



JAN NIEWĘGŁOWSKI¹

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland

ORCID [0000-0001-9673-4989](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9673-4989)

EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING IN THE SECOND POLISH REPUBLIC. ATTEMPTS TO TRANSFER THE SALESIAN CHARISMA TO THE POLISH LAND²

OŚWIATA I WYCHOWANIE W II RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ. PRÓBY PRZENIESIENIA CHARYZMATU SALEZJAŃSKIEGO NA ZIEMIE POLSKIE

Streszczenie: W 1918 r. nasz kraj odzyskał niepodległość. Proces odbudowy jego państwowości napotykał niezliczone trudności. Do nich możemy zaliczyć problemy występujące na polu oświaty i wychowania. Ówczesne władze polskie były świadome faktu, że wyzwania te należy podjąć jako jedne z pierwszych. Oświata bowiem i wychowanie są specyficznymi formami działalności, bez których nie możliwy jest proces odbudowy tkanki społecznej i narodowościowej kraju. Salezianie czynnie włączyli się w proces odbudowy kraju otwierając wiele nowych placówek szkolno-wychowawczych.

Słowa kluczowe: Towarzystwo Salezjańskie, działalność szkolna i wychowawcza, wychowanie w II Rzeczypospolitej, system prewencyjny

Abstract: In 1918, our country regained its independence. The process of reconstructing Polish statehood came across numerous problems including those emerging in the field of education and upbringing. The contemporary Polish authorities were aware of the fact that those challenges had to be treated as a priority. Education and upbringing are undoubtedly such specific forms of activity without which the reconstruction process of a country's social and ethnic fabric is not possible. Salesians actively joined that process of reconstructing the country by establishing many new educational institutions.

Keywords: The Salesian Society, school and education activity, upbringing in the Second Polish Republic, preventive system

¹ Jan Niewęgłowski, prof.; Faculty of Education at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. E-mail address: j.nieweglowski@uksw.edu.pl.

² The text was published in Polish.

Introduction

In 1918 our country regained its independence. The process of reconstructing the Polish statehood encountered numerous difficulties. The major problems faced by the young state included lack of experienced political structures, difficult economic situation, war damage, lack of officials at all levels of government as well as the global crisis, which further hindered the development of the newly established state. The above list will not be complete without mentioning many difficulties in the field of education and upbringing of children and youth. Polish authorities were aware of the fact that those challenges had to be treated as a priority. Education and upbringing are undoubtedly such specific forms of activity without which the reconstruction process of a country's social and ethnic fabric is not possible (Halecki 1992, 269). The Salesians located on the Polish lands of the Austrian partition since 1898, actively joined the process of reconstructing the country, establishing new provincial structures and opening many new educational institutions. This article aims to present the process of transferring Don Bosco's (1815 – 1888) educational system to the Polish reality.

1. The situation of Polish education

On the verge of independence, the organizers of Polish education faced many difficult challenges. Almost everything was missing: experience, tradition, structures and, above all, financial resources. The most difficult situation was in the Prussian and Russian partitions where even textbooks in Polish or teaching staff were unavailable. The first task for the authorities of the young state was to unify the educational system. Poland inherited three separate educational systems, administrations, and legislations. In the Prussian partition school education lasted 8 years, in Galicia 6 years, while in the territories of the Russian partition there was no compulsory schooling at all. That is why, the highest percentage of illiterates was recorded in that partition (Szcześniak 1997, 471; Kot 1996, vol. 2, 363). The process of creating a uniform school system was hindered by the lack of knowledge of the Polish language. This especially referred to the Prussian and, to a certain degree, the Russian partition. Children and youth from these regions needed thorough re-Polonization. In addition, in the territory of the Second Polish Republic, about 30% of children and youth belonged to national minorities. This situation compelled the authorities to incorporate their national languages into the newly created school structures. For this purpose, in the years 1918 – 1939, the Polish government passed a number of laws aimed at organizing education and at the same time improving the quality of education (Draus, Terlecki 2005, 283).

