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CONSERVATIVE PEDAGOGY AND CONTEMPORARY POLISH PEDAGOGICAL THOUGHT

S u m m a r y : The subject of the analysis is the state of metatheoretical research concerning contemporary conservative thought in the pedagogical sciences. The lack of a philosophical syntheses of the essence of conservatism, which could provide the basis for the development of conservative pedagogy, results in the need to develop a theoretical map of thought in order to be able to recognize its different traditions and trends. The author justifies the need for synthetic research in order to create a clear map of the geography of conservative pedagogical thought, its representatives, and key publications for Polish teachers. The article also presents a critical assessment of the current state of research and research methods in this field since Poland's political transformation of 1989. The author demands that conservatism be included in studies of pedagogical thought, to make sure it is not merely being used in ideological disputes and to ensure that its essential value is considered in the process of nurturing and educating young generations.

Ke y w o r d s : conservative pedagogy, Poland, philosophy of education, educational ideology, educational theory

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Introduction

The title of this article contains the conceptual categories whose meaning, as adopted here, becomes a criterion in the analysis of the position of conservative pedagogy in contemporary pedagogical thought. The term ‘pedagogical thought’ as used by Bogdan Nawroczyński is very broad. Nawroczyński thought it was “[...] all that constitutes the noteworthy content of our literature, i.e., not only pedagogical theories of a more or less scientific nature, but also pedagogical journalism in which pedagogical ideals are usually formulated.”² Karol Poznanski takes an even broader approach by saying that pedagogical thought is

[...] not only the views expressed on education and child rearing in treatises, theories and philosophical doctrines. The term is understood more broadly, not only as theory but also as practice, being an expression of a particular concept, doctrine or plans, thoroughly thought-out educational intentions, which found expression in the form of laws, instructions, ordinance, or educational content and programmes.³

It does not seem justifiable to treat pedagogical thought, including conservative thinking, as individual (world-)views, beliefs, opinions or original concepts which have their roots in social and political philosophy. Even though conservative pedagogical deliberation linked to child-rearing and education is not mentioned in the *Universal Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*⁴, it can be still framed as a common system “[...] of natural to human nature tendencies and attitudes of aversion to change, particularly violent change; distrust of what is unknown, and attachment to tradition and proven institutions, norms and values.”⁵ Conservatism, however, is not merely an attitude of traditionalism, for if it were to be seen as such the term could be also used to define orthodox liberals or socialists if they were to be accused of being opposed to radical, dynamic changes to their liberal or leftist views on the world and human nature.

Conservatism, as Jacek Bartyzel has it in the above-mentioned encyclopaedia, is a carrier of ideas, doctrines and ideologies which are derived from social and political philosophy, referring to these inclinations and attitudes. It is also

² Bogdan Nawroczyński, *Polska myśl pedagogiczna. Jej główne linie rozwojowe, stan współczesny i cechy charakterystyczne* [*Polish Pedagogical Thought. Its Main Lines of Development, Contemporary State and Character*] (Lwów-Warszawa: Książnica Atlas, 1938), 9. All quotes have been translated from Polish for the purposes of this article by Marta Robson.

³ Karol Poznanski, „Rozwój polskiej myśli pedagogicznej w zaborze rosyjskim” [The Development of Polish Pedagogical Thought in the Russian Partition]. In: *Nauki pedagogiczne w Polsce. Tradycja, współczesność, przyszłość* [Pedagogical Science in Poland. Tradition, Contemporaneity, Future], eds. Stanisław Michalski, Roman Ossowski (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo WSP, 1994), 189.

⁴ Jacek Bartyzel, „Konserwatyzm” [Conservatism]. In: *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii* [Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy], vol. 5 (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2004), 804-811.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 804.

an ideological and political movement striving to uphold or restore traditional (often changeable) “[...] principles of social and political order.”⁶ In pedagogy, it is linked precisely to conservatism understood in this way, for these principles to be affirmed and practised by (non)professional educators who are well aware of how different their approach to the nurturing and formation of the human in the spirit of tradition, conservative politics is, when compared to the opposing ideologies, doctrines or systems of values recognised and applied in various socialisation and education environments. As Bartyzel points out, in fact conservatives themselves are engaged in an internal dispute about the ways in which their doctrine, position or methodology should be understood.

The same is true of social policy, which is a profoundly political field of research, and therefore one that generates much controversy. “It encompasses a key area of social life in which competing ideologies clash. For this reason, it is worth remembering that all authors working in the field of social policy had a particular political view or worldview.”⁷ For example, British social policy meta-theorists do not include conservatism in their classification at all but only list the following theoretical approaches as an area of research and academic validation of social policy and as a subject for history or social studies in teacher training: neoliberalism, new social democracy, Marxism, feminism and racism.

Conservative thinking, like any other kind embedded in a system of values, or a conception of the human being (pedagogical anthropology) underpinning human beliefs, is a vehicle for one of the normative pedagogies. Practicing it in education is not easy, since there is no consensus among adherents of conservatism about its formal sense (conserving as such) or the material sense (what is to be conserved).⁸ Pedagogical thinking potentially exists in words as linguistic meanings, and thus has an existence independent of the people who have produced it in their thoughts. “For if a thought is expressed in words, then the content of that thought as the linguistic meanings of those word becomes bound to them, and words can last for centuries ahead. The contents of thoughts, potentially latent in words as their linguistic meanings, can therefore be called products of thought.”⁹

This particular thesis has been developed by the historian of pedagogical thought Władysława Szulakiewicz:

It is true that pedagogical thought can have a diverse character, be subject to scientific rigour and contradict it, refer to colloquial ideas about child rearing; it can be the work of professional pedagogues, but also representatives of other disciplines, educational activists and journalists. This

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ *Polityka społeczna. Teorie, pojęcia, problemy* [Social Policy. Theories, Concepts, Problems], eds. Michał Lavalette, Alan Pratt (Warszawa: Difin, 2010), 22.

