of metaphors which, we believe, underlie Newman’s vision of this site of learning. Principally, there are three main networks of conceptual metaphors structuring our understanding of Newman’s vision of a university: LIFE IS A BUILDING; LIFE IS A LIVING ORGANISM; and LIFE IS A JOURNEY. However, due to the space limit, only one network, i.e. LIFE IS A BUILDING, is to be elaborated in detail in this section of the paper. Undoubtedly, the other two networks of conceptual metaphors derived from Newman’s work deserve some proper attention in a future study.

Newman’s lectures entitled *The Idea of a University* (1852) comprise ten chapters broken into two parts each, “University Teaching” and “University Subjects.” He accounts for a number of stimulating statements. To start with, Newman’s assertion is that a university should be “a place of teaching universal knowledge” (ix), which forms a structure for the overall network given in Figure 1. This set starts with the most general conventional metaphor LIFE IS A BUILDING. The metaphor itself may be realized by numerous linguistic expressions, e.g. *to build* one’s new life, my life is *ruined*, my life *collapsed* like a house of sticks, among many others. The LIFE IS A BUILDING metaphor entails the UNIVERSITY IS A CONSTRUCTION metaphor, which, in turn, can be structured metaphorically in two ways: UNIVERSITY IS A PLACE and UNIVERSITY IS AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM, as seen in Figure 1 below.

¹ For discussion of the so-called linguistic world view, an interested reader is referred to Bartmiński (2009).

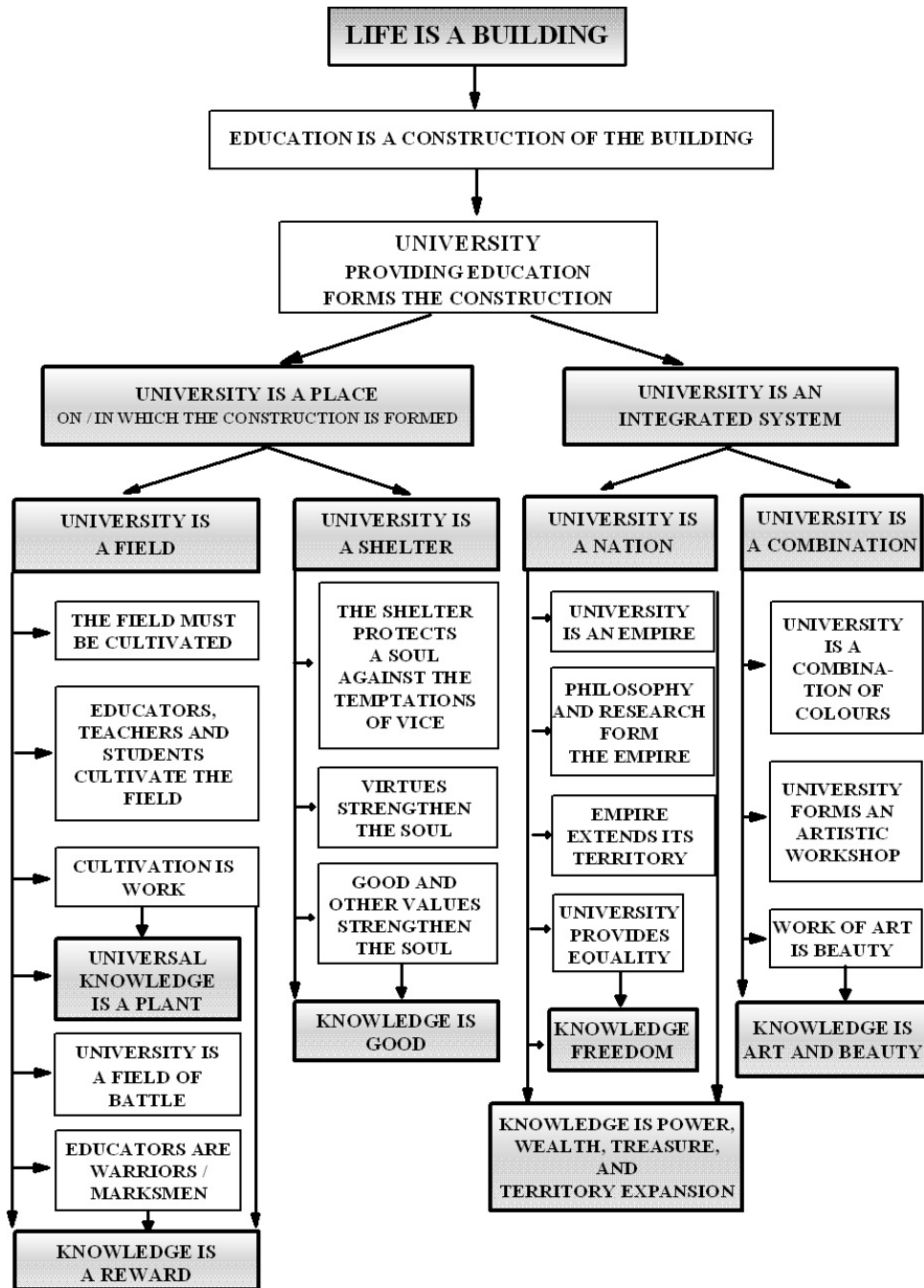


Figure 1: The network of conceptual metaphors deriving from the metaphor LIFE IS A BUILDING, as seen in Newman's *The Idea of a University* (own source).

