Pre-school Education in Poland in the 20th Century as a Forgotten and Underestimated Source of Contemporary Trends and Pedagogical Inspirations

ABSTRACT
The aim of the article is to show the stages of the development of pre-school education in Poland in the 20th century, which set the directions for further changes in the pre-school area. The article was prepared on the basis of available historical sources in the form of specialist press, guides, and methodological manuals, as well as analysis of the literature on the subject. The work identifies and distinguishes innovative views and methods in the field of former pre-school education, which may constitute a form of contemporary pedagogical inspiration. The aim of this article consciously combines two important aspects, i.e., acquiring historical knowledge and its modern applications. The text discusses the history of pre-school education in Poland in the 20th century and shows its reminiscences in contemporary social and educational space. The text is an attempt to show the importance of pre-school education in the modern system, and drawing the reader’s attention to the achievements of Polish pre-school education in the context of changes and needs of society in the area of care for pre-school children. The article is not an exhaustive study, but rather a contribution to considerations in this area.

Keywords:
Poland, pedagogy, kindergarten, trends, pre-school education, innovations, 20th century, inspirations.
THE HISTORY OF POLISH PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION: A GLORIOUS CARD FROM HISTORY OR A RELIC OF THE PAST?

The aim of the article is to show the stages of development of pre-school education in Poland in the 20th century, which set the directions for further changes in the pre-school area. The article was prepared on the basis of available historical sources in the form of specialist press, guides, and methodological manuals, as well as analysis of the literature on the subject. The work will identify and distinguish innovative views and methods in the field of former pre-school education, which may constitute a form of contemporary pedagogical inspiration. The aim of this article consciously combines two important aspects, such as acquiring historical knowledge and using it today3. The study uses the method from the history of upbringing, i.e., the analysis of documents, which is justified in the case of the content of this article. The literature on the subject is adequate to the content of the article. The article is a review, it is the basis that sets the direction for further historical research conducted by the authors of this text in the field of the history of pre-school education and pedagogical activity of Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa – the promoter and creator of pre-school education in the Second Polish Republic.

In addition, the article is part of the concept of “post-new” upbringing proposed by J. Szmyd as a response to the contemporary crisis of upbringing, which concerns not only the main structural content, theological and axiological content and entities carrying out educational activities, but civilization-cultural and mental barriers in upbringing. In his concept presented in 2011, J. Szmyd proposes a discourse between postmodern pedagogy and the rich and diverse thought and pedagogical activity of the modern era called the New Education, focused on preparing a person to function in the sphere of external, social, and internal, spiritual life (Suchodolski, 2003, p. 69). The New Education is represented, among others, by É. Claparède, M. Montessori, G. Kerschensteiner, C. Freinet, F. Froebel, and in Poland by J. Rowid, J. Korczak, M. Grzegorzewska, H. Radlińska, or a precursor of pre-school education, M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa. At the beginning of the new century, B. Śliwerski (1998, p. 7) pointed out that pedagogy still needs

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3 The authors of this article, together with a team of pre-school and early school practitioners (including: J. Gołko, M. Lukasiewicz, E. Zamojtk), in 2020 started a social research project as part of the Polish Ethnological Society, the aim of which is to gather knowledge about pre-school education in Poland and the transfer of selected didactic methods to contemporary educational activities. We cordially invite you to cooperate: uwroblewska@wp.pl; m.choinska.kiezel@gmail.com.
to be rewritten and it may be worthwhile to undertake research to show a new and practical dimension of the new education by referring to Polish traditions and educational experiences.

The article concerns the development of pre-school education in Poland in the 20th century. Reference was also made to the earlier period, where this education was organized, but developed already in the 20th century, especially in the interwar period. The main characters that formed the foundations of pre-school education and who developed them were mentioned. Legal changes concerning the functioning of kindergartens in particular periods as well as its role were indicated. The contemporary activity of kindergartens was also shown in the context of the experiences of the 20th century. The article brings several important threads to contemporary science and practice, and its content is the basis for further research in the field of the history of pre-school education.

In order to benefit from pedagogical traditions and experiences, one first needs to know about them. Unfortunately, there has been no reliable historical monograph on the subject of pre-school education so far, which would include the already available source materials. Among the items dealing with the history of pre-school education, one should mention works from the past century by Wanda Bobrowska-Nowak entitled *An Outline of the History of Pre-school Education*, which was published in 1978, or the publications by Maria Wróbel entitled *Preschool Education in Poland in the Years 1918–1939* published in Wrocław in 1967. They constitute a valuable historical source, but they require very honest criticism. Their content is in line with the then political approach to kindergartens. Now that we have new materials at our disposal, have access to archival sources and use the historian’s research workshop, it is possible to develop an objective and reliable scientific monograph.

