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THE ACTIVITY AND PEDAGOGICAL VIEWS OF WOMEN AT THE TURN OF THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES – HISTORICAL EXPERIENCES FOR THE CONTEMPORARY TIMES

INTRODUCTION

For the scientific development of pedagogy and pedagogical practice it is necessary to use the knowledge gained in the course of research in the field of the history of education and pedagogical thought. For many years in Poland historical and pedagogical research was discredited, which was related to – as pointed out by S. Palka – an ambiguous definition of the relationship between pedagogy and the history of education (Palka, 2004). The understating of the role and significance of historical and pedagogical research was also due to the fact that it was forgotten that the pedagogical subdisciplines had their own history created by eminent people. Kamila Mrozowska, in her reflection on the history of education, stated that “the creators and co-creators of pedagogical subdisciplines must not be forgotten” (after: Szulakiewicz, 2008, p. 658).

One of the areas of interest in the contemporary history of education are the biographies of outstanding figures who contributed to the development of pedagogical thought, educational reforms, school history, educational and schooling institutions. Researchers emphasize that “human biographies are a source of knowledge about the role of individual life events and their functions in the process of upbringing and socialization. The educational dimension of the experiences contained in the life cycle is therefore the value which is believed to be of a particular pedagogical significance. This is to be a way to find out the extent to which a man, on his individual way of life, has surrendered to the shaping of more or less external factors: from the socio-economic situation, through the family, the immediate environment, to objective events that have influenced (also) his internal world” (Wawrzyniak, Wypiorczyk-Przygoda, 2012, p. 217).

Władysława Szulakiewicz emphasizes the use of biographical research for creating individual and collective biographies, the ones of groups or generations (Szula-

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kiewicz, 2013). Women, the precursors of social and educational work in Poland, presented in this study, can therefore constitute a collective portrait in historical and pedagogical research.

In Polish historiography, there are studies devoted to the issues of women and their pedagogical activity. These include works, among others, by W. Jamrożek (2001), J. Suchmiel (1994), D. Żołędź-Strzelczyk (2001), and K. Jakubiak (2000). There is, however, no synthetic study showing the contribution of women to the development of educational activity and pedagogy as a science. The presented article is a portrait of women who at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries were involved in caring and social activities among children and adults. They also made a significant contribution to the development of pedagogical thought whose lasting value is found in contemporary pedagogical views.

THE EMANCIPATION MOVEMENT OF WOMEN AT THE TURN OF THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

In the nineteenth century, on the wave of liberalism, the postulates of women in the field of equal access to education were implemented, supported by emancipation and feminist movements. Although this process was slow, the legacy of the Enlightenment, recognizing the woman “as a free citizen,” came true in the field of education only at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Draus, Terlecki, 2016).

On the Polish territory, girls in the Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1815) were the first to obtain access to elementary schools, when the Education Chamber introduced the school obligation in 1808. In the field of girls’ education it was Klementyna Tańska Hoffmanowa who made a special contribution (Gawlik, 1995). Thanks to her initiative, schools for young girls began to be founded, and in the second half of the nineteenth century, female gymnasiums. In the autonomous Galicia, there developed secondary female education and female teachers’ seminars. From 1868, Higher Courses for Women were active in Krakow, which initiated the fight for women’s access to university studies. Anna Żarnowska writes: “Higher education in the case of women played a special role. Giving them a high, social prestige, it gave them a unique status in society [...]. Higher education – especially in the first period after women gained access to universities – was perceived as predestining them to perform a specific civilization mission in society (Żarnowska, 2014, p. 288). Women’s aspirations for equality in terms of education were an important stage in the fight for political rights, in particular for electoral rights. “Polish women received electoral rights in 1918. In the Polish Parliament (Sejm) elected in 1919 there were nine female deputies. The Polish constitution of March 1921 recognized the equal rights of women in social and political life. With the appearance of women in the Polish Parliament (Sejm), work began on changing laws discriminating against women” (Sala, 2011, p. 243).

THE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY OF WOMEN

Women's aspirations for equal rights in access to education, initiated in Poland, were directly connected with the initiation of social and educational activities by them. Women undertook numerous roles at various levels of pedagogical work, both practical and theoretical. At the beginning of the twentieth century these were among others: Józef Joteyko, Urszula Ledóchowska, Aniela Szycówna, Stefania Sempołowska, Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa, and later Natalia Han-Ilgiewicz, Maria Grzegorzewska, Janina Doroszevska and many others. For the purpose of this study, the biographies of S. Sempołowska, A. Szycówna and M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowicz are analyzed, assuming that the reconstruction of their life events will explain the impact they had on their own times and the subsequent ones.