The first, milestone legal act concerning Polish education was the decree on school obligation of February 7, 1919. First of all, the act introduced, a 7-year schooling obligation, enabled establishing part-time schools according to the needs, allowed

to postpone the schooling obligation or organize non-public education. Another important regulation on education was the Act on setting up and maintaining public primary schools. It was in force from February 17, 1922. The legislation determined, among others, the distance between the school and the student's residence, the procedure of establishing a school district, as well as defined the school size and the number of pupils per class. This act had a positive impact on the development of education in densely populated areas. The situation was worse in rural areas, where as many as 70% of children attended schools that employed only one or two teachers. The above act mobilized state and local authorities, as well as teachers and parents to a great effort. In a short time, it began to bring positive results which was also due to the good economic situation and the increasing state budget expenditure on education: 5.2% in 1921 and 16% in 1925. In this respect, Poland matched the richest European countries, such as Germany (16.5%) or Sweden (16.8%). Thanks to the above policy, there was a significant decrease in the number of single-teacher schools, while the number of qualified teachers and teaching posts increased. Another achievement consisted in reducing, in the late 1920s, disparities between the eastern and western regions of the country. However, the dynamic development of the Polish education system was hampered by the global economic crisis. Due to the lack of funds, budget expenditure on education decreased by 30%. Class sizes increased. In the central and western territories, they comprised 60 pupils, while in the eastern lands there were up to 80 students per one teacher (Szafran 2010, 13; Draus, Terlecki 2005, 287).

Another reform of Polish education took place under the Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, Janusz Jędrzejewicz (Lewandowski 2003, 473). His bill on the system of education entered into force in 1932. The act introduced many comprehensive changes in the functioning of kindergartens, elementary schools, vocational and secondary schools. It provided for three levels of general education lasting seven years each. Its novelty was also compulsory education up to the age of 18. The reform was beneficial for schools in large population centres, however, it was less favourable for schools in rural areas as their graduates could not continue their education in general secondary schools or in vocational schools. As a result, the number of children who were unable to fulfil their school obligation increased to one million. Positive changes in the Polish education system were noticeable after 1926. They were influenced by such phenomena as: overcoming the economic crisis, decrease in the birth-rate as well as increased budget expenditures on education. A large number of teaching posts were created, and hundreds of new schools were built. However, despite the great efforts of the educational authorities not all educational problems had been solved by September 1939. The country lacked approximately 45,000 school classes and over 20,000 teachers. This problem especially affected the eastern territories of the Republic of Poland, where about 40% of children and youth did not fulfil the school obligation. The Jędrzejewicz reform paid the least attention to general

secondary education. It only provided for an 8-year secondary school, that was divided into a 3-year “lower” and 5-year “upper” secondary school and introduced a “minor” and “major” matriculation exam respectively. Access to these schools, however, was limited by high tuition fees (Krasuski 1985, 181).

Another area lacking legal regulations was vocational education. The poor condition of the Polish economy had a negative impact on the development of such schools. Vocational schools operating at that time did not have the status of secondary schools, which in turn made it difficult for their graduates to continue their education in higher education institutions. Numerous and positive changes in this field were made by the Jędrzejewicz reform. Significant development of vocational education can be noticed in the 1930s, when the country’s economic situation improved. Despite this, the number of vocational schools was still very low and did not meet the needs of the Polish economy (Możdżeń 2006, 103).

Another serious problem for the newly formed country, in addition to the creation of school structures, was the reconstruction of the childcare system. War activities contributed to the fact that a huge number of homeless, poor and orphaned children appeared in the country. All this contributed to the increase in juvenile delinquency. In the 1920s, such children were taken care of by charities. The state’s contribution was insignificant and limited to partial subsidizing of institutions conducting care activities. The children that were taken care of in the first place were orphans repatriated from the Soviet Union, abandoned children and those violating the social order. They were placed in care centres or in foster families. The next area of social welfare activity comprised children deprived of any means of subsistence, as well as those from working-class, poor, and large families. During the school year they were supplied with clothes, shoes, and food. During the holiday months summer camps were organized for them (Lepalczyk 1988, vol. 1, 155). The issue of childcare was also addressed by legislation. On February 7, 1919, a decree establishing special juvenile courts and special detention centres entered into force. The above decisions, however, only partly solved the exacerbating problem of upbringing (Balcerek 1978, 111).

