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Pedagogical and Ethical Content in Polish Young Readers' Periodicals in the Years 1863–1918

In European countries, the nineteenth century was a period of widespread free public and compulsory elementary education supervised by the state organs¹. New educational programs were created and effective methods of knowledge transfer were sought². The spread of natural education was especially important as a way of helping pupils understand the rapidly changing world, which was entering the Industrial Revolution. In this context, in Polish literature, postulates by Adolf Dygasiński and Edward Bogdanowicz draw particular attention³. The specificity of the situation of the Polish nation during the period considered resulted from its functioning in three different systems of education formed by three separate partitioning states. It is not surprising that the knowledge provided in schools was not always coherent and mutually equivalent, especially and understandably in relation to the subjects of native culture and language.

At about the same time (i.e. in the mid-nineteenth century), the education systems of Austria, Prussia and Russia were thoroughly reformed, albeit they were changing in different directions, which was mainly influenced by political and ideological issues. While in the Austrian partition, liberalization of the principles of education associated with the Polonization of science at all levels was seen, the assumptions of the Prussian Kulturkampf were intended to unify the educational message throughout the empire, which led to the limitation of the rights of the Polish national minority along with the decreasing influence of the Catholic Church. The most dramatic episode in this process was the strike of children in the town of Września, widely commented in the Polish press. In the Galician periodicals, this act of violence committed against the pupils⁴ was publicly condemned. There were also collections made to help victims not only in Września, but also in other cities of the

¹ The article was based on queries and research funded by the National Science Center No UMO-2013/11/B/HS2/02589, ID 23859: *Polish press for children and youth to 1918 year*.

² J. Draus, R. Terlecki, *Historia wychowania. Wiek XIX i XX*, vol. 2, Kraków 2010, p. 40–42.

³ R. Wroczyński, *Dzieje oświaty polskiej 1795–1945*, Warszawa 1987.

⁴ *Stała się rzecz straszna*, „Mały Świątek” 1901, no. 35, p. 273–275; *Do naszych czytelników w dzień Nowego Roku*, „Mały Świątek” 1902, no. 2, p. 10; *Suplikacye*, „Wiek Młody” 1901, no. 23, p. 179–181.

Prussian partition (including the arrest of students from Toruń)⁵. In the Prussian partition, there was a particularly high risk of Poles being deprived of their national identity⁶. The problem of limiting the ability to use native language was so important that "Przyjaciel Działy" issued in Grudziądz even published Polish language courses filling the gap associated with the lack of teaching aids for learning grammar or spelling⁷. In the course of this, German was sometimes used, which – to some extent – was a testimony to the popularity of our western neighbors' speech also in the Polish community. It is interesting that the printed texts did not use the official neo-gothic print used in the schooling system, but consistently used antique letters.

In the Russian partition the school system was heavily russified⁸. Therefore the children's and teens' magazines that existed there in view of their particular vitality and publishing continuity, played an exceptionally high culture-creating role. They provided didactic materials used in the process of self-education not only of children but also for adults. Due to the underdeveloped education sector in the Russian partition, the private education system was developed on a large scale. It was based on different programs than the official state-run education marked by russification and not using modern pedagogical methods in practice. Private education was especially important in the education of women, as it was not organized on a larger scale in the context of the state activity⁹. In addition, a system of "scientific" courses aimed at educating adults was developing¹⁰. On this background, Polish journalism was one of the most important channels to broaden the knowledge and was a key source of information about new inventions, discoveries and current events. These types of functions are confirmed already in the titles of some published texts (eg. *Szkółka domowa* [Home school])¹¹. Without a doubt, magazines in the partitions promoted independent home-schooling, showing the various opportunities for further training together with parents or peers. The self-learner was often presented as a role-model¹².

⁵ *Wykaz składek...*, „Mały Świątek” 1901, no. 36, p. 291–292, 1902 no. 2, p. 13–14, no. 3, p. 22–23, no. 4, p. 30, no. 7, p. 53.