⁸ Ibid., 806.

⁹ Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz, *Język i poznanie, vol. 1. Wybór pism z lat 1920–1939* [Language and Cognition, vol. 1. A Selection of Writings from 1920–1939] (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1985), 308.

is determined by such factors as the pedagogical knowledge of their authors, their preparation, or what we could call pedagogical culture or pedagogical awareness.¹⁰

I shall not elaborate on the analysis of the term ‘conservatism’ any further, leaving the task to philosophers, political scientists and lawyers. In school pedagogy it is treated as an educational ideology which, like any other ideology, can be and sometimes is instrumentally used by those in political power to manage the school system in accordance with ideology of their choice. Conservatism as a social philosophy, including in particular Catholic social teaching, is mainly practised by non-public schools. This educational trend develops particularly strongly when educational policy is subordinated to another political ideology (social philosophy),¹¹ also penetrating into grassroots educational initiatives e.g., the conservative home-schooling environment.¹² The aim of the content analysis of the works in general pedagogy, whose authors aim to classify contemporary pedagogical thinking, is to seek an answer to the question about the way conservative pedagogy is represented and the function it plays in academic disputes.

Philosophy, ideology or educational theory?

Without a synthetic reflection on systems of ideas, pedagogy deprives itself of the opportunity to pose fundamental questions, limiting itself merely to selected aspects of educational reality. I first published a monograph presenting contemporary trends and theories of child rearing for a good reason,¹³ which was also behind

¹⁰ Władysława Szulakiewicz, „Myśl pedagogiczna jako przedmiot badań historiografii edukacyjnej” [Pedagogical Thought as a Subject of Research in Educational Historiography]. *Chowanna* XLI (LII) (1998): 15.

¹¹ Teresa Hejnicka-Bezwińska, *Pedagogika ogólna* [General pedagogy] (Warszawa: WAI, 2008); Marian Nowak, „Teoria czy praktyka, ideologia czy nauka? Dylematy metodologiczne współczesnych koncepcji wychowania”. *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici, Socjologia Wychowania* XII (1994): 17–33; Leszek Nowak, „Lewica, prawica, teoria społeczna. Esej raczej ideowy niż naukowy” [Left, Right, Social Theory. An Ideological Rather than a Scientific Essay]. In: *Edukacja wobec zmiany społecznej* [Education in the face of social change], eds. Jerzy Brzeziński, Lech Witkowski (Poznań–Toruń: Wydawnictwo Edytor, 1994); Kazimierz Przyszczypkowski, *Polityczność (w) edukacji. Studia Psychologia i Pedagogika* 179 [Politicity (in) Education. Psychology and Pedagogy Studies] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2012); Bogusław Śliwerski, *Program wychowawczy szkoły* [The school's educational programme] (Warszawa: WSiP, 2001); Bogusław Śliwerski, *Współczesna myśl pedagogiczna. Znaczenia, klasyfikacje, badania* [Contemporary Pedagogical Thought. Meanings, Classifications, Research] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2009); Bogusław Śliwerski, *(Kontr)rewolucja oświatowa. Studium z polityki prawicowych reform edukacyjnych* [(Counter) educational Revolution. A Study in the Politics of Right-wing Educational Reform] (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2020).

¹² Marek Budajczak, *Edukacja domowa* [Home Education] (Gdańsk: GWP, 2004); Marzena i Paweł Zakrzewscy, *Edukacja domowa w Polsce. Teoria i praktyka* [Home Education in Poland. Theory and Practice] Warszawa: (Wydawnictwo: Oficyna Wydawniczo-Poligraficzna „Adam”, 2009).

¹³ Bogusław Śliwerski, *Współczesne teorie i nurty wychowania* [Contemporary Theories and Currents of Education] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 1998).

publishing the translations of various syntheses by American, Swiss and German scholars and their taxonomies of pedagogical thought of the Western world of science and culture.¹⁴ Gerald Lee Gutek, the American philosopher of education, distinguishes between philosophies, theories and ideologies of education in terms of their applications in school systems, so that one can open up to reality in the knowledge that there are also other concepts of education. “Thought quite easily abandons ends for means, thinking for method, the uncertainty of opening up for the security of closing and limitation. But this is also happening because our minds prefer to dwell on what is easier, already preoccupied only with themselves and the fragments of the knowable world.”¹⁵

Gutek makes no secret of the fact that the basis of education was and is a generally comprehensible “[...] speculative, reflective and systematic inquiry into the universe and man’s place in it,”¹⁶ hence among **philosophical** educational concepts he distinguishes idealism, realism, Thomism, naturalism, pragmatism and existentialism; **ideological** educational concepts are understood here as an instrument of power “[...] of shaping and promoting social, political, economic and educational ideas”¹⁷: nationalism, liberalism, conservatism, utopianism, Marxism and totalitarianism; and **educational theories** are understood as complete systems of thought of philosophical **origin** (essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, social reconstructionism, critical theory), ideological, or derived from educational practice. For Gutek, conservatism is an educational ideology.