Stefania Sempołowska (1870-1944). The pedagogical activity of Stefania Sempołowska was inextricably linked to the changes in socio-political life. She participated in the works to create and reform Polish education and professional teacher movement in the interwar period. Sempołowska combined teaching with broad social and educational activities, among others in the Warsaw Charity Society, the Flying University, and the Women's Education Circle for All People (Mackiewicz-Wojciechowska, 1939). In the Circle, together with, among others, K. Kulikowska, R. Brzezińska, F. Morzycka, W. Umińska, she led the organizational and lecture work, engaging in a movement aimed at popularizing knowledge among women. The activity of the Circle focused on conducting secret teaching among young people and adults, supplying them with books, setting up shops and restaurants in the countryside, in order to "help the people and facilitate access to them" (Wawrzykowska-Wierciochowa, 1960, p. 52). S. Sempołowska, being a member of the pedagogical section of the Circle, conducted classes on courses for teachers from rural areas. She also participated in the organization of library sets for the participants of the courses.

Until 1905, Sempołowska stayed in Krakow and only after the outbreak of the revolution she returned to Warsaw, actively engaging in the educational activity. During this period, the area of her interests and work included out-of-school education for youth and adults in the countryside. She participated in the works of such organizations as: Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults, University for Everyone, Polish Teachers' Association, Reading Society of Warsaw (1906). At the same time, she was involved in organizing care and assistance for political prisoners. Sempołowska started this form of activity at the end of the 19th century, engaging in the defense of those who fought for national liberation. These activities were pioneer in nature, because at that time there were no organizations involved in providing help to prisoners. Justifying the need for such action, she wrote: "The complaint coming from prisoners turned my thought towards them, aroused the feeling of duty, deed, and rescue" (Mortkowicz-Olczakowa, 1961, p. 55). She claimed that helping them was in the nature of the human soul, treating slavery as one of the greatest human tragedies.

In 1905, Sempołowska started to work at the Assistance Office for Political Prisoners. In the booklet *We – taking care of political prisoners*, she wrote: “The best, most powerful period of my spiritual life was swallowed up by prisons, prisoners and their fate. I was bound to it with an inseparable knot” (Wawrzykowska-Wierciochowa, 1981, p. 75). The necessity of providing help for prisoners is most accurately explained in the memories of S. Sempołowska by J. Rogowska-Doroszevska who writes: “What inclined Miss Stefania to help political prisoners was the awareness that they needed help and that few would have courage to provide it. But still this hot conviction, which she constantly expressed, that not only should they be defended because they are usually treated badly in prison and that in this way the lawlessness of prison or court officials is carried out over them, but also because in general those whose only «offense» is the service of their ideas should not be in prison. And finally, Miss Stefania used to help these people because she felt spiritually related to them” (Rogowska-Doroszevska, 1959, p. 42). Her activity in this area also had a personal dimension because she was imprisoned three times for participating in the secret educational movement, in the school strike in 1905 and in the action of providing help for political prisoners.

An important element of her protective activity was providing care for children deprived of their family during the war. She organized material aid, and after 1918, she repeatedly requested protection for them from the state (Karcz, 2000). During the Teachers’ Council in 1919, Sempołowska spoke about the fate and harm of the child deprived of home by the war, the fate of parents and the need to support them, called for the creation of a state apparatus for taking care of these orphans and the homeless. Until the end of her life she was involved in the political activity, assistance for political prisoners, and after 1940, help for Jews. She died on January 31, 1944 in Warsaw.