⁶ A particularly difficult situation existed in the Vistula Pomerania, which was attached to Prussia as part of the First Partition. Thus, unlike in other parts of Poland, reforms of the Commission of National Education did not come into being, and so Polish never became a lecture language in secondary schools. R. Grzybowski, *Udział prasy w nauczaniu domowym dzieci polskich na Pomorzu Nadwiślańskim w drugiej połowie XIX wieku i początkach XX wieku*, [in:] *Nauczanie domowe dzieci polskich od XVIII do XX wieku*, ed. K. Jakubiak, A. Winiarz, Bydgoszcz 2004, p. 275–286.

⁷ E.g. „Przyjaciel Działy” 1904, no. 26, p. 101 (lecture on declination), *Pisownia polska*, ibidem 1913, no. 12, p. 47–48 (rules of spelling).

⁸ Cf. K. Poznański, *Wybrane zagadnienia z historii wychowania*, vol. 2, Warszawa 2009, p. 148–153.

⁹ Ibid., p. 153–159. The main problem of this alternative education system was the economic dependence. In the press, therefore, organization of a scholarship system was postulated to be based more on issues related to charity. *Gwiazdka*, „Świat” 1881, no. 4, p. 46–48.

¹⁰ R. Wroczyński, *Mysł pedagogiczna i programy oświatowe w Królestwie Polskim na przełomie XIX i XX w.*, Warszawa 1955, p. 110–113.

¹¹ S. Duchcińska, *Szkółka domowa*, „Jutrzenka Polska” 1906, no. 2, p. 9–10.

¹² K. Król, *Wielki samouczek Michał Faraday*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” Warszawa 1895, no. 38–40.

Specialist pedagogical content rarely appeared directly on the pages of the periodicals of interest. Biographies of famous educators such as Jan Henryk Pestalozzi¹³, Grzegorz Piramowicz¹⁴, Jan Fryderyk Herbart¹⁵ or Klementyna Hoffman nee Tańska were printed.

Individual editors certainly attached great importance to the promotion of certain moral-ethical values. Characteristically, short stories presenting specific patterns of behavior were frequently published. Numerous stories centered on the reckless conduct of young characters, which led to various injuries and accidents while allowing the formulation of an educative punch line¹⁶. Many character defects were stigmatized, especially in short stage works called "komedyjka" [little comedy]¹⁷. Most of the fictional texts that appeared in the Warsaw "Przyjaciel Dzieci" and "Wieczory Rodzinne" and the Lviv "Towarzysz Pilnych Dzieci" conveyed moral truths important for the shaping of character¹⁸. Numerous works of this type adopted the schema of a developmental novel showing the social advancement of the hero, who, as a result of hard work and overcoming various adversities, provided a better life for himself those surrounding him (or her)¹⁹. The often described school adventures of the protagonists frequently referred to historical times²⁰. This moralism sometimes took the form of a **parenesis**. In the 1870s a popular series printed in the "Przyjaciel Dzieci" was *Czyny Nauczające Teresy Jadwigi Papi* [Exemplary Deeds by Teresa Jadwiga Papi]. Most of these short stories were loosely connected to various historical events or to famous people (monarchs, leaders, clergymen and saints) and one of the promoted virtues was the ability to compromise and place public good over self interest²¹. Young readers' magazines also published various tips on how to behave properly. These took the form of "golden thoughts", proverbs or moral teachings expressed explicitly. In the Warsaw "Przyjaciel Dzieci" they created a cycle called Thoughts and sentences²². They dealt with various issues: from the postulate of obedience to parents or adults in

¹³ M. Poh, *Pestalozzi*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” Warszawa 1876, no. 17, p. 194–195.

¹⁴ *Grzegorz Piramowicz*, ibidem 1889, no. 29, p. 337–338.

¹⁵ *Jan Fryderyk Herbart*, „Wieczory Rodzinne” 1887, no. 12, p. 84.

¹⁶ Halina, *Niemita przygoda Jadwisi*, „Wieczory Rodzinne” 1891, no. 29, p. 112; *Ukarany*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1894, no. 2, p. 13; W. Bełza, *Nieposłuszna Helcia*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci i Młodzieży” 1870, no. 6, p. 44.