Among the scientific works on the history of pre-school education, it is also worth mentioning the articles by Krzysztof Jakubiak (2015) about the beginnings of pre-school education in Poland, and by Agata Samsel (2003) entitled *Preschool Education in the Years 1918–1939* published in two parts in the pages of the magazine “Wychowanie w Przedszkolu” [Upbringing in Kindergarten], as well as chapters in collected works by Anna Klim-Kimaszewska (2005), Jolanta Karbowniczek (2011), or Zbigniew Ostrach (2016). In the bibliographic area, there are also scientific articles by Dariusz Szewczuk (2012), Mirosława Bednarzak-Libera (2012), and Joanna Sosnowska (2014) discussing the development of protection and kindergartens in the regional context and taking into account the specificity of a given area. It is also worth mentioning the scientific works that indirectly provide valuable knowledge about the needs of pre-school children, such as the article by
Agnieszka Wałęga (2012) presenting the organization of care for a small child in the context of the Pomeranian Society for the Protection of Children [Pomorskie Towarzystwo Opieki nad Dziećmi]. The aforementioned works do not exhaust the bibliographic resources of the discussed issue, however, they constitute a very valuable source of historical knowledge concerning the development of pre-school education in Poland. It is also worth referring to the book by Tadeusz Lewowicki (1997), entitled The Transformations of Education, in which the author assesses the condition of Polish pre-school education. When discussing the issue of pre-school education, one should also mention the series entitled “Education of a Small Child”, published since 2012 under the editorship of Ewa Ogrodzka-Mazur. The publication, currently consisting of 16 volumes, includes numerous articles on contemporary pre-school pedagogy, texts that highlight the most important trends and pedagogical inspirations. However, all the proposed articles do not constitute a comprehensive monographic approach to pre-school education. Also, this text does not usurp the right to a comprehensive compendium of knowledge, it is rather of a contributory nature. However, we would like to draw reader’s attention to the need to conduct research in the field of the history of pre-school education, which has been the focal point of our research since 2020.

Since we conduct research in order to develop the history of pre-school education and draw inspiration from it, it is worth briefly discussing the stages of building pre-school networks and the development of the care system for young children in Poland in the 20th century.

**DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN POLAND**

The beginnings of pre-school education date back to the 19th century, and the then nurseries were the prototype of kindergartens. They were created as a result of socio-economic changes in Europe of that time. As a result of the development of industry and the increase in labour demand for women, the problem of providing childcare for working mothers had become increasingly common. The first orphanages were organized in England in 1816 on the initiative of the utopian Robert Owen. The aim of the first English orphanages was to provide the pupils with a minimum of knowledge useful in life. In France, the first protections were created as a result of the activities of the educator and Evangelical pastor Jean-Frédéric Oberlin. Their task was to provide children with care and prepare them for elementary school by developing speech and passion for work, regularity and order. What is more, the first orphanage which was created on the basis
of English Infant Schools was organized at the initiative of Jean-Denis Cochin. The educational institution for 400 children included a kindergarten and a school for older children, as well as a seminar for orphanage educators. Cochin was the author of a prized book entitled *Manual for Founders and Leaders of the First Schools Known as the Nurseries*. And the first typical school for the employees of the shelters was founded by Maria Pape-Carpantier. It was a practical course for working in orphanages. She also developed a textbook on *Advice for Conservationists*. The author touched on the issues of proper teaching methods, through guided observation of objects and phenomena of the world around them. According to her postulates, children were grouped by age. Pedagogical staff was also increased. Also at the beginning of the 19th century, orphanages – modeled after English nurseries – were created in Germany. In this country, one of the first orphanages was founded by Pauline Christine Wilhelmine of Anhalt-Bernburg (also: Princess Pauline of Lippe), following the example of the facilities in France. In Berlin, in 1819, Friedrich Wadzeck organized an orphanage for children in nursery age. Johann Georg Wirth in Augsburg and Theodor Fliedner in Kaiserswerth undertook wider initiatives in organizing orphanages. They modeled them after the nurseries for young children founded in the Netherlands and England. The heyday of German kindergartens, known as “children’s gardens”, falls on the years of activity of Friedrich Wilhelm Fröbel (Froebel), the theoretician and main founder of pre-school education with a humanist orientation, the creator of the first pre-school education system. In Italy, the first orphanage for children was established in Cremona in 1827. It was founded by Ferrante Aporti. This facility was intended for children from wealthier families. They organized many gymnastic exercises and sense-training classes, kids had time for free playing and fun. Intensive development of orphanages in Italy coincided with the years of activity of Maria Montessori, a doctor and creator of the system of raising children based on free development. In Russia, the first nursery was organized in St. Petersburg in 1837. The institutions were philanthropic. Founded by private individuals, their financial existence depended on the so-called guardian, usually a rich merchant. Then they established the guardian committee which developed regulations for these institutions and established further orphanages.