Aniela Szycówna (1869-1921). She occupies a leading position in Polish pedagogy at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Her educational aspirations and in the adult life also professional, developed in her family home. Szycówna graduated from Helena Budzińska’s private school and in 1886 she obtained a teacher’s diploma, so-called a government patent that gave the formal entitlement to teach (Wawrzykowska-Wierciochowa, 1967). Acquiring the diploma enabled her to start teaching work and at the same time she became a student of the Flying University, training herself in the field of pedagogy, psychology, literature and philosophy. A significant influence on the development of her pedagogical interests was made by a lecturer Jan Władysław Dawid (Leżańska, 2017). From 1890, she cooperated with *Przegląd Pedagogiczny* (*The Pedagogical Review*) and from 1900 with the socio-political journal *Głos* (*The Voice*). The cooperation with *The Pedagogical Review*, edited at the time by J.W. Dawid – as W. Leżańska emphasizes: “[...] was a turning point in her professional career. Thanks to Dawid she was among her former professors, including: Stanisław Norblin, Piotr Chmielowski, Ignacy Chrzanowski, Adam Marhrburg and Ludwik Krzywicki” (Leżańska, 2017, p. 26). On the initiative of

Szycówna in Warsaw in 1905, the organizational committee of the association was established, which on 27 April 1907 adopted the statute and the name of the Polish Society for Research on Children. Szycówna was its chairman. "At the first meetings, the board and the chairman – Aniela Szycówna were elected and the first resolutions were adopted, which regarded, among others, opening a library and a reading room for members of the Society, a program of scientific and research activities. The number of members in the first year of activity increased from 34 to 81 people. The members of the Society were dominated by women, mostly teachers, and many doctors among men" (Bodanko, Kowolik, 2007, p. 21). Members of the Society focused their activities on research in the field of psychology, experimental pedagogy and popularizing pedagogical knowledge among teachers and parents.

W. Leżańska also characterizes other forms of social and educational activity of Szycówna, writing that: "Despite health problems, Szycówna was an extremely energetic and hard-working person. She cooperated with the Lublin Educational Association Light, giving lectures on the initial teaching methodology. She taught the issues of broadly understood initial education at Pedagogical Courses for Women. She cooperated with the School Office in organizing a uniform public school and uniting the teachers' movement. From 1919 she also ran the Department of Pedagogy at the Free Polish University (Leżańska, 2017, p. 27). Szycówna's pedagogical activity, her scientific and practical achievements were mainly aimed at the reform of Polish elementary education. She died on February 4, 1921 in Warsaw and was buried in Powązki.

Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa (1858-1944). An important contribution to the popularization of progressive preschool pedagogy at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was made by M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowicz. Early orphaned by her mother, she was forced to take over part of the care of her younger siblings. This fact had a significant impact on her later interests in taking care of a small child. She was a graduate of the government gymnasium in Pskov and Higher Pedagogical Courses for Women in St. Petersburg (Moliere, 1982). S. Moliere writes: "Studies were a hard life trial for Maria Weryho and took her seven years (1877-1884). And it must be added that she had a lot of luck, obtaining a diploma at the last minute, just before entering in 1884 the regulation on the suspension of the activities of all women's universities, which was then valid until 1890" (Moliere, 1982, p. 456). The need to improve her own skills and qualifications made M. Weryho complete two-year preschool teaching courses run by Justyna Strzemska and gymnastics courses organized by Dr. Piotr Lesgaft (Ordon, 2000).

In 1884, Weryho started working at Henryka Czarnocka's school for girls. At the same time, she was looking for other opportunities to develop interest in the pedagogy of a small child, which was aroused in her by Justyna Strzemska – a future longtime co-worker and co-author of works in the field of preschool education (Bobrowska-Nowak, 1978, p. 262). The result of Weryho's interests was the opening of her own private preschool at Chmielna Street in Warsaw. It was an exemplary pre-

school which served not only as an educational institution for children, but also as a place for educating candidates for educators. B. Moraczewska emphasizes that “this experimental institution enabled Weryho to realize her own pedagogical ideas – here she was able to implement the program for the comprehensive development of a child, in accordance with Froebel’s assumptions of raising young children. The kindergarten was organized in a very modern way for those times, and physical exercises, fun and games were one of the most important elements of education. Weryho’s lectures for parents and educators were also a novelty” (Moraczewska, 2015, p. 219).

In 1903, Maria Weryho married Rafał Radziwiłłowicz, a psychiatrist, head of the hospital in Tworki, specialist and intellectual, with whom she shared social and educational activities. Until the outbreak of the First World War, she led a very lively organizational activity aimed at popularizing preschool education. Among others, she was the chairwoman of the Preschool Education Society, organizer of the Course for Childcare Teachers in Pruszków, State Seminar for Childcare Teachers (Bobrowska-Nowak, 1978, pp. 266-267).