Representatives of every ideology of education must expect resistance, reluctance, disfavour or affirmation, commitment or acceptance. As Gutek says:

Education has long been the subject of numerous debates and polemics, which have become particularly fierce in recent years. As is well known, if a topic is controversial, it means that we are dealing with a crucial issue. The school, being a social institution, is a source of conflict. New projects to reform it are constantly being developed.¹⁸

Not only teachers, but also the parents of their students should know and understand the essence of the differences between the various concepts of education

¹⁴ Hans Berner, „Współczesne kierunki pedagogiki” [Contemporary directions in pedagogy]. In: *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], ed. Bogusław Śliwerski (Gdańsk: GWP, 2006), 195–275; Gerald L. Gutek, *Filozoficzne i ideologiczne podstawy edukacji* [Philosophical and Ideological Foundations of Education], translated by Anna Kacmajor, Agata Sulak, afterword Bogusław Śliwerski (Gdańsk: GWP, 2003); Heinz-H. Krüger, *Wprowadzenie w teorię i metody badawcze nauk o wychowaniu* [Introduction to the Theories and Research Methods of the Education Sciences], translated by Dorota Sztobryn (Gdańsk: GWP, 2005); Hein Retter, *Komunikacja codzienna w pedagogice* [Everyday Communication in Pedagogy], translated by Magdalena Wojdak-Piątkowska, introduction and elaboration Bogusław Śliwerski (Gdańsk: GWP, 2005).

¹⁵ Marek Szulakiewicz, *Naznaczeni tymczasowością. Wprowadzenie do teorii istnienia* [Marked by Temporality. An Introduction to the Theory of Existence] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2017), 19.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

and child rearing in public, mainstream schools, whose programmes and educational methodology are decided by politicians with or without the participation of scholars. “Perhaps it will be easier for them to understand that innovations in the field of the education system and teaching methods can be used for multiple purposes and have multiple consequences.”¹⁹

The state of research on contemporary pedagogical thought in Poland

More new works in this field are being published, including monographs on pedagogical trends and directions, the authors of which present the results of their theoretical (metahistorical and meta-pedagogical) research. I think that the time has come to move towards synthetic research, which would not only reveal the methodological skill of many of us in exploring, reconstructing and interpreting contemporary pedagogical thought, but which would also aim to recognize the shortcomings, dilemmas and even aporias existing in the cognitive process. Władysława Szulakiewicz, who analyzed the ways of presenting pedagogical thought of authors involved with the subject of its history in the Renaissance, Enlightenment and the 19th and early 20th centuries, says that “[...] they did it focusing mainly on outstanding representatives of pedagogical views and creators of educational concepts. Among these works, there were few studies of a synthetic nature.”²⁰ In order to continue with the research, it is perhaps worth taking a closer look at the state of affairs in the 21st century.

The pluralism of pedagogical thought is a fact, for it results from the enduring independence of one another of different approaches to child rearing and education. In scientific debates, value-laden praise or negation of them can be found, depending on the degree of commitment to one or the other, or as a result of examining the objective persistence of distinguishable pedagogical thoughts side by side. This state of affairs is aptly illustrated by a lithograph by Maurits Cornelis Escher, entitled *Relativity*. Its philosophical sense is well interpreted by Szymon Wróbel, who says that it introduces us

[...] into a space in which three forces of gravity act perpendicularly on each other. The three earthly planes on which people live intersect at right angles. These three gravitational forces are freedom, equality, fraternity. The inhabitants of the three different worlds cannot walk, sit or stand on the same floor because they perceive the horizontal and vertical planes differently. Defenders of equality - radical democrats (Chantal Mouffe, Ernesto Laclau, Jacob Torfing), defenders of

¹⁹ Ibid., 20.

²⁰ Władysława Szulakiewicz, *Historia oświaty i wychowania w Polsce 1944-1956* [History of Education and Upbringing in Poland 1944-1956] (Kraków: WAM, 2006), 181.

freedom - radical liberals (John Rawls, Richard Rorty, Jürgen Habermas), and defenders of solidarity - radical conservatives (Leo Strauss, Allan Bloom, Harold Bloom) take for the floor what their neighbours take for the ceiling. They may use the same staircase, but they are unable to agree on their shared values in an absolute way, i.e., one that permanently founds a particular social order. In the staircase at the top of the illustration, two people are walking side by side in the same direction, although one is going up and the other is going down. This is how liberals and conservatives diverge. This is also how liberals and radical democrats diverge. There can be no contact between them because they live in different worlds and are therefore barely aware of each other's existence as well as of their alienation.²¹

The fact that there has not been, is not and will not be any reconciliation between the proponents of different worlds of values and thinking is not and should not be surprising, nor should the expectation that society should be subordinated to any one of them. Surprisingly, however, Wróbel does not mention any examples of Polish thinkers, in line with the phrase from a poem by the 19th century poet Stanisław Jachowicz:

You praise that of others
Not knowing your own [...].²²

Synthetic research on Polish philosophical, sociological or pedagogical thought demonstrates that Polish representatives of various axionormative orientations have been and will be present in educational and academic circles, serving them as theorists and practitioners. It would seem that after thirty-three years of Poland's post-communist transformation, the pluralism of child rearing and educational theories has become obvious and natural for pedagogues. However, conservative thought and pedagogy is missing from the picture and, when it does appear, it fails to find even a minimal acceptance or tolerance in the various approaches to education in the pedagogical environment. Perhaps this is due to the infiltration of the interests of the Catholic Church into politics or the other way round, and the treatment of the Church as a tool for politics. Perhaps the academic pedagogical community is closed to conservative thought due to fact that its approach is supposed to take an exclusive worldview and impact the world with education being used for its purposes, as was the case under the totalitarian system.

Just as materialist ideology became an imposed way of thinking in Poland under communist rule and treated as incontestable and undisputable, any pedagogical thought unrelated to it was taken to be pseudo-scientific and removable from all spheres of experience. A struggle for the secularisation of the national education

²¹ Szymon Wróbel, „Wstęp: Uniwersytet w opałach” [Introduction: University in Distress]. *Studia Pedagogiczno-Artystyczne* VI (2006): 19.