¹⁷ E.g. F. Barański, *Za karę*, „Mały Świątek” 1894, no. 1–3; *Ciekawska*, ibidem 1901, no. 31–33; J.K. Gregorowicz, *Oj te chłopaki*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” Warszawa 1888, no. 12–15; vol. Prażmowska, *Zarobek Grzesia*, ibidem 1905, no. 41, p. 654–655; Kazimiera, *Awantura z jagodami*, „Wieczory Rodzinne” 1884, no. 1–3; *Dobre serce Stasia*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1866, no. 2–3, p. 102–119.

¹⁸ E.g. H. Darowska, *Wakacje Henrysia*, „Towarzysz Pilnych Dzieci” 1877; Mar, *Czy praca jest nieszczęśliwym?*, „Wieczory Rodzinne” 1891.

¹⁹ M. Zielińska, *Rodzina artysty. Powieść współczesna*, „Wieczory Rodzinne” 1883; Kazimiera, *Reginka*, ibidem 1884.

²⁰ P.J. Bykowski, *Pamiętniki Jasia*, „Wieczory Rodzinne” 1880–1881; *Wychowanie Sobieskich Marka i Jana, późniejszego króla Polski*, „Towarzysz Pilnych Dzieci” 1880, no. 28, p. 221–224; *Wspomnienia szkolne*, „Wiek Młody” 1897, no. 11, p. 81–82.

²¹ T.J., *Szlachetna prośba*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1877, no. 41, p. 487 (Conrad I's decision to surrender the imperial crown to his enemy Henry the Fowler in order to maintain the unity of Germany); T.J., *Jan Kazimierz w Jazdowie*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1877, no. 43, p. 511 (the rule of Parliament over the rule of the King).

²² Published from 1861 almost to the end of the century.

general to the difficult choices associated with higher ideals such as patriotism, faith and honesty. Different types of unambiguous orders or directives sometimes appeared as titles of longer articles. They referred, among others, to the religious commandments²³.

An important component of education was instilled through numerous examples of respect for one's elders. In individual readings it was shaped by the use of appropriate forms of speech, emphasis on the rules of precedence and subordination. In its own way, the patriarchal educational system was shaped by numerous "heuristic" lectures in various fields of knowledge, due to the strongly disproportionate relationship between the parties leading the dialogue. An adult communicating important information was presented there as a mentor and was titled by the listeners with due respect usually in a third person form²⁴:

'We had long wanted to ask Daddy'²⁵, Helenka spoke, 'but we did not dare to disturb, seeing Father busy with guests or business. But now let us remind Daddy, that you started talking about something very interesting and did not finish'²⁶.

The task of the teacher-educator was not only to clarify a particular issue, but also to control the conduct of the students and to ask questions about the issues discussed earlier. This kind of strict lecture was clearly changed over the years in favor of a bit looser talk using new techniques such as photography²⁷. Gradually, it became increasingly clear that storytelling for children could not be accompanied by intrusive didacticism. In a contest of children's stories held in 1868, a number of tips for potential authors was published:

The moral, or noble pursuit, is necessary, but in order to make the work, e.g. a literary novel, occupy the young mind, it should not be overwhelmed by the moral principles, but it is obligatory to put the facts and descriptions together so as to enliven them with dramaticity and cleverly conduct the intrigue, so that morality sinks into the mind of the reader even without the his knowledge. ... Also, introducing characters so perfect that they cannot be present in the real world to the novel for a younger reader, such as ones discussing virtue, gratitude, charity, compassion, love of parents, etc., from their youngest age, is another evil because it is incompatible with the truth, which is the only thing that can be believed [...]²⁸.

²³ E.g. *Czuj ojca swego i matkę swoją*, „Niańka” 1868, no. 2–3, p. 7.

²⁴ A specific break from this rule was the cycle of lectures published in the Warsaw „Przyjaciel Dzieci” entitled *Pogadanki z nauczycielem* [Chats with a Teacher], in which the narrative was conducted from the point of view of the teacher: Cf. *Pogadanki z nauczycielem*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1888, no. 11, p. 121–122.

