

From the Editor

Professor Ryszard Wroczyński, the co-founder of Polish social pedagogy used to say that during the Enlightenment, all new and innovative topics had been exhausted in humanities and social sciences. Later on, scientific circles only repeated, re-defined and re-interpreted previously discovered problems. Today, historians of education and philosophers of science would probably partially agree with this controversial hypothesis. They seek for lineage and specific continuity of pedagogical ideas, whilst simultaneously pinpointing breakthroughs and turns in pedagogical research.

One may apply this approach when looking at the new issue of „Social Pedagogy” entitled *Schools in a social environment – school environment*. This is a return to the traditional issue of social pedagogy and the fundamental themes previously covered by Helena Radlinska. The social function of a school, the effect of social conditioning on success and failure of children from deprived environments, used to be the leading thought of the interwar Polish social pedagogy. These ideas were explored by classical social pedagogues on multiple occasions.

In the mid-sixties of the twentieth century, extensive research took place under the supervision of professor Ryszard Wroczyński, regarding the role of a school in the community. Ten years later in the Social Pedagogy Department of the University of Warsaw, an idea of community school and life-long learning came to life. Many renowned names came out of these groups of researchers of extracurricular education, the connections of school with the local environment and the social conditioning of educational inequality (Edmund Trempała, Jerzy Wołczyk, Tadeusz Pilch, Mikołaj Winiarski, Edward Mazurkiewicz, Elżbieta Breitkopf and others).

In the following issue of „Social Pedagogy” we return to this heritage. Mikołaj Winiarski shows it very clearly in his article, building a bridge between the past and the current challenges in the field of traditional social pedagogy and educational research. Drawing on the achievements of social pedagogues with the Polish background, upbringing and traditions was our deliberate decision. It is important to celebrate and remember the achievements of Polish social pedagogy when confronted with the flood of diverse, worldwide educational discoveries, ideas and concepts.

The science of today overcomes narrow frames of disciplines and research communities. It is inscribed in the European and non European discourse about the functions of a school and its socio-cultural, economic, political and religious role. These analyses are embedded in well grounded theories, analytical categories, appropriate frames and definitions. Other less known diverse positions and school theories are referred to in this issue through the article entitled *In search of school theory*.

The core of this issue of „Social Pedagogy” quarterly is made up of diagnoses and critical analyses of the current affairs besetting schools. These are academic expert views, in the perspective of educational ideologies, political conditioning and school-based culture created and shaped by the school and the school’s atmosphere (Bogusław Śliwerski, Maria Czerepaniak-Walczak, Marta and Marek Kuleszowie).

Another group of articles refer to the external and internal activities taken by parents, teachers and children. These papers present alternative solutions in rural communities and non-conventional education in so-called quasi schools, created by affluent, highly educated parents. The completeness of these papers rely on other articles that depict the classic socio-educational issues of schools, related to the care and support of children, orphaned by the suicide of their parents and refugee children in European mass migrations.

In the new, changeable, social political and demographic conditions, the issues of schools are faced by pedagogues as new fields of praxis and theory. New and urgent tasks emerge. One must face them appropriately due to the challenges of modern cultures and today’s standards of educational sciences.

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