²² Stanisław Jachowicz, *Cudze chwalicie, swego nie znacie*. <http://www.edusens.pl/edusensownik/cudze-chwalicie-swego-nie-znacie> [accessed: 29.09.2022].

system was well underway, in which pseudo-scientific criticism of bourgeois orientations of pedagogical approaches was conducted in order to lead to the total secularisation of the school in a broad sense.²³

Not so long ago, any attempt to transcend this reality as was drawn up by the sciences was perceived as an attack on the only serious reasoning. Anything beyond them was 'frivolous' and unworthy of human reflection. The pretence of materialising science to universalise experience tended to eliminate other experiences.²⁴

This could be one reason why it is necessary to also study conservative thought, as it restores the awareness of the existence of the spiritual and transcendental, and thus not only the need, but also the right of many people to live and raise their children according to the higher, absolute values to which they adhere.

Conservative pedagogy in times of transition

With the political breakthrough of the early 1990s, Polish pedagogy became a discipline oriented towards the values of pluralism, democracy and the open society with its divergences, multiplicity and otherness; towards learning about discourses, trends, concepts of education and child nurturing that had been absent for years only because they contradicted the Marxist-Leninist education doctrine. Over a period of three decades, pedagogy has now been enriched by scholarship whose authors have focused on reading the works of their chosen classics of the educational sciences according to their philosophical, sociological, psychological or ideological roots. Not everyone has been convinced as yet that the state of apparent, and perhaps even to some extent partial, dissociation of Polish pedagogy from the monistic, ideologically degenerated socialist pedagogy, should sensitise academics to the profound, though often repeated (by politicians) principle of discourse of Aleksander Kamiński, that 'we should be able to differ beautifully'.

Poland's political transformation of 1989 opened up, along with the abolition of political (and therefore ideological, doctrinal) censorship, the necessity to bring forth theories of education and child rearing other than the Marxist-Leninist, which had been effectively suppressed in the People's Republic of Poland for the reasons already stated, so that through public and non-public education

²³ *Postępowa myśl oświatowa w Polsce w latach 1918-1939* [Progressive Educational Thought in Poland 1918-1939], Bronisław Ługowski, Feliks W. Araszkiewicz (eds.) (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo PAN, 1972); Karol Kotłowski, „O przyczynach upadku pedagogiki uniwersyteckiej w Polsce Ludowej” [On the causes of the decline of university pedagogy in the People's Republic of Poland]. *Nowa Szkoła* 3 (1957).

²⁴ Szulakiewicz, *Naznaczeni*, 213.

Polish society could regain learning and expand on knowledge in line with the actual state of the sciences, level of public awareness, differences in world-views, and systems of values recognised and implemented in everyday life. The radical change of the socio-cultural context and the theoretical way of applying pedagogy required accelerated thinking on the issue of the best preparation for life in a democratic, open, pluralistic society and active involvement of teachers and educators in the creation and reconstruction of knowledge absent from their practice.

Małgorzata Lewartowska-Zychowicz has spoken of this situation in these words:

The opportunity for scientific pedagogy is seen in carrying out a profound critique of its own theoretical foundations in the context of the contemporary cultural crisis, as well as on the basis of the critique carried out in the natural sciences, and in building its own theoreticality on this basis. This idea involves the need for pedagogy to liberate itself from the framework of scientism and to reorganise its understanding of 'scientism' as one of many possibilities for pedagogy. The crisis of pedagogy could then be understood not catastrophically, as the breakdown of a certain order, but as a breakthrough from which new qualities emerge that are better suited to reality. Each of these qualities can describe the educational reality in its own way, to a certain extent, and their multiplicity creates an opportunity for teachers to look at this reality from different points of view.²⁵

For years, however, the state-control imperative of indoctrinating and grooming young generations in the school system has persisted in educational policy, as secured by the mass-effect of its influence through compulsory education until the age of 18. Perhaps this is the reason for unwillingness, unkindness, and bitterness among the providers of public education who, on the one hand, grow up and operate in a society that is open, also to differences in the private, world-view sphere, and, on the other hand, the fact that they cannot count on the educational authorities to recognise pluralism at all, as the curriculum policy of education and child-rearing is entirely submitted to ideology of the party in power. In fact, it no longer matters which political formation is in charge of the education ministry, as so far, each one has violated the principle of respect, tolerance and even the right to the presence of a different ideology of education in the public space shortly after coming to power. Some people still hope that little will change in the science of education, since education policy is decided by the political authorities which will not let go of their influence of legitimising human attitudes towards an unambiguously defined world of values.

In any case, Polish democracy is still too young and unconsolidated to expect mature attitudes to the management of education from citizens, politicians

²⁵ Małgorzata Lewartowska-Zychowicz, *Między pojęciem a kategorią* [Between concept and category] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2001), 51.

or education professionals such as those encountered in the democracies of Western Europe or the USA. Education in Poland is still not perceived or treated as a common good but merely as an electoral gain for the realization of the objectives of those in power. However, in the period of over three decades of Poland's political transformation, works and dissertations have been published on synthetic pedagogy whose authors discuss various orientations and trends in contemporary pedagogical thought, including among its Polish representatives. Even though conservative pedagogy has not been at the centre of these analyses, it has certainly been present.