The fate of children in factories and workshops was tragic not only because of the work but also because of ruthless treatment by superiors. Such things also took place in Poland. Out of concern for the fate of children, in 1814 the Warsaw Charity Society was organized which helped orphans and provided material help to poor families. The idea of establishing orphanages for children was suggested by Teofil Janikowski. He founded the orphanages with Piotr Łubieński and
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Stanisław Jachowicz. The first orphanage aroused great interest, and the influx of children indicated the need for such facilities. Since then the number of orphanages established had increased not only in Warsaw but also in other cities of the Kingdom of Poland. In 1870, thirty two orphanages were recorded. In 1842, activist and social thinker August Cieszkowski drew attention to the poor conditions in which children lived in the Polish countryside and the benefits of developing rural shelters and educational care for rural children. Władysław Dawid and Stanisław Karpowicz in their scientific works also emphasized the importance of early childhood in the process of human development. In adapting theories to practical life, Karpowicz organized in Warsaw an experimental and modern “Educational Home” for pre-school children, in which new pedagogical methods were used. In that time, in Poland, a network of orphanages and care institutions established by religious orders and congregations was also developing. It is worth mentioning here, for example, the person of Edmund Wojciech Stanisław Bojanowski, a Polish social activist, who, as a lay person, opened an orphanage in Podrzecze on May 3, 1850, which gave rise to the Brotherhood of Nursery Workers, from which the Congregation of the Sister Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary developed (Grocholewski, 2014; Panuś, 2009).

As a result of pedagogical views of Western Europe, the ideas of F. Froebel and M. Montessori began to take shape. In Poland, until independence, there were two types of pre-school institutions: orphanages in which children of working mothers received care and pre-school institutions modeled after Friedrich Froebel of gardens for children, or M. Montessori children’s homes.

The interwar period marks a new stage in the development of pre-school education. The term “kindergarten” appeared for the first time in Poland in 1919. This happened during the first National Educational Congress, which aimed to develop plans and strategies for the development of education in a reborn Polish state. Then during the so-called “The Teachers’ Sejm”, a section of kindergarten teachers was created. On the other hand, the name “kindergarten” was formally introduced by way of the Act on the System of Education of March 11, 1932, in which the role of the kindergarten in the school system was determined. In this act it was specified for whom kindergartens are organized but it was not specified yet what they would be and what their relationship with the school would be. In 1932, instead of the program, the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment issued a guidebook entitled Advice and Tips for Educators in Kindergartens (Orphanages). After Poland regained independence, the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment created a special pre-school education paper. In the Interwar period, fundamental structural, organizational and qualitative changes were made
in the functioning of kindergartens. Thanks to Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa, the Pre-school Education Society was established and the “Pre-school Education” magazine was published. Moreover, she helped to develop guidelines and assumptions of pre-school education and to equip kindergartens with necessary teaching aids; seminars and courses for teachers were organized. In the years 1927–1928, there were 1435 kindergartens in Poland of which 776 were organized in cities and 659 in rural areas. In total, 83,912 children attended kindergartens (Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa, 1930). Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa together with collaborators and supporters of new forms of raising young children, Stefania Marciszewska-Posadzowa, Teresa Pruszak-Mleczkowa, Natalia Cicimirska, Fryderyka from Zielonków Grottowa (Bobrowska-Nowak, 1978; Sandler, 1959, 1965, 1968; Wróbel, 1967), developed new directions in pre-school education. Józefa Żukowska, founder of the first Froebel’s kindergarten [in Polish: freblówka] in Kielce, and Stanisława Okolowiczówna, teacher, author of children’s books, were also involved in this process. There were still many people involved in the subject of “care for young children” and they exchanged their views and educational ideas, for example: Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa, Janusz Korczak, and Maria Grzegorzewska. It is assumed that also national minorities and religious groups, which at that time constituted over 34% of the population in Poland, established their own private kindergarten institutions. The intensive development of kindergartens was hampered in the 1930s, perhaps due to the crisis and budgetary difficulties of the state at the time. There is little information in this regard and we cannot know what was the fate of kindergartens during the war and occupation without historical researches. We can only suspect that they were closed or renamed and children met a tragic fate. There is a lot of ambiguity in the area of pre-school history, many white spots that need to be filled.