As already stated, for Newman, university is destined to be a place of universal knowledge. Indeed, in the Preface to *The Idea of a University*, Newman outlines briefly the main role of a university where its universal role is diffused:

The view taken of a University in these Discourses is the following: That it is a place of teaching universal knowledge. This implies that its object is, on the one hand, intellectual, not moral; and, on the other, that it is the diffusion and extension of knowledge rather than the advancement. (Newman ix)

University, Newman notes, is:

a place of instruction, where universal knowledge is professed (...). (Newman 21)

The UNIVERSITY IS A PLACE metaphor is subdivided into two other metaphors: UNIVERSITY IS A FIELD, and UNIVERSITY IS A SHELTER. both of these conceptual metaphors become the source and target of important metonymic parts in the whole network. Accordingly, since university is a field, the field must be cultivated. The process of cultivation takes place in students' minds, and it is performed by educators and teachers. This activity requires skill, exertion, precision, persistence, but the work is worth its price, as exemplified in the texts below:

But education is a higher word; it implies an action upon our mental nature, (...) since cultivation of mind is surely worth seeking for its own sake. (Newman 114)

Since mind is metaphorized as a field to be cultivated, some work of "weeding" the vice and error is also required (Newman 473).

there must be great care taken to avoid scandal, or shocking the popular mind, or unsettling the weak; the association between truth and error being so strong in particular minds that it is impossible to weed them of the error without rooting up the wheat with it. (Newman 473)

For Newman, UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE IS A PLANT is an object of this cultivation process, and A REWARD after hard work:

Liberal Education, viewed in itself, is simply the cultivation of the intellect, as such, and its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence (...)

Why do you take such pains with your garden or your park? You see to your walks and turf and shrubberies; to your trees and drives; not as if you meant to make an orchard of the one, or corn or pasture land of the other, but because there is a special beauty in all that is goodly in wood, water, plain, and slope, brought all together by art into one shape, and grouped into one whole (...). (Newman 179)

Furthermore, according to Newman, UNIVERSITY IS A FIELD OF BATTLE, and educators become marksmen and warriors, while KNOWLEDGE IS THEIR FINAL TARGET AND REWARD. Actually, it is a preacher who is compared with a marksman, expected to be concentrated on a definite point of his duty, have a clear objective and master-like precision. Cardinal Newman wants any lecturer or educator to desire “the spiritual good of his hearers” (Newman 406) like preachers do. Besides, UNIVERSITY structured as a place IS also A SHELTER. Newman names a university as a shelter against evil and depraving influences. However, one’s individual effort to grow up and become more virtuous is expected to be made, as well. In this vein, for the 19th century writer, virtues, values and all the knowledge obtained at the university are designed to protect and strengthen the souls; thus, KNOWLEDGE IS seen as GOOD (Newman 91).

Notice now that “the right branch” of the UNIVERSITY AS A CONSTRUCTION metaphor in Figure 1 entails the metaphor of a university as an integrated system. The metaphor of A UNIVERSITY AS ONE WHOLE SYSTEM refers to the next two metaphors used in Newman’s *The Idea of a University*, namely, UNIVERSITY IS A NATION, and UNIVERSITY IS A COMBINATION. Truly, John Newman sets a goal for a university to form a nation of its citizens, providing them “privileges within its legitimate range of action,” and “imperial power” (Newman 458). Besides, the metaphor of A UNIVERSITY AS AN EMPIRE is evoked, which strengthens the powerful position of a university when it comes to the field of philosophy and research.

What an empire is in political history, such is a University in the sphere of philosophy and research (...) it maps out the territory of the intellect, and sees that the boundaries of each province are religiously respected, and that there is neither encroachment nor surrender on any side. (Newman 459)

Therefore, according to Newman, the kind of KNOWLEDGE one is likely to obtain at a university IS POWER, which means a scientifically and philosophically formed-mind, an ability to make clear judgements, while its results are external to themselves (Newman 111–112).

What is more, even though universities usually adjust curriculum to reproduce the changing world, a university in Newman's opinion should provide a territory for all subjects separately and equally, since all the subjects and knowledge form one whole (Newman 50–51). Indeed, only when treated as a whole, with all the subjects connected together, may knowledge receive its proper value, regain its powerful educational effect on its learners, and be claimed a "sovereign position."