Polish conservative thought in the synthetic studies on contemporary pedagogy in Poland

The need to conduct research on various trends in education, including into Polish pedagogical thought, serves the purpose of the learning of thought maps that are adequate to our culture and tradition, and compliant with the methodology of scientific research; the maps that reveal the state of transition from the monistic socialist pedagogy to open, axionormatively diverse knowledge about education, which for this reason is also subject to various interpretations and applications in educational policy.²⁶ Contemporaneity in this case marks out the time of Poland's systemic transformation, which began in 1989 and is still underway, struggling with the processes of destruction in the period of attempts by politicians and social movements to consolidate democracy.

Thus, I am not considering here the valuable though only partly current treatises by Ludwik Chmaj (1963), Kazimierz Sośnicki (1967), Bogdan Suchodolski (1962) or Karol Kotłowski (1973), as they are laden with both self- and state censorship. Neither do I take into account the various dissertations on the trends and directions of pedagogical thought, as they make no reference to the systematics of contemporary pedagogical thought. Their authors usually study the pedagogical thinking

²⁶ See: Bożena Matyjas, Zdzisław Ratajek, Elżbieta Trafiałek, *Orientacje i kierunki w pedagogice współczesnej* [Orientations and Trends in Contemporary Pedagogy] (Kielce: Wszechnica Świętokrzyska, 1997); Stefan Wołoszyn, *Nauki o wychowaniu w Polsce w XX wieku. Próba syntetycznego zarysu na tle powszechnym* [Educational sciences in Poland in the 20th century. An attempt at a synthetic outline against a common background] (Kielce: Wydawnictwo Strzelec, 1998); *Źródła do dziejów wychowania i myśli pedagogicznej*, Selection and elaboration Stefan Wołoszyn, vol. III (Kielce: Wydawnictwo Strzelec 1998); Śliwerski, *Współczesne teorie*; Śliwerski, *Współczesna myśl*; Monika Jaworska-Witkowska, Zbigniew Kwieciński, *Nurty pedagogii. Naukowe, dyskretne, odlotowe* [Currents of pedagogy. Scientific, discreet, happening] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2011); Mariusz Gizowski, *Niebezpieczne nurty i idee filozoficzno-pedagogiczne XX wieku* [Dangerous Currents and Philosophical-pedagogical Ideas of the 20th Century] (Koszalin: Politechnika Koszalińska, 2015).

of their choice as derived from the philosophy, social/sociological, psychological or political thought relevant to it.

As Wiesława Korzeniowska says about the state of differentiation of pedagogy and, with it, the education of teachers and pedagogues:

In Western Europe and beyond, contemporary pedagogical thought has been inspired by pluralism and individualistic conceptions of the human being promoted by liberal ideologies. Under their influence, three periods can be distinguished in the development of pedagogy: orthodoxy, heterodoxy and heterogeneity. The latter, emerging in the 1990s, is associated with the transition from the 'paradigm dispute' to the stage of 'debating societies' - which, in relation to pedagogues, means taking on the role of 'interpreters' and abandoning the hitherto role of 'legislators'. [...] in this multiplicity of currents and directions, however, some problems still demand attention, the most important of which are: launching a social discussion about education, creating a platform for the process of undisturbed communication of the parties participating in it, and validating different kinds of knowledge about education, and various methodologies and methodologies of its creation.²⁷

One of the important treatises on conservative Christian thought in Poland is without doubt Piotr Magier's metatheoretical study.²⁸ Magier aptly constitutes his thought in relation to the school system, within its structure distinguishing the pedagogy of Catholicism, the pedagogy of Orthodoxy, the pedagogy of Protestantism and the pedagogy of religion. He also recalls the closely related names for Christian pedagogy, capturing it as a global variable, namely: pedagogy of religion, theological pedagogy, classical pedagogy, personalistic pedagogy, integral pedagogy, transcendental pedagogy, ecumenical pedagogy and pastoral pedagogy.

The relationships of scope generated by attributes such as "transcendent", "of religion", "Christian", "Catholic", "Orthodox", "Protestant", rely on a relationship of containment. The widest scope can be attributed to the term "transcendent pedagogy", which represents all types of pedagogy that refer to Revelation, God, spiritual forces.²⁹

Analysing the Polish pedagogical literature, I notice the following research approaches to conservative educational thought, which are distinguished by their object and research method. At their centre are Christian (including Catholic, Evangelical) and non-Christian (Steiner's anthroposophy), as well as transcendental concepts, orientations, and currents of conservative socio-moral education. These

²⁷ Wiesława Korzeniowska, *Mysł pedagogiczna na przestrzeni wieków. Chronologiczny słownik biograficzny* [Pedagogical thought over the centuries. Chronological Biographical Dictionary] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2010), 181.

²⁸ Piotr Magier, *Metateoria pedagogiki chrześcijańskiej* [Metatheory of Christian pedagogy] (Lublin: WN KUL, 2019).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 123.

occur in such research directions as the historical, biographical, metatheoretical, axiological, anthropological-pedagogical, educational, monographic, didactic (school curricula), and teachers research.³⁰