With the end of the Second World War gradually began the next stage of development of pre-school education. It is known that in 1945 at the National Educational Congress in Łódź, a postulate was put forward regarding compulsory pre-school education for children from 3 to 6 years old and the maintenance of kindergartens by local governments. The goal was to create conditions for comprehensive development of children, preparation for social life and for fulfilling the school obligation. In those days there was a clear tendency towards centralization in the management of kindergartens. The development of education has the character of activities included in a uniform system related to the state system changes. In the 1960s, the network of kindergartens run by social and Catholic organizations was closed, while the network of state kindergartens was expanded. The main reason for the organization of kindergartens was the increase in the participation
of women in professional work and the resulting social tasks and demands for compulsory pre-school education of five-year-old children. In 1958, kindergartens at primary schools began to be established and a Pre-school Education Study was organized. Candidates for pre-school educators were schooled. The Act on the Development of Education and Upbringing of July 15, 1961, defined pre-school education as the first level in a uniform system of education and upbringing, and set the goals of pre-school education, paying attention to the comprehensive development of children, preparing them for schooling and helping working parents to provide parental care. It became the basis for the development of the pre-school education program and the kindergarten statute implemented in 1963. In the spirit of developing socialism, kindergartens became the first level of socialist education and were under the strict control of school leaders of the PRL. In order to popularize pre-school education, since 1977 six-year-old children were also included in pre-school education. A special program was prepared for them which introduced learning to read, based on the knowledge of 22 letters. This caused wide public discussion about whether learning would not dominate the basic educational factor of young children having fun. At the end of the 1970s, 94.1% of six-year-olds and only 24.9% of three-year-old children were taken to pre-schools.

Just before the beginning of the political transformation in Poland, in 1987 there were 26,000 kindergartens that provided care to 415,286 children. Their number increased in rural areas but also the number of children in groups increased, which directly influenced the level of caring, educational and teaching tasks in kindergartens. Program changes were made, which mainly concerned the modernization of the program for six-year-old children in the field of elementary reading instruction, preparation for learning to write and understanding mathematical concepts. Kindergartens were run by local state administration bodies, state or cooperative workplaces, social organizations, e.g., the Society of Children’s Friends, and by some ministries, e.g., the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Transport and Communication, the Ministry of Agriculture and Nutrition. At the end of the 1980s, the social movement of teachers, parents and employees of universities, expressing their own vision of educating children and youth, gained importance. This resulted in the establishment of the Social Educational Society in 1989, whose task was to create autonomous, social schools and kindergartens with a large organizational diversity, and original educational and didactic work programs. The period of social transformation brought a number of program and organizational changes in the functioning of childcare in state-owned kindergartens. According to the Act of September 7, 1991 on the education system, municipal authorities were required to establish, run and maintain public kinder-
gartens in their area. However, there was gradual liquidation of kindergartens, as a result of the growing market economy, high unemployment among women, reduction of financial resources for the functioning of educational and care facilities, and a different understanding of their current social functions.

In recent years we have been observing a very intensive development of kindergarten care by establishing new kindergartens and kindergarten points, and reorganizing existing facilities. It results from the parents’ demand for this type of institutions, while the social policy of the state undoubtedly influences and directs this tendency. In addition, as a result of competitiveness, kindergartens offer diverse forms of activities, trying to keep up with contemporary pedagogical trends, often using traditional methods proposed, among others, by Montessori, Froebel, or Freinet. Parents and guardians consciously search for effective forms of working with a child, try to find the right one for their child’s age and abilities. There are a lot of guidebooks on the publishing market, they are overloaded with social media suggestions, information on activities for children, and cultural institutions are outdoing each other in the range of activating the youngest. Classes for children are becoming a kind of business, they are reserved goods and are also part of the modern understanding of branding.

