

Z BADAŃ NAD TRADYCJĄ POLSKIEJ PEDAGOGIKI. TOM IV. WŁADZA – EDUKACJA – WIEDZA [FROM THE RESEARCH ON TRADITION OF THE POLISH PEDAGOGY. VOLUME NO. 4. POWER – EDUCATION – KNOWLEDGE], SCIENTIFIC ED. J. KRÓL, SZCZECIN 2016, p. 209

The publication entitled *Z badań nad tradycją polskiej pedagogiki. Tom IV. Władza – Edukacja – Wiedza (From the research on tradition of the Polish pedagogy)*, edited by Joanna Król, was published in 2017. It was created as part of the works of the Society of the History of Education in Szczecin and is a continuation of the series of publications.

Inspired by the idea expressed i.a. in *Porządek dyskursu (The order of discourse)* by Foucault¹, the authors of the articles undertook an extremely difficult task, which was to describe the category of power and knowledge in an educational context. It is difficult, as it undermines in some way the existing educational (dis)order. While analyzing the content of the articles included in the publication, it is possible to notice that concerns about introducing necessary changes in the thinking pattern about education are not typical only for contemporary times, but date back to more distant times. However, as Bogusław Śliwerski indicates, there is an urgent need today for change – in particular in the conformist mentality of our society. At the same time, it is a call and a task *to testify to the truth*².

The book is divided into three parts which are preceded by the introduction. All texts included therein are guided by one key issue expressed in the form of a task created by the authors which is to find *the essence and to define the boundaries of mutual relations between power, education and knowledge*³. The starting point for conducting analyzes and syntheses in this monograph assumes that there is an ongoing game between them⁴.

The first part of the reviewed item entitled *Pedagogika polska w dyskursie władzy/wiedzy (The Polish pedagogy in the discourse of power/knowledge)* includes an article by B. Śliwerski – which touches upon a very important issue

¹ M. Foucault, *Porządek dyskursu [The Order of Discourse]*, Gdańsk, Słowo/obraz terytoria, 2002, p. 32.

² B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika po 28 latach transformacji [Pedagogy after 28 years of transformation]*, in: *Z badań nad tradycją polskiej pedagogiki. Tom IV. Władza – Edukacja – Wiedza [From the research on tradition of the Polish pedagogy. Volume No. 4. Power – Education – Knowledge]*, ed. J. Król, Szczecin, Volumina, 2016, p. 31.

³ J. Król, *Wstęp...[Introduction]*, in: *Z badań nad tradycją...*, p. 5.

⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

expressed already in the form of its title: *Pedagogika po 28 latach transformacji (Pedagogy after 28 years of transformation)*. The author starts his considerations by drawing attention to a dangerous syndrome rooted in the Polish mentality called *homo sovieticus*. He also analyzes such issues as: manipulating (students) by teachers and the level of burnout related thereto, the crisis of civic education, as well as manipulating society by the authorities. It seems reasonable (taking account of the existing and urgent problems) to call the author to organize a new counterculture movement. The question included in the text about the direction in which the Polish education is heading⁵ indicates that it is in crisis that we are guilty about as *zawiedliśmy wszyscy krzątający się wokół własnych spraw (those who were bothered about their own matters have failed)*⁶.

The second part of the book – *Władza – edukacja – wiedza w perspektywie pedagogiczno-historycznej – (Power – Education – Knowledge in the pedagogical and historical perspective)* – opens the article entitled: *Samotranscendencja według Sergiusza Hessena (Self-transcendence according to Sergey Hessen)* by Wiesław Andrukowicz. The author reminds of the concept of comprehensive education created by S. Hessen. In addition, he analyzes the texts written by Hessen in terms of his attitude to power. And although Hessen did not speak explicitly about the category of power, he identified the authority of “unity” and “difference”, however, it should be pointed out that none of them should enjoy absolute domination. The key issues for the article include: dialogue and self-education – towards responsible freedom.

The article entitled *Spółeczeństwo a wychowanie w poglądach Lucjana Zarzeckiego (1873–1925) (Society and education in the views of Lucjan Zarzecki (1873–1925))* by Robert Jankowski refers to the issue of national education. The considerations concern, i.a. difficulties and tasks that were present in Poland after regaining independence. The idea of upbringing had to be reconsidered and, according to the author, this process of considering (but also acting) was to refer to entire society. In other words, it was necessary to figure out who should have power over the education of future generations and what it was intended to do.