²⁵ The third person address is a Polish polite figure of speech. In the 19th century, it was used by children addressing their parents instead of the modern equivalents of “Mom” or “Dad”.

²⁶ *Pogadanka z ojcem* ([Chat with a father - Mr Łanowski]), „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1877, no. 3, p. 27.

²⁷ *Czarnoksiężska latarnia Wujaszka*, „Wiek Młody” 1894, no. 1, p. 5–7.

²⁸ J.K. Gregorowicz, *Od redakcji „Przyjaciela Dzieci”*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” Warszawa 1868, no. 52, p. 414–415.

A simple normative model of education, boiling down to illustrate a kind of educational morality, was replaced by a variety of persuasive techniques designed to ensure that the information provided was consistent with the intent of the author.

No doubt, at the head of many editor boards of children's and youth magazines were experienced pedagogues, applying knowledge of teaching in their practice and aware of the development of education science. For example, the editor-in-chief of the Warsaw "Świat", Adam Wiślicki, was experienced in running a Froebel childcare facility evidenced by several theoretical articles. Professional teachers were, among others, Ignacy Danielewski – chief editor of the Kuyavia magazine "Niańka" and "Gazetka dla Dzieci" for children and Anna Lewicka – the creator of "Mały Świątek". In the Prussian partition, several local periodicals were issued by priests experienced as catechists²⁹. Individual editors collaborated with individual educators, e.g. Adolf Dygasiński, Henryk Wernic³⁰ or Teresa Jadwiga Papi. It was thanks to these people that the journals for young readers reflected different concepts referring to the pedagogy of the time, based on the discoveries of Positivist and Modernist science and philosophy. Also, information related to the real situation of education in the Polish territory was included. The concepts of education in the family and at home by Henryk Wernic, Piotr Chmielowski's views on education as a form of national self-defense, and finally, Stanisław Karpowicz's ideas about games and play as an educational factor can be listed here. It is worth noting that an important part of most periodicals were mental entertainment departments, presenting not only original charades, crosswords or logogrifs, but often using the work of the readers as well.

The defined paradigm of education was associated in the Polish territory not only with the appropriate assumptions stemming from the development of the science of education, but also from the specific political and social situation influencing the determination of a particular ideological mission of the particular titles. The educational goals of the various editions of the periodicals were usually expressed in the first issues by publishing short introductory articles. In the periodicals addressed to the younger reader, this manifest was often expressed in the form of a poem. Undoubtedly, the subordination of the content to pedagogical assumptions was important for individual editors³¹ and resulted from a widespread scientific outlook treating pedagogy as one of the most important tools for shaping the character of a young person and thus making it possible to decide on the direction of the development of the society. These assumptions, however, were not usually specified in detail, but they formed a holistic yet idealistic outline. Less attention was paid to the methods of achieving the intended objectives and more to the directions of influence: "The Editorial Board's program is short and clear. Our task will be to see today's children become, in time, people with a full concept of human dignity and goals"³².

²⁹ E.g. Fr. Józef Kłós published "Opiekun Dziełek" in 1896–1926 in Poznań and Fr. Antoni Ludwiczak, in 1912–1916, edited "Przyjaciel Dzieci".

³⁰ In the Warsaw "Przyjaciel Dzieci", which he co-operated with, his 25-year anniversary of pedagogical activity is mentioned, referring to numerous articles and stories printed in the periodical. *W dwudziestopięcioletnią rocznicę pracy literacko-pedagogicznej Henryka Wernica*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1894, no. 8, p. 90.

³¹ Cf. *Od redakcji*, „Świat” 1871, no. 1, p. 1.

³² *Od redakcji*, „Towarzysz Pilnych Dzieci” 1876, no. 1, p. 1.

A constant theme of the educational mission was to develop patriotism in the young generation³³. In the generation's proper preparation, a chance to regain independence was seen:

Polska młodzieży! Polska młodzieży
W Was ufność lepszej przyszłości leży
W Was nowe siły i prądy nowe
Zdolne całuny zerwać grobowe [...]

[Oh, Polish young! The Polish young,
You are a hope the future can bring
In you, the new strengths and the new waves
To tear down the shrouds from our graves]³⁴.