³⁰ *Myśl pedagogiczna przełomu wieków* [Pedagogical thought at the turn of the century], ed. Tadeusz Aleksander (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2001); Jerzy Bagrowicz, *Edukacja religijna współczesnej młodzieży* [Religious education of contemporary youth] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo UMK 2000); Jerzy Bagrowicz, Stanisław Jankowski, „Pan Bóg twój, wychowuje ciebie” (Pwt.8,5). *Studia z pedagogiki biblijnej* [The Lord your God is bringing you up (Deut. 8:5). Studies in biblical pedagogy] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo UMK, 2005); Maria M. Bouzyk, *Wychowanie otwarte na religię. Polska szkoła filozofii klasycznej o religii w wychowaniu* [Education open to religion. Polish school of classical philosophy on religion in education] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2013); Mariusz Cichosz, *Działalność społeczno-wychowawcza Kościoła Katolickiego w środowisku lokalnym. Na przykładzie miasta Bydgoszczy* [Social and educational activity of the Catholic Church in the local environment. On the example of the city of Bydgoszcz] (Bydgoszcz: Instytut Wydawniczy Świadectwo, 1997); Witold J. Chmielewski, *Zwalczanie wychowania religijnego w szkołach w latach 1944-1950* [Combating religious education in schools in the years 1944-1950] (Kraków: Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie, 2017); Stanisław Chrobak, *Koncepcja wychowania personalistycznego w nauczaniu Karola Wojtyły – Jana Pawła II* [The concept of personalistic education in the teaching of Karol Wojtyła – John Paul II] (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Salezjańskie, 1999); Stanisław Chrobak, *Podstawy pedagogiki nadziei. Współczesne konteksty w inspiracji personalistyczno-chrześcijańskiej* [Foundations of the pedagogy of hope. Contemporary contexts in personalistic and Christian inspiration] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2009); Marcin Drewicz, *Etos nauczyciela liceum ogólnokształcącego we współczesnej Polsce a zasady katolickiego wychowania* [The ethos of a high school teacher in contemporary Poland and the principles of Catholic upbringing] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Salezjańskie, 2003); Ewa Dybowska, *Wychowawca w pedagogice ignacjańskiej* [Educator in Ignatian pedagogy] (Kraków: Akademia Ignatianum, WAM 2013); Stanisław Dziekoński, *Rozwój wychowawczej myśli Kościoła na przestrzeni ostatnich wieków* [The development of the Church's educational thought over the last centuries] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2004); Beata Ecler-Nocoń, *Wychowawcze konteksty myśli Wojtyły. Rzecz dla pedagogów* [Educational contexts of Wojtyła's thought. A thing for teachers] (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Śląsk, 2009); Stanisław Gałkowski, *Rozwój i odpowiedzialność. Antropologiczne podstawy koncepcji wychowania moralnego* [Development and responsibility. Anthropological foundations of the concept of moral education] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2003); Beata Gola, Dominika Jagielska, Janina Kostkiewicz. „Wstęp” [Introduction]. In: *Niepodległościowe koncepcje i programy wychowania przełomu XIX i XX wieku. I Seminarium Polskiej Myśli Pedagogicznej: Myśl o wychowaniu dla Polski niepodległej 1863-1914/18* [Independence concepts and educational programs at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. 1st Seminar of Polish Pedagogical Thought Thoughts on Upbringing for Independent Poland 1863-1914/18], eds. Beata Gola, Dominika Jagielska, Janina Kostkiewicz (Kraków: Zakład Pedagogiki Szkoły Wyższej i Polskiej Myśli Pedagogicznej IP Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2015), 7-9; Gizowski. *Niebezpieczne*; Roman Jusiak, *Pedagogika społeczna Kościoła Katolickiego* [Social pedagogy of the Catholic Church] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2013); *Chrześcijańskie inspiracje w pedagogice* [Christian inspirations in pedagogy], ed. Janina Kostkiewicz (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2011); *Pedagogie katolickich zgromadzeń zakonnych. Historia i współczesność* [Pedagogies of Catholic religious congregations. History and the present], vol. 1, ed. Janina Kostkiewicz (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2012); Stefan Kunowski. *Podstawy współczesnej pedagogiki* [Basics of modern pedagogy] (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Salezjańskie, 1981); Stefan Kunowski. *Problematyka współczesnych systemów wychowania* [Problems of contemporary education systems] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2000); Czesław Kustra. *Oratoria jako forma opieki wychowawczej we współczesnej parafii* [Oratories as a form of educational care in the modern parish] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 1998); Magier, *Metateoria*; Ryszard Małachowski, *Średnie szkolnictwo katolickie w Polsce i w wybranych państwach europejskich (lata 1945-2000)* [Secondary Catholic education in Poland and in selected European countries (1945-2000)] (Zielona Góra: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, 2005); *Pedagogika pastoralna* [Pastoral pedagogy],

Still, we have not yet seen a synthetic work that would show the geography of conservative pedagogical thought or practices that would enable candidates for the pedagogical profession or other social forces to find an academic reference point adequate to their positions. There are also no works on Orthodox pedagogy and pedeutological studies through which it would be possible to find out if and how teachers representing pedagogical conservatism are educated.