The article written by Elżbieta Magiera is entitled *Programy nauczania szkół powszechnych w latach 30. XX wieku jako wyraz realizacji ideologii obozu rządzącego (The curricula of public schools in the 1930's as an expression of the ideology of the ruling camp)*. The topics thereof are focused on Marshal Józef Piłsudski and, more specifically, on the ruling camp related to him (sanation) and his activities. Thanks to the considerations provided by the author, it is possible i.a. to understand what the state education introduced at that time consisted in, what its purpose was, what ideas (ideologies) it was guided by and what an ideal man expressed in two words: fighter-worker really meant. Demonstrating by

⁵ B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika po 28 latach...*, p. 24.

⁶ Ibid. p. 23.

E. Magiera how much power is held by “state power” and to what extent it may interfere in the upbringing of future generations is very crucial as well.

In the article entitled *Ideologia edukacyjna jako ideologia praktyczna na przykładzie Polski Ludowej (Educational ideology as a practical ideology on the example of People's Poland)* by Jacek Wołoszyn, presents the process of defining and redefining a person's identity to such one which can contribute to the program of the present government. The article discusses such topics as: collective axiological identity, the role of school education in People's Poland, educational ideology as a sign of practical ideology, and the content of teaching as a message of practical ideology. As the author points out, education at that time was part of the so-called ideological state apparatus, and citizens were becoming (or more precisely: were supposed to become) carriers and developers of this ideology.

Romuald Grzybowski in his text entitled *Odczyty pedagogiczne z lat 50. XX wieku jako forma upowszechnienia założeń pedagogiki marksistowskiej (radzieckiej) wśród nauczycieli polskich (Pedagogical lectures from the 1950's as a form of promoting Marxist (Soviet) pedagogy among Polish teachers)* draws attention to an important issue concerning the indoctrination of Polish teachers between 1948–1956. However, even the youngest members of society were indoctrinated by those in power in Poland after 1945, who reached for the minds of pre-school children. Creating a new man in Poland after the war was compared to creating a socialist man (*homo sovietus*). The author shows how the role of a teacher was depreciated in this process. Only a person who faithfully served the ideology of the ruling camp could become a teacher. And the pedagogical lectures were meant to be one of the methods that formed the attitudes of both future and then teachers, but – as we get to know the text – it was not their only purpose.

Another article by Joanna Król is focused on the analysis of the period between 1948 and 1957. Already its title *Rytualizacja życia szkolnego jako mechanizm władzy w Polsce stalinowskiej (1948–1957) (Ritualization of school life as a mechanism of power in Stalinist Poland (1948–1957))* focuses on the aspect of power which is crucial for this text, i.e. the possibility of interfering in the internal school life (its rituals). The author fails to engage herself in providing detailed analyses of Stalinism and its conditions, as they, as she noted, have already been discussed in detail in the literature. J. Król draws reader's attention to the above-mentioned key issue, dedicating her article to *the process of ritualization of school life between 1948–1956 as one of the fundamental mechanisms of exercising power in education*⁷. The author shows the process of using the constitutional transformation to establish a new order, and thus – a cultural change. To create a new man, the then government had to transform the understanding of concepts. For this purpose, it used all possible channels of producing and distributing

⁷ J. Król, *Rytualizacja życia szkolnego jako mechanizm władzy w Polsce stalinowskiej (1948–1957) [Ritualization of school life as a mechanism of power in Stalinist Poland (1948–1957)]*, in: *Z badań nad tradycją...*, p. 138.

information and knowledge. From laws, textbooks or media, to the words spoken by a single citizen-state official, who was a teacher.

A key element of the ideologization process of society is the educational theory and practice, and all the elements related thereto that the author discusses in detail, turning simultaneously to the issue of ritualization of school life. As elements of indoctrinational educational practice, she mentioned, i.a.: school ceremonies, activities of children's/youth organizations, as well as engagement in political and social life. J. Król also gives a voice to the sources including the statements of those people who were subject to indoctrination, thus showing that in spite of deep and consistent ideologization, the social awareness was watching and analyzing the actions of the authorities very carefully, opposing them at the same time.