Responsibility for the common good of the people was emphasized, warning against too hasty open rebellion against the occupying powers, but rather encouraging the readers to patiently strengthen the social force through learning and work. Characteristic elements in the most of the analyzed scripts were martyrological texts. Polish patriotism was, unfortunately, most often associated with mentioning the tragic struggles for independence and the glorification of heroism in the fight. It seems that compared to today much more space in the children's magazines was devoted to misery and death. Certainly this was due to the contemporary living conditions, which made such an image of the world presented not particularly shocking for the recipient. Poland was often written about despite difficulties with censorship and pressure from the authorities. Speaking openly about independence and nationality was difficult. However, efforts were made to pay tribute to the idea of national unity "regardless of the borders"³⁵. An equivalent of this type of tradition was the Roman Catholic religion. The Christian system of values and dogmas of faith were some of the important elements of the upbringing of the young generation³⁶. In 1871, the Warsaw "Przyjaciel Dzieci" started a cycle called *Learning morals*, that initiated extensive articles devoted to God as the creator of the world³⁷ and to Jesus Christ³⁸. One should also note that some of the published journals functioned under the auspices of Catholic associations. In titles such as the Lviv "Anioł Stróż" and the Bytom "Dzwonek", most of the space was devoted to ethical issues connected with the dogmas of faith. Other content in these writings was also often transmitted in a religious context. Patriotic texts referring to a certain extent to various political

³³ H. Strawińska, *Powitanie*, „Wiek Młody” 1893, no. 1, p. 1.

³⁴ *Do polskiej młodzieży prześladowanej za język ojczysty*, „Mały Świątek” 1900, no. 17, p. 131.

³⁵ B. Bobrowska, *Do czytelników*, „Promyk” Kraków 1909, no. 1, p. 1.

³⁶ Of course, there were exceptions in this regard. The first was probably the Warsaw "Świat" magazine, which appeared in the years 1876–1881, which "was strictly in the field of science and goodwill, so that no faith, no confession be offended in any respect and that all young people using the Polish language at home without religious difference could find learning and mental entertainment herein." *Od redakcyi*, „Świat” 1881, no. 52. The emergence of left-wing views in the early 20th century resulted in new titles developing atheistic attitudes.

³⁷ *Nauka moralności*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” 1871, no. 1, p. 1–2.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, no. 2, p. 13.

events were most often published in the liberal Galician partition. On the other hand, in the initial issue of the Warsaw "Przyjaciel Dzieci", the Positivist ideas were glorified by promoting knowledge. It is also reminiscent of the universal philosophy of Bronisław Trentowski³⁹. "Whoever has the science, cannot be evil, and who is not evil, he is loved by God even more – and whoever the love and grace of God walk with, will not be obscured by his fellow human beings' hostility [...]"⁴⁰.

The views on the development of the young person's character features were definitely evolving. While the editions of individual periodicals in the middle of the nineteenth century approached educational issues in an authoritarian manner, treating education as a necessary interference, the later ones granted the children's world a specific autonomy, where only the right direction had to be given. A good example of this second view was the "Mały Światek" [Little World] magazine, referring to the space of childhood already in its title. Also the program of the magazine created by Joanna Rossowska and expressed in poetry oscillated between two levels of understanding of reality:

Od sceny świata wielkiego w dali na której los się jego rozgrywa, ty sobie tworzysz o mniejszej skali własny Twój światek, dziatwo gwarliwa. [...] Lecz mały światku, chociaż dziś może myśl Twoja nigdy nie spocznie na tem – i Ty się staniem o pewnej porze z małego świata – poważnym światem

[From the stage of the world afar, where fates are played out, you create one that's smaller, oh burbling child. ... But you, little world, however you may not give it a thought, will once become a serious world]⁴¹.