CONTEMPORARY REFLECTION ON THE HISTORY OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

So, is the over one hundred-year tradition of pre-school education in Poland our glorious page in the history of education or is it treated as a fossilized structure and a relic of the past, requiring constant pedagogical innovations? And can we use the experiences of past generations, or are we constantly trying to discover new ones that may already be discovered?

In October 2019, one of the ministers stated during a public debate that kindergartens and nurseries are a relic of the People’s Republic of Poland and that there is no need for artificial help in creating them. These words stuck in the memory of the authors of this text and became an impulse to investigate the history of kindergartens in Poland, mobilized to search for answers to the questions: What is the genesis of pre-school education in Poland? Do we have significant achievements in this area, or is pre-school really a relic of the People’s Republic of Poland that requires thorough changes?

Taking into account historical knowledge, the development of pre-school education took place in the interwar period, so the kindergarten is not a figment of the
socialist Polish state’s policy. Undoubtedly, the renaissance of the development of the kindergarten network falls on the communist times, when kindergartens were a form of childcare for working mothers. Since they were created as a result of the social need of a socialist state, modern institutions may not fully meet the needs of society in the 21st century. However, today we observe various forms of pre-school care, which try to meet the needs of parents and the needs of the child. In order to increase the attractiveness, kindergartens more and more often outdo each other in their offer of classes, from sensory arts, to Chinese language, robotics, or early learning of global reading. And in this diverse range of possibilities are parents who try to choose the most attractive and the most advantageous offer that stimulates the child’s development. And this way, it is possible to fall into the trap of extremes, resulting from the contradiction and multiplicity of information about kindergartens. On the one hand, kindergartens, as a relic of the People’s Republic of Poland, create a very rich offer to be more modern and more attractive for parents. On the other hand, the pre-school period is a time of spontaneous play of a child, learning social relations and development of skills that will be needed only in the next stage of education, already at school level. We believe that the current situation is caused by the lack of awareness of the importance and development of pre-school education in Poland, the lack of real appreciation of the pedagogical achievements of the interwar period, the labeling of “relics”, and the search for innovative solutions, undoubtedly effective, but often devoid of cultural context and being only a temporary trend in education. It is enough to take a look at the phenomena of kindergartens in France, Italy and Scandinavia, which we currently draw inspiration from. These are facilities that meet the contemporary developmental needs of children, but at the same time are very strongly anchored in their tradition.

In addition, our detailed analysis of Internet sources shows the lack of reliable information in the multimedia space, which we already use so often. On the subject of pre-school education in the Second Polish Republic, there is only one paragraph in Wikipedia, “The first kindergarten in Poland was established in 1836 in Warsaw. The Act of 1932 introduced kindergarten as a unified term for institutions providing care for children from 3 years of age to the beginning of school education. The organization of kindergartens and their financing was left to self-governments and social organizations”. However, for comparison, on the European Wikipedia page under the heading: kindergarten5, one can find the history of kindergartens and links to 44 countries (Poland is not included, sic!). On the English page under

the slogan: preschool, the history, creators and achievements of pre-school education are discussed in detail. Information on kindergartens in Poland is sporadic. The same is true of iconographic material relating to the everyday life of kindergartens, which is not widely available, except for specialized archives. Also, the mainstream area is poor in terms of the history of upbringing and education in Poland. Similarly, sources of information about the history of upbringing and education in Poland are scarce in mainstream media such as YouTube. It is easy to find content on the pedagogy of Maria Montessori, Célestin Freinet, Ovide Decroly, Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel, or Helen Parkhurst on the English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese channels. The pedagogy of M. Montessori is currently very popular among parents and kindergartens, and the base of professional literature, teaching aids and colloquial knowledge is more and more diverse – one can learn about the life of an outstanding Italian doctor from the feature film The True Story of Maria Montessori, an Italian production from 2007.

In the Internet space in Poland, among the pedagogical content, one can find information about significant educators such as Janusz Korczak or Maria Grzegorzewska. However, information about their life and pedagogical activity is not disseminated and is not presented in a form attractive to the younger generation. In the social consciousness, J. Korczak functions as the author of stories for children, in the pedagogical space he is an unquestionable model of values and attitudes towards a child, and in the international sphere his activity is presented in the context of his tragic death together with the children in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp. The website of the Academy of Special Education took care of the memory of Maria Grzegorzewska, the creator of special education, by placing her interview on its website. The fact that a private user posted on YouTube two films as part of the “Polish Roads of Education” series about the activities of Maria Grzegorzewska and Władysław Przanowski is worthy of recognition.