During the Second Polish Republic, M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowicz was actively involved in the organizational work of preschool education. She presented her postulates in this regard, among others, at the Congress of Delegates of Polish Teachers’ Societies, which took place in Warsaw on January 3-4, 1919, and the Teachers’ Council meeting on April 14-17, 1919. M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowicz died on November 4, 1944 in Krakow. Her involvement and work led to the consolidation of the position of preschool education in the Polish educational system not earlier than in the People’s Republic of Poland.

WOMEN – PRECURSORS AND PEDAGOGICAL WRITING

S. Sempołowska complemented her social activity with writing. Works devoted to the problems of education and care, and in particular *Niedola młodzieży w szkole galicyjskiej* (*Misery of youth in the Galician school*) (1906), *Reforma szkolna 1862 roku* (*School reform of 1862*), *Organizacja szkolnictwa elementarnego* (*Organization of elementary education*) (1915) or *Rządowy projekt reformy ustroju szkolnictwa* (*Government project to reform the school system*) (1925) aroused great interest in education circles. She often presented her pedagogical views in articles published in the press. Being upset by the harm of the youngest children, the demoralization of adults, she demanded state protection for them. In the study *I want a payment out of a million*, she writes: “The most terrible of all human wrongs is the harm affecting the child. Look at it, unsentimental people, calmly and soberly looking at the world: this harm not only strikes an innocent, helpless and vulnerable child, but it will also strike you, peaceful citizens, because the child’s harm takes revenge on the whole society” (Sempołowska, 1962, p. 214). She claimed that through the prism of relation to a child one can talk about the degree of culture of a given society. She gave examples of other

countries where there was a developed institutional care for children. That is why she criticized the actions of the Central Welfare Council, showing its ineffectiveness. She claimed that the Council is limited to social fundraising. "The spiritual matter of abandoned and orphaned children was looked at not from the social position towards the members, but from the position of «charity» [...]. With a total lack of organization, everything turned against children here. They are guilty of everything. They are guilty of this hell. The educational system pointed out straight: «punish, beat»" (Sempołowska, 1962, p. 225). Sempołowska represented the view that all children due to their social affiliation, their life and existence have the right to receive a physical, moral and intellectual education appropriate for their age.

The pedagogical views of A. Szycówna focused on the issues of the younger school age. They were formed under the influence of the so-called paedology as a direction of research on a child, which in the early twentieth century had many followers, and Szycówna was the author of a dissertation on paedology, published in 1910 (Szycówna, 1910). She devoted a lot of attention to the issues of initial teaching. Her works, mainly *Nauka w domu* (*Learning at home*), *Przewodnik dla wychowawców* (*Guide for educators*) (1895) set the direction of initial teaching in the period preceding the First World War. Her personal experiences contributed to forming views on the organization of learning at home and the home teacher. Her other works include: *Rozwój pojęciowy dziecka w wieku lat 6-12* (*Conceptual development of a child aged 6-12*), *Badania nad dziećmi* (*Research on children*) (1899), *O zadaniach i metodach psychologii dziecka* (*On the tasks and methods of child psychology*) (1901), *Kobieta w pedagogice* (*A woman in pedagogy*), *Matka* (*Mother*) (1908). During the war and in the first years of independence, Szycówna was very active in the work on the organization of public education. She expressed her views in this area primarily in the book *O powinnościach nauczyciela i jego kształceniu* (*About the teacher's duties and his education*) (1915), in which she identified five sub-sections: teacher educator, teacher towards science and teaching, teacher as an artist, teacher as a citizen of the country and teachers' education. She wrote in it: "Among the numerous needs that we feel most strongly in today's crucial moment in the life of the nation, the future Polish school is on the first place" (Szycówna, 1915, p. 3). She devoted a lot of attention to the figure of a home teacher and teacher of initial education. She emphasized his role in educating and raising children. In her opinion, "The essence of education lies in the continuous, purposeful and conscious influence on the developing mind and character of the child, and therefore in the teacher's personal influence, in his independent and creative work, for which all textbooks and methods will only serve as tools and means to conduct clearly defined plans and goals" (Szycówna, 1915, p. 4).

One should also emphasize the importance of the activity of M. Weryho who over many years created a rich literary output aimed at popularizing progressive preschool pedagogy. In order to popularize knowledge in the field of preschool pedagogy, in 1895 she published a book *Wychowanie przedszkolne. Podręcznik dla wychowawców* (*Preschool Education. Manual for Educators*) devoted to the analysis of the Froebel

system and containing proposals and examples of the adaptation of his methods in Polish conditions (Bobrowska-Nowak, 1978, p. 264). In the study she postulated the role of free play, she recommended limiting the number of talks in favor of direct observations of the surrounding nature, people's work and the nearest social environment. In her views, she took into consideration the characteristics of the child's psyche, she believed that his/her creative elements and brightness should be developed, she promoted education in a relaxed and warm atmosphere.