ed. Marek Marczewski (Lublin: Polihymnia, 2003); Zbigniew Marek, *Rozwój teorii religijnego wychowania dziecka w wieku przedszkolnym w Polsce w latach 1945-1990* [Development of the theory of religious upbringing of a preschool child in Poland in the years 1945-1990] (Kraków: WAM Księża Jezuici, 1994); Zbigniew Marek, *Pedagogika towarzyszenia. Perspektywa tradycji ignacjańskiej* [Pedagogy of accompaniment. The perspective of the Ignatian tradition] (Kraków: Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie, 2017); Matyas, Ratajek, Trafialek, *Orientacje; Pedagogika chrześcijańska. Tradycja, współczesność, nowe wyzwania* [Christian pedagogy. Tradition, modernity, new challenges], eds. Jarosław Michalski, Aldona Zakrzewska (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2010); *Elementy pedagogiki religijnej* [Elements of religious pedagogy], ed. Bogusław Milerski (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo ChAT, 1998); Stefan Możdżeń, *Inspiracje katolickiej myśli wychowawczej w Polsce do poł. XX w.* [Inspirations of Catholic educational thought in Poland until the mid-20th century] (Kielce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej, 2001); Jan Niewęglowski, *Wychowawczo-społeczna działalność salezjanów w Polsce w latach 1898-1989* [Educational and social activity of the Salesians in Poland in 1898-1989] (Warszawa: Towarzystwo Naukowe Franciszka Salezego, 2011); *Wychowanie chrześcijańskie a kultura* [Christian education and culture], eds. Marian Nowak, Tomasz Ożóg (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2000); *Dziedzictwo myśli pedagogicznej Edmunda Bojanowskiego we współczesnej edukacji w Polsce i na świecie* [The legacy of Edmund Bojanowski's pedagogical thought in contemporary education in Poland and in the world], ed. Maria Loyola Opiela (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2014); Adam Orczyk, *Zarys historii szkolnictwa i myśli pedagogicznej* [An outline of the history of education and pedagogical thought] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak”, 2008); *Wychowanie chrześcijańskie metodą harcerską*, ed. Anna Petkowicz (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2009); Romuald Rybicki, *Wprowadzenie do pedagogiki chrześcijańskiej* [Introduction to Christian pedagogy] (Częstochowa: Kuria Metropolitalna, 1997); *Wychowanie młodzieży w nauczaniu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, ed. Alina Rynio (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 1995); Alina Rynio, *Z myśli pedagogicznej Prymasa Wyszyńskiego* [From the pedagogical thought of Primate Wyszyński] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 1995); Alina Rynio, *Wychowanie do odpowiedzialności. Studium z teorii i praktyki pedagogiki integralnej* [Education for responsibility. A study in the theory and practice of integral pedagogy] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2019); Helena Słotwińska, *Pedagogika religii w relacjach z dyscyplinami teologicznymi* [Pedagogy of religion in relations with theological disciplines] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2016); Helena Słotwińska, *Wychowanie chrześcijańskie szansą integralnego rozwoju człowieka. Studium z pedagogiki religii* [Christian education as a chance for integral human development. A study in the pedagogy of religion] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2019); Sławomir Sobczak, *Celowość wychowania. Tomistyczne podstawy teleologii wychowania* [Purposefulness of upbringing. Thomistic foundations of educational teleology] (Warszawa: NAVO, 2000); Barbara Surma, *Koncepcja wychowania religijnego dziecka w myli pedagogicznej Sofii Cavalletti. Geneza, założenia teoretyczne i recepcja* [The concept of religious education of a child in the pedagogical thought of Sofia Cavalletti. Genesis, theoretical assumptions and reception] (Kraków: Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie, WAM, 2017); Sławomir Sztobryn, Jerzy Semków, *Edukacja i jej historiografia. W poszukiwaniu płaszczyzny twórczego dialogu* [Edukacja i jej historiografia. W poszukiwaniu płaszczyzny twórczego dialogu] (Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2006), 75-87; *Personalistyczny wymiar filozofii wychowania* [Personalistic dimension of the philosophy of education], eds. Anna Szudra, Katarzyna Uzar (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2009); Śliwerski, *Współczesne teorie; Śliwerski, Współczesna myśl; Wołoszyn, Nauki; Marta Zahorska, Szkoła: między państwem, społeczeństwem a rynkiem* [School: Between the state, society and the market] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak”, 2002).

Conclusions

One may wonder what the purpose of research on contemporary pedagogical thought is, if in the constantly changing life of the Polish society it has merely become the subject of power struggles among the main political formations? Do we indeed need to broaden or deepen our knowledge of a preferred approach to education for the instrumental needs and influences of the parties in power, or should we serve the development of pedagogical science, regardless of the party that holds the office of the Ministry of Education and, with it, the pedagogical supervision of schooling? As the editors of the 1st Seminar of the Polish Pedagogical Thought Beata Gola, Dominika Jagielska and Janina Kostkiewicz, rightly assume:

The rich tradition of Polish pedagogical thought implies the question about its nurturing, continuation and use for the education of new generations. The question of how to build the present and create the future of the theory and practice of nurturing and education on the basis of the best models of the past raises many detailed and multicontextual issues. Polish pedagogical thought – despite the fact that it is still waiting for a grand opening in various periods of its history – is already revealing its qualities in their present state.³¹

Conservative pedagogical thought in Poland has an equally if not better developed body of scientific knowledge on the subject than liberal and left-wing resources. I do not support Piotr Magier's thesis that Christian pedagogy is “[...] a controversial element of contemporary pedagogy. Despite the fact that its output is extensive and multifaceted, and the dynamics of research testify to a steady, unabated development.”³² The fact that, as a result of the political conflict in Poland, its presence or penetration into the sphere of education and educational policy is being undermined, in no way negates its sense, the legitimacy of its existence and development, or the dispute conducted within it about the subject of research and the scope of application of its results in educational practice.

There is a war of ideas raging in Poland, for which ideologies (political and legal doctrines) rather than pedagogies are the main fodder. As Szymon Pękala says that

the narrative that political opponents are the embodiment of evil and that one should be emotionally and personally involved in the fight against them is already normalised in mainstream Polish public debate. This does not give rise to any widespread shock or surprise, purely because we have become accustomed to it. In fact, it is a perfectly natural consequence of seeing opposition as the enemy. A dialogue is however possible with an adversary, but not with an enemy. The enemy must be destroyed.³³

³¹ Gola, Jagielska, Kostkiewicz, Wstęp, 7.

³² Magier, *Metateoria*, 9.

³³ Szymon Pękala, *Wojna idei. Myśl po swojemu* [War of ideas. Think your way] (Kraków: Znak Horyzont, 2022), 9.