According to widely accepted pedagogical assumptions, the content of a vast majority of journals was general-purpose, designed to shape character and spirit and not necessarily to provide professional or specialized information. In this regard, it seems that the periodicals issued in the Russian partition had a distinctive and the most comprehensive character, especially in the 1860s and 1870s. "Przyjaciel Dzieci" became similar to a textbook, passing on knowledge from various fields with particular emphasis on classical subjects (ancient history). Such a model of general education, however, was the topic of discussion in educational environments. At the time, the transformation of schools was aimed at increasing the share of practical knowledge and a significant extension of the methodological workshop used to shape it. It is worth mentioning here that in the period considered, there was a strong demand for the creation of workshops in the ranks of folk schools – which were intended to enable peasant children to better adopt for various professional activities⁴². At the same time, however, educators were warned against creating commercial institutions based on the education of children⁴³. In all the partitions, the editors of particular magazines proposed various practical projects aimed not

³⁹ Cf. K. Poznański, *Wybrane zagadnienia z historii wychowania*, vol. 2, Warszawa 2009, p. 114–119.

⁴⁰ J. Chęciński, *Do młodych czytelników*, „Przyjaciel Dzieci” Warszawa 1861, no. 1, p. 1.

⁴¹ J. Rossowska, *Mały światek*, „Mały Światek” 1887, no. 1, p. 1.

⁴² *Zjazd pedagogiczny w Krakowie*, „Świat” 1881, no. 33, p. 230–231.

⁴³ *Gwiazdka*, ibidem, 1881, no. 4, p. 46–48.

only at engaging the recipient with reading, but incorporating him or her into various activities requiring specific action or co-participation.

The mass media, like the education system, are an important vehicle for pedagogical values. They have multiple educational functions based primarily on the supply of knowledge and information about the world, which influence the shaping of the reader's views and attitudes, but also stimulates intellectual activity through the ability to engage in discourse and participation in a variety of personality-shaping activities. During the period of the partitions, magazines for young readers not only supplemented the existing institutional education system, but in many cases they were the only source of important information and orderly knowledge. Unlike school teaching outside Galicia, magazines for Polish children and adolescents were published in the national language in all the partitions, thus constituting an important reading material to keep in touch with native writing. Certainly, their educational values were also associated with the high attractiveness of the content, which was influenced by dynamic forms of communication: lectures, fictional stories, popular biographies or popular science texts. They often contrasted with the archaic school methods used in the state educational systems: mnemonic learning or the stigmatized Prussian "deductive-speculation" method⁴⁴. An important feature of the press message was its periodicity and continuity, which allowed, at least theoretically, to use printed content in a systematic manner. The ethical values propagated by the analyzed material were timeless, hence the periodicals could have been successfully used by successive generations.

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⁴⁴ W. Frąckowiak, M. Popławska, *Chełmiński „Tygodnik dla Dzieci i Młodzieży” Józefa Chociszewskiego w aspekcie potrzeb dydaktyczno-wychowawczych na Pomorzu*, „Roczniki Naukowe WSWF w Gdańsku” 1973, no. 3, p. 329–349.

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Abstract

In the nineteenth century, there were systems of universal and free elementary education supervised by state organs. The specificity of the situation of the Polish nation resulted from its functioning in three different systems of education formed by three separate partitioning states (Austria, Prussia and Russia).

Individual editors attached great importance to the promotion of certain moral-ethical values willingly referring to Christian ethics. Numerous stories centered on the reckless conduct of young characters, which led to various injuries and accidents and allowed the formulation of an educative punch line. In short stage works, various types of character defects were often stigmatized. Some works of this type adopted the schema of a developmental novel showing the social advancement of the hero, who, as a result of hard work and overcoming various adversities, provided a better life for himself those surrounding him (or her). An important component of education was patriotism and respect for one's elders.

While the editions of individual periodicals in the middle of the nineteenth century approached educational issues in an authoritarian manner, treating education as a necessary interference, the later ones granted the children's world a specific autonomy, where only the right direction had to be given.

Individual editors collaborated with renowned educators, e.g. Adolf Dygasiński, Henryk Wernic or Teresa Jadwiga Papi. It was thanks to these people that the magazines for young readers reflected different concepts referring to the pedagogy of the time, based on the discoveries of Positivist and Modernist science and philosophy. Also, information related to the real situation of education in Polish territory was included.

Keywords: pedagogy, ethics, children's magazines, youth magazines, 19th–20th centuries

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