This, however, is not the reason why I claim for it so sovereign a position. (...) a University professes to assign to each study, which it receives, its own proper place and its just boundaries; to define the rights, to establish the mutual relations. (Newman 457–458)

UNIVERSITY seen as a nation PROVIDES WEALTH for its inhabitants. However, for Newman, education obtained at a university is much dearer than gold, health or even "wealth." It stems from the fact that a well-educated graduate is expected by Newman to become a gentleman with all the possible skills, with mental, human and spiritual values, and with all the features of character which make him a perfect human being, a hard-working employee, an eager worshiper, and a devoted citizen. Therefore, such a person feels fulfilled, pleased and respected.

It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. (...) He has a gift which serves him in public, and supports him in retirement, without which good fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointment have a charm. The art which tends to make a man all this, is in the object which it pursues as useful as the art of wealth or the art of health, though it is less susceptible of method, and less tangible, less certain, less complete in its result. (Newman 178)

Besides, KNOWLEDGE IS compared by Newman to a TREASURE. The rewarding result of education means forming a real virtuous gentleman with good habits.

There is a Knowledge, which is desirable, though nothing come of it, as being of itself a treasure, and a sufficient remuneration of years of labour. (Newman 114)

Furthermore, each nation and empire maintains its territory, trying to gain new lands at the same time. Hence, knowledge, in Newman's vision of a university, is said to be a necessary condition to grow up, develop one's

intellectual perspectives; thus, to provide an expansion or enlargement of mind (Newman 129–130). The metaphor which is evoked is sounds KNOWLEDGE IS TERRITORY EXPANSION.

In addition, Newman attributes a great deal of importance to knowledge, which, if universal and philosophically-oriented, enlarges the intellectual horizons, releases the heart, like “a prisoner” set free from captivity, overcomes chain-like limits, wings but does not overwhelm (Newman 131–132). Thus, for Newman, KNOWLEDGE IS FREEDOM.

A UNIVERSITY in Newman’s opinion should PROVIDE A TERRITORY FOR ALL SUBJECTS separately and equally. Hence, UNIVERSITY PROVIDES EQUALITY:

It is the very profession of a University to teach all sciences, on this account it cannot exclude Theology without being untrue to its profession. (...) all sciences being connected together, and having bearings one on another, it is impossible to teach them all thoroughly, unless they all are taken into account, and Theology among them. (Newman 97)

Additionally, the branch of knowledge is conceptualized by means of a palette of different colours, which are selected and mixed together. The degree of this combination of particular subjects or research areas i.e. “colours,” depends on one’s intellectual possibilities. Consequently, UNIVERSITY IS THE COMBINATION OF COLOURS, and it must form an artistic workshop. The works of art are likely to be beautiful; thus, KNOWLEDGE obtained in such a workshop, must be ART AND BEAUTY (Newman 100).

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In our attempt to capture the essence of Henry Newman’s idea of a university we have formulated a number of conceptual metaphors, set in three main networks. The sets in these networks derive from three basic metaphors, of which the LIFE IS A BUILDING metaphor has been discussed in detail in this paper.

To conclude, Newman’s metaphors of UNIVERSITY AS A PLACE OF UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE constitutes the ground for the overall network, presented in Figure 1, in which UNIVERSITY is recognised both as A PLACE, FIELD, or SHELTER, and as AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM, such as A NATION or A COMBINATION OF COLOURS. The description of Newman’s metaphors presented so far may help us understand his very reasoning and vision referring

to a university. University education is supposed to be as broad and liberal as possible, covering all branches of knowledge, including science and religion (Discourse II); while students' knowledge, if limited or narrowed, leads to biased and obstinate judgments (Discourse IV) (cf. Hiner). That is why Newman expects knowledge to be universal. Besides, he maintains that the goal of education needs to be perceived more broadly than student evaluation and specialization within a given discipline. This view contradicts the utilitarianism of Locke (1700) and Mill (1859), who claim that a primary objective of educational institutions is the development of marketable skills in service of broader economic purposes. It can be assumed that Newman is not against training for a vocational career since he reveals a wish to have different "branches of knowledge;" nonetheless, he desires even more that the university curriculum would encourage study in multiple fields in order to help students and scholars identify connections and engage most challenging philosophical questions, social issues, and scientific problems. Truly yet, Newman may have been disappointed to see the contemporary university, with its discrete colleges of business, education, engineering, fine arts, and law, with lack of communication between each of them (cf. Lanford).