The second part of the book finishes with the article by Edyta Kahl-Łuczyńska entitled *Nauki społeczne i humanistyczne w świetle polityki partyjnej początku lat 70. i uchwał II Kongresu Nauki Polskiej (Social sciences and humanities in the light of the party politics of the early 1970's, and the resolutions of the Second Congress of Polish Science)*. At the beginning of her reflections, the author shows what technique was applied to promote only the correct views – namely at that time in Poland there was a process of identification of science (in particular humanities and social sciences) with ideology. As a consequence, it made it possible to instill the Leninist-Stalinist doctrine in people's minds. E. Kahl-Łuczyńska discusses such issues as: the role of science in party visions and the development of the socialist state, HR plans, strengthening the unity of ideological science and its politicization, a long-term program for the development of social sciences, debates of the Second Congress of Polish Science and its resolutions.

The article by Justyna Nowotniak entitled *Nadzór pedagogiczny w Polsce w dyskursie wiedzy/władzy (Pedagogical supervision in Poland in the discourse of knowledge/power)* opens the third part of the book – *Władza – edukacja – wiedza. W perspektywie współczesności (Power – Education – Knowledge. In the contemporary perspective)*. The author focuses her analyses on the system of evaluating education (Polish: System ewaluacji oświaty SEO), and more specifically – on showing what it means in reality and what actions (intentions) are behind it.

Taking advantage of Foucault's meta-narrative, J. Nowotniak presents changes in the concept of pedagogical supervision in Poland after 2009 in a synthetic way, and the intricacies of knowledge/power related thereto. The author describes basic elements of the system of evaluating education: the first of them is an external evaluation – as a new form of pedagogical supervision and a (potential) source of social change. The second element is an internal evaluation (self-evaluation), the understanding of the right essence of which, as the author noted, has become a challenge for teachers. In her article, J. Nowotniak touches upon an extremely important issue, which is Foucault's "parrhesia". It is referred to the issue of the internal evaluation, and thus shows how difficult it is to "execute" it in an authentic way as it does not follow (and cannot follow) any predetermined procedures. And self-reflection, if it is meant to be authentic, must be reflected in the truth (about itself).

Maksymilian Chutorański and Oskar Szwabowski are the authors of the last article. The text with a short, but very meaningful title – *Wszechobecna władza (Pervasive power)* – refers to the issue, which, according to the authors, is becoming wrongly marginalized or giving way to other concepts. The panopticon – a key word in the article – refers to the more common process of monitoring people using “the eye” of power. The authors also discuss the project of Konrad Pustoła *Widoki władzy (The views of power)*, the title of which is literal, as it concerns the views from the windows of the people “in power”, although the results of the project are difficult to interpret.

M. Chutorański and O. Szwabowski in their text note that power should not be identified with a particular person, because this person may only be a “guardian” who holds no real power. That is why, real views of power may not be available to the eye of an ordinary citizen. The authors point out that because of the development of technology, the authorities can observe every step we take, without revealing who does it and why. Another important issue they drew attention to in their text is the school panopticon and the surveillance of students and teachers related thereto – training their bodies and minds under the watchful eye of the camera.

M. Chutorański and O. Szwabowski describe six features of modern panopticism, which include: dematerialisation, increase in mediation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialization, acceleration, egalitarianism and immanence. Thanks to their text, the authors draw reader’s attention directly to the surrounding world equipped with cameras, and, to be more precise, to what real risks this world poses.

The texts included in the book, even though they describe different moments of history, are connected by one narrative, demonstrating what relations were present (and still exist) between power, education and knowledge. It is advisable to reach for each of the articles, as it will help to create a fairly coherent picture of how knowledge was invariably appropriated by the authorities for many years in order to shape the ethos of entire societies through education. The topics discussed in the book make a significant contribution to the development of the scientific discipline, i.e. pedagogy. Considerations over education with reference to the ideas of Michael Foucault help to analyze the validity of many (un)pedagogical claims regarding the shape of education. What seems and seemed right to raise the level of education in the context of Foucault’s narrative takes on a different meaning. Often negative. Reflections on the politicization of education are nothing new, but a growing awareness of the connections and consequences that result from the triad of power, education and knowledge, leads to a serious reflection on the state of contemporary education at all levels.

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