It is especially important, then, that we as educators do not get involved in this, so that no child, parent or teacher feels stigmatised, excluded, or depreciated just because he or she is perceived as a stranger, an enemy, a barbarian by virtue of recognising and manifesting different ideological worldviews or attitudes.³⁴

Pedagogy must not be harnessed to a civilisation of death, war, destruction or obliteration. Differences in worldviews cannot be treated as means of building a front for the struggle between good and evil, as in this form they have little to do with goodness or concern for the human. In no way is pedagogy as a discipline or educational practice served by reconstructing non-conservative philosophical or pedagogical trends and ideas from the perspective of their alleged danger³⁵ by creating a pseudo-scientific, demagogic “political cudgel” with which to strike a blow against the positive value of pedagogy right where it is preached or published. Even the most beautiful idea in the hands of those who generate alleged enemies contradicts the ethos of the scholar, who should pursue the truth rather than preach its makeovers or distortions.³⁶ Needless to say, people who wish to live in a democratic state must make sure they see the difference.

In fact, my own position is close to Aleksander Kamiński’s idea that an educator ought to combine civic responsibility with high ethics and political dialogue, and if strongly influenced by the spirit of a political party she or he enters into its manipulative, mainstream service, they should, in the spirit of Christian values

[...] make the greatest effort to observe this extremely important principle in involvement with a party: despite all the love and faith you have for your party, be loyal to all other parties that stand on the ground of the independent Polish state. One of the nastiest features of party life is a kind of satanic brainwashing, which turns formerly chivalrous, honourable and honest people into stupefied fanatics, who see in all other parties and political groupings other than their own only meanness and treachery, falsehood, malicious intentions, incompetence and ill will, and

³⁴ See: Anne Applebaum, *Zmierzch demokracji. Zwodniczy powab autorytaryzmu* [Twilight of democracy. The deceptive allure of authoritarianism], translated by Piotr Tarczyński (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Agora, 2020); *Cyber kontra real Prof. Andrzej Zybortowicz. Rozmawia Jarema Piekutowski, Cywilizacja w techno-pułapce* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Nowej Konfederacji, 2022); Janusz Grygień, *Demokracja na rozdrożu. Deliberacja czy partycypacja polityczna?* [Democracy at the crossroads. Deliberation or political participation?] (Kraków: Universitas, 2017); Leszek Koczanowicz, *Polityka dialogu. Demokracja niekonsensualna i wspólnota krytyczna* [Dialogue policy. Non-consensual democracy and critical community], translated by Katarzyna Liszka (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2015); Michał P. Markowski, *Wojny nowoczesnych plemion. Spór o rzeczywistość w epoce populizmu* [Wars of the Modern Tribes. The dispute about reality in the era of populism] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Karakter, 2019); Andrzej Paradysz, *Śladami wojny polsko-(nie)polskiej 1989-2021* [In the footsteps of the Polish-(not) Polish war 1989-2021] (Chomęcice: Wydawnictwo FNCE, 2022).

³⁵ Gizowski, *Niebezpieczne*; Jan Zubelewicz, *Filozofia wychowania. Aksjocentryzm i pajdocentryzm* [Philosophy of education. Axiocentrism and paedocentrism] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak”, 2002); Zubelewicz, *Filozoficzna analiza i krytyka pajdocentryzmu pedagogicznego* [Philosophical analysis and criticism of pedagogical paedocentrism] (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Politechniki Warszawskiej, 2008).

³⁶ More in: Bogusław Śliwerski, *Pedagogika dziecka. Studium pajdocentryzmu* [Child pedagogy. A study of paedocentrism] (Gdańsk: GWP, 2007); Śliwerski, *Współczesna myśl*.

are convinced that the most terrible disasters and ruins are ready to befall their fatherland at the hands of any of their political opponents. I repeat that in spite of all the love and faith you have for your own political party, pursue the position of chivalry and loyalty towards other parties, even if the programmes of these parties or their people deeply hurt your sense of what is the public good. Always remember that your political opponent may also be hurt by your party's programme. And one more thing: do not exclude any party standing on the grounds of an independent Polish state from this circle of loyalty. From the extreme left to the extreme right, treat all (political) groups as those towards whom loyalty is due and towards whom all effort must be made to understand their intentions.³⁷

Whether, and to what extent, this will turn out to be possible in the near future remains to be seen, as Poland has faced a difficult period of another political upheaval in connection with the war in Ukraine and the upcoming parliamentary and local elections in Autumn 2023. The results of these will certainly turn out to be significant for future education policy.

Translated from Polish by Marta Robson

S t r e s z c z e n i e : Przedmiotem analizy jest stan badań metateoretycznych, które dotyczą współczesnej myśli konserwatywnej w naukach pedagogicznych. Brak filozoficznych syntez istoty konserwatyizmu, które są podstawą rozwoju pedagogiki konserwatywnej, skutkuje koniecznością opracowania mapy teoretycznej myśli, by możliwe było rozpoznanie różnych jej tradycji i nurtów. Autor uzasadnia potrzebę prowadzenia badań syntetycznych, by powstała zrozumiała dla polskich nauczycieli mapa geografii pedagogicznej myśli konserwatywnej, jej przedstawicieli i kluczowych publikacji, a także prezentuje krytycznie dotychczasowy stan i metody badań w tym zakresie po 1989 roku. Autor upomina się o uwzględnienie w opracowaniach myśli pedagogicznej konserwatyizmu, by nie był on wykorzystywany do prowadzenia sporów ideologicznych, ale uwzględnił istotną jego wartość w procesie wychowania i kształcenia młodych pokoleń.

S ł o w a k l u c z o w e : pedagogika konserwatywna, Polska, filozofia edukacji, ideologia edukacyjna, teoria edukacji

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³⁷ Aleksander Kamiński („J. Górecki”), *Wielka Gra* [Great Game] (Warszawa: Niezależne Wydawnictwo Harcerskie, 1981), 10-11.

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