On the other hand, about Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa, the creator and initiator of pre-school education in the interwar period, there is only a short biographical note in the Internet space and the lack of scientific studies on her life and social activity. As part of the Fairy Tale by Maria Weryho there are two books entitled Adventures of the Curious Jadzia and Other Kids and Forest Tales turned into audio plays. Moreover, in order to commemorate Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa, in 2007, the monthly magazine “Bliżej Przedszkola” established the Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa Award, which is awarded to outstanding personalities and initiatives that significantly affect the comprehensive

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development of young children, pre-school education and the entire educational process. These are a few examples of the presence of pedagogical historical threads from the interwar period in the social space. That is why it is worth filling this gap, filling it with content that will inspire and testify to Polish educational traditions in the area of pre-school education in an interesting and modern way.

Furthermore, based on the facts already discussed about the history of pre-school education, it can be seen that over the years pre-schools have changed under the influence of various pedagogical concepts and depending on the country’s system – from just the care facilities to educational places.

In recent years there have been significant transformations in pre-school education in Poland. Kindergartens opened wide to the needs of children and began to take into account the expectations of parents. Regardless of how early childhood education is treated, it prepares the child to participate in the following stages of education. The assumptions of the reform do not force organizational changes and profound transformations of methods of working with pre-school children, but its spirit and general vision of human education in our country must be reflected in the work of kindergarten. There has been a change in the style of work towards methods that release a child’s sense of subjectivity. Teachers help the pupils to search, discover, and exceed their previous achievements. Despite modern changes, this “new” pedagogical concept refers to the achievements of such authors as Stefan Szuman, Jean Piaget, Abraham Maslow, or Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky. Psychologists pay attention to the importance of the child’s own spontaneous activity for his/her development. Andrzej Brzeziński, Maria Kielar-Turska, Edyta Gruszczyn-Kolczyńska, Bronisław Rocławski and others refer to these sources in their research. We also observe attempts to transfer to Poland the pedagogical concepts of Maria Montessori, Célestin Freinet, Carl Orff, and Rudolf Laban.

**CONCLUSION**

Contemporary pre-school education classes are often transformed from foreign educational models, which in most cases draw from their pedagogical tradition and adapt their traditional methods to the contemporary needs of a child. At their base is the nineteenth-century New Education trend. Despite the passage of years and social changes, they are still relevant, effective, attractive, interesting for children and interesting for adults. Unfortunately, we do not observe such a phenomenon in Poland, we do not see any elements that could testify to our strong educational heritage. We do not appreciate our own, proven and effective methods and forms
in the field of pre-school education. Of course, any method that promotes a child’s development is beneficial and desirable, regardless of its origin. Undoubtedly, in order to consciously use international pedagogical concepts, we must know our past exactly, be aware of our pedagogical heritage and have a sense of an established pedagogical position in the world. Observing a number of new proposals and the enthusiasm with which they are accepted, we tend to do so without reflection and without realizing that many methods have already been used. Moreover, as a result of social changes created by the media, we function in a constant need to search for “something modern and more attractive”. Despite so many possibilities and offers of classes, nowadays, as psychologists alarm, there is a strong stimulation of children and a limitation in building social bonds. In order not to have to use compensatory classes and activities supporting the natural development of the child in the future, it may be worth using effective and proven methods. Such a conscious “trip to the past” may prove to be an inspiration and a way for a child’s peaceful and harmonious development. New tasks before kindergartens as well as social needs are increasing. Without a historically grounded tradition, without a sense of belonging, community and conviction about the effectiveness of the methods developed, i.e., without the identity of the place, it is difficult to meet social expectations. Despite the fact that kindergartens have opened up to the needs of children and began to take into account the expectations of parents, they are constantly looking for effective methods, sometimes adopting foreign models that are obviously effective but are also taken out of the cultural context and constitute a temporary fashion and trend in education. We absolutely do not criticize modern proposals because we consider all ideas of comprehensive support for a child’s development as effective. However, we would like to point to the possibilities of using and strengthening traditional methods of pre-school education, which can also be treated as alternative forms.

Perhaps it would be worth cultivating the methods of pre-school education developed in Poland, which are unknown, have been forgotten or are simply underestimated. The past may be the basis for building the future, because we want not only to educate, but also to learn to shape reality.

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