Guidance for the upbringing of a small child was also included by M. Weryho-Radziwiłowicz in a publication published in 1921 *Wskazówki dla osób zakładających i prowadzących ochrony (z planami budynków)* (*Guidance for people setting up and maintaining childcare nursery schools (with building plans)*). As the purpose of these places, she mentioned providing help for parents in bringing up children. She defined education as instilling in children the religious and moral sense, elements of culture, as well as love for work, order, getting used to courtesy, helpfulness and stimulating mental abilities. The author also gave a short characteristic of the child who in her opinion is sensitive to beauty, affectionate, curious and clever. She emphasized that working with children should consist in familiarizing them with the surrounding world, but not only with the use of talks, but also through observing objects and phenomena. Information acquired during various classes was to form a whole, which is why she promoted that the childcare teachers would apply the principle of concentration at work (Wróbel, 1967, p. 89). The views of M. Weryho-Radziwiłowicz on the organization of the work of childcare nursery schools and the methods of pedagogical work propagated in them were widely popularized during the period of the Second Polish Republic. "The figure of Maria Weryho has a special place in the history of our thought and practice of preschool education because of the versatility of activities, deep understanding of the needs of the entire movement, ideological commitment. Nobody else before and after her dealt with this issue with such regularity and consistency. Her tireless pedagogical, organizing, writing and social work had one and only purpose – «to support the comprehensive development of a child in the age preceding the beginning of school education »" (Moliere, 1982, p. 451). The works of M. Weryho-Radziwiłowiczowa, containing a multi-dimensional conception of upbringing and caring for a small child, can be an important source of contemporary considerations on preschool education.

SUMMARY

The pedagogical views of S. Sempołowska, A. Szcówna, M. Weryho-Radziwiłowicz, as well as all their social and educational activities, developed in two different historical periods - during the national captivity and in the first years of the Second Polish Republic. S. Sempołowska – a social activist, pedagogue, organizer of the secret educational movement. A. Szcówna – a teacher, psychologist, publicist.

M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa – a creator of preschool education. During the entire period of their professional activity, they were involved in social and educational work, initially secret, and in independent Poland, an open one. Their activity served to raise the level of education and the culture of society. They reacted vividly to all socio-political events that exerted impact on human harm. They repeatedly expressed their views on pedagogical and social issues in the press and in numerous scientific works. They concerned childcare, teaching and social work among adults.

The analysis of the achievements of the recalled women representing various areas of educational activity is on the one hand bringing them to light from the „historical shadow,” on the other, looking at their achievements in a wider way. Since the activities of the mentioned characters are part of a long-term process of changes in terms of upbringing, teaching and care in Poland after the Second World War. Their pedagogical works enriched knowledge in the field of pedagogy, including caring and social pedagogy, pedeutology as well as psychology.

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Keywords: woman, pedagogy, scientific activity

Abstract: Although women have contributed to the development of science from the earliest times, their participation has not always been noticed. The breakthrough in the career path of women was World War I, in the consequence of which women gained the possibility of studying at universities and pursuing the academic activity. The presented article is an attempt at bringing to light the memory of the women-pioneers and their scientific activity in the field of Polish pedagogy at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.



DZIAŁALNOŚĆ I POGLĄDY PEDAGOGICZNE Kobiet NA PRZEŁOMIE XIX I XX WIEKU – DOŚWIADCZENIA HISTORYCZNE DLA WSPÓŁCZESNOŚCI

Słowa kluczowe: kobieta, pedagogika, działalność naukowa

Streszczenie: Kobiety wносиły swój wkład do rozwoju nauki od najdawniejszych czasów, niemniej ich udział nie zawsze był dostrzegany. Momentem przełomowym na drodze kariery naukowej kobiet była pierwsza wojna światowa, w konsekwencji której zyskały one możliwość studiów uniwersyteckich oraz działalności akademickiej. Prezentowany artykuł jest próbą przywrócenia pamięci o prekursorkach i ich działalności naukowej w pedagogice polskiej na przełomie XIX i XX wieku.