Moreover, in his vision of a university, as seen in the metaphors he uses, Newman holds an inclusive and holistic view of knowledge, stating in Discourse Two of the first book that "the very name of University is inconsistent with restrictions of any kind" (22). He notes that "if certain branches of knowledge were excluded, those students of course would be excluded also, who desired to pursue them" (23). Newman's understanding of this kind of knowledge may have been influenced by England's historical exclusion of Catholic students, and the fact that he addresses his lectures to a most probably skeptical Dublin Irish Catholic audience that, nevertheless, had been historically excluded from education.

Additionally, Newman considers the role of religious belief in higher education at substantial length. Whereas many might deliberate the combination of science and religion to create the conditions for epistemological incoherence, Newman believes that the two, by necessity, should be explored and extended collectively for human progress. Newman finds doctrinaire thought that unquestioningly passes knowledge down from generation to generation disagreeable with the pursuit of "Truth" and hopes that universities would instead encourage logical debate. This belief in Truth as an attainable and aspirational goal for university faculty and students marks Newman as something of an early positivist.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that, as the metaphors described in section 3 appear to indicate, most of the concepts used by Newman are generally considered values, understood as “something intrinsically valuable or desirable such as a principle or quality” (*Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, “Values”) in all domains of human life. This is consonant with Bartmiński’s (2003, 2016) observation that values are a privileged subject in the linguistic picture of the world, and with Krzeszowski’s claim that values in culture can hardly be overestimated, since they constitute an influential aspect of language, its obligatory parameter. Newman’s all the spheres of human life are involved into the university education, which is responsible for “supplying true principles,” as he described it in the following words:²

a University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims (...) at supplying true principles. (Newman 177–178)

In this vein, the virtues, values, and all the universal knowledge obtained at the university are designed to provide ethical principles, and to protect, strengthen and “shelter the soul from the temptations of vice” (Newman 91); thus, KNOWLEDGE IS seen as GOOD. Nonetheless, the ability of discerning between what is good and bad is required, and it “comes from God,” as underlined by Newman³:

All that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful, all that is beneficent, be it great or small, be it perfect or fragmentary, natural as well as supernatural, moral as well as material, comes from Him. (Newman 66)

A final remark: the list of unethical issues in our contemporary education is said to be endless, which acts as stumbling blocks to effective learning (*IICE*). However, using the achievements of the past and the visions of university education that devoted educators and authorities, such as Cardinal John Henry Newman, used to create, may be a good step forward for making a positive change. Hence, the ethical component is more than desired to constitute an intrinsic element of higher education. It may be especially helpful for Polish universities, at dawn of the new educational reform, contributing to pedagogical effectiveness.

² The issue of values in Newman’s teaching seems to deserve a more thorough discussion, but due to the space limit it is only mentioned here.

³ Newman’s idea of truth is closely associated with other values, namely goodness and beauty, which makes him refer to Plato’s ideas of transcendentals (cf. Aertsen).

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EDUKACJA: JEJ WYMIAR ETYCZNY I METAFORYCZNA WIZUALIZACJA
NA PODSTAWIE KSIĄŻKI JOHNA HENRY'EGO NEWMANA
THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY (1852)

Streszczenie

Niemal dwa wieki temu w swojej książce *The Idea of University* Kardynał John Henry Newman (1801–1890) wykreował wizję edukacji uniwersyteckiej, którą ujął w świetle wiary i etyki katolickiej. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest zaprezentowanie poglądów Newmana na temat uniwersytetu za pomocą teorii metafory pojęciowej, zaproponowanej początkowo przez Lakoffa i Johnsona w książce *Metaphors We Live By* (1980 [2003], por. także Lakoff i Johnson 1999; Lakoff 1987, 1993; Kövecses 2015, m. in.). Artykuł stara się wyłonić główne sieci (ang. *networks*) metafor implikacyjnych, które — jak wierzymy — obrazują ideę uniwersytetu według Newmana. W artykule skonstruowano trzy główne sieci metafor pojęciowych, które leżą u podstaw zrozumienia wizji uniwersytetu według Newmana: ŻYCIE JEST BUDOWLĄ; ŻYCIE JEST ŻYWYM ORGANIZMEM; ŻYCIE JEST PODRÓŻĄ. Artykuł skupia się na analizie tylko pierwszej sieci (*network*). W omawianej metaforze ŻYCIE JEST BUDOWLĄ, UNIWERSYTET jest postrzegany przez Newmana jako MIEJSCE, POLE, SCHRONISKO lub jako SYSTEM ZINTEGROWANY, np. NARÓD lub KOMBINACJA KOLORÓW. WIEDZA jest zobrazowana językiem Newmana jako m.in. ROŚLINA, NAGRODA, DOBRO, WOLNOŚĆ, MOC, SKARB, SZTUKA I PIĘKNO.

Słowa kluczowe: John Henry Newman; edukacja uniwersytecka; etyka; teoria metafory pojęciowej; sieci metafor implikacyjnych.