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare contributed to implementing significant changes in childcare. Thanks to its efforts, the first provisions regulating the problem of childcare were already included in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of March 17, 1921. The most important article, 103, regulated the problem of educationally neglected as well as orphaned children. Pursuant to it, children had the right to care and assistance from state institutions. In very difficult situations, the law allowed to deprive parents of parental rights based on a court order. Gifted students could receive state scholarships. The provisions also regulated the problem of child labour. It was forbidden to employ children under the age of 15 and in conditions harmful to health. The Social Welfare Act of August 16, 1923 also contributed to the improvement of childcare. It specified the conditions of childcare and the scope of duties of state and local government authorities. It

also emphasized the importance of social activity in areas not covered by direct assistance from state institutions. The Act, moreover, defined that the subject of social concern was “care for infants, children and youth, especially orphans and half-orphans, neglected, abandoned, delinquent children and children threatened by the influence of a bad environment” (Balcerek 1978, 126).

The Catholic Church was very active in the area of social work, especially as regards work with children. On December 24, 1930, in order to regulate the state-Church relations, Card. August Hlond, Primate of Poland, issued an ordinance specifying the tasks and principles of supervising care facilities run by the Church structures. Pursuant to this ordinance, institutions had to develop their own regulations, comply with them, keep regular accounts, make periodic reports, submit to inspection and supervision by competent authorities and take care of providing training for the staff in the field of pedagogical qualifications. Two years later, the Primate established the Catholic Educational Institute, whose task was to support the heads of educational institutions in their management (Erekcja Katolickiego Instytutu Wychowawczego 1933).

2. Educational goals and ideals in the Second Polish Republic

In 1918, the Polish educational authorities faced two important tasks, firstly, to organize the education system and, secondly, to define the educational goals and ideals that were to guide Polish schools and education (Araszkiewicz 1978, 84). During the partitions, school and upbringing were guided by the idea of national education. It was an antidote to the denationalization of Polish youth. The propagators of this thought were convinced that the main task of upbringing was to save the national awareness of Polish youth, Polish tradition, and national identity. One of those propagators, Lucjan Zarzecki, said in 1917 at a congress of high school teachers: “Education should aim at creating citizens, faithful sons of the homeland, obedient tools of the state” (Zarzecki 1917, 7). Zarzecki still defended his position after 1918, claiming that the main goal of education was to be the good of the nation, and that every young Pole was to be a “citizen soldier”. Other representatives of this trend were Stanisław Prus-Szczepanowski and Zygmunt Balicki. The idea of national education, strong and relevant during the partitions, lost its driving force after 1918. Most of its supporters belonged to the circles of National Democracy, which did not enjoy great popularity among teachers. Nationalist slogans were another problem for national pedagogy as they created tensions in the multinational Polish society. In the interwar period, national minorities accounted for as much as 30% of Polish society (Konopczyński 1995, 136).

The idea of state education enjoyed the greatest support among teachers and educational workers. Their number increased even after the May Coup in 1926, when the concept of Sanation became the guiding idea of many circles in Poland. The main assumption of state education was the unity of the state, while the goal and ideal

of education was to create a citizen serving the state. In the process of upbringing and education, attention was paid to love, dedication, diligent work, the cult of the state and leaders, and respect for state emblems and symbols. Newly developed textbooks and educational programs reflected this idea. One of the creators and proponents of state education was the minister and deputy Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, Sławomir Czerwiński. At a meeting with teachers in Vilnius in 1928, the minister stated that the goal of the government was to “educate good citizens of the State” and therefore, he said, “we cannot and do not want to require schools and other educational institutions in Poland to educate Germans or Ukrainians to be Poles, or evangelicals and Orthodox Christians to Catholics, but we have the right and duty to demand quite categorically, firmly and consistently that all forms and all factors of public education operating in the area of our state work in harmony to establish in the hearts of children and youth a strong foundation for the flourishing and the power of the Republic. [...] Under the threat of losing the independence of the state, public education in Poland must be conducted in such a way that every Pole, before becoming a nationalist, socialist or peasant, was first of all a statesman (...); [so that] before he becomes a conscious worker in the field of culture of his stricter society, he feels and understands that he is to be, above all, a good citizen of the Most Serene Republic” (Araszkiewicz 1978, 157).

Minister Sławomir Czerwiński’s views were actively supported by Janusz Jędrzejewicz, a politician and future reformer of Polish education, as well as by outstanding educators, Kazimierz Sośnicki and Zygmunt Mysłakowski who propagated them in their publications. The concept of state education is today positively assessed by experts. Its assumptions were original Polish views and it allowed teachers to implement patriotic and civic education. The results of such education were readily noticeable. During World War II and the German occupation, Polish youth with great courage joined the fight for the country’s independence, suffering great losses (Kostkiewicz 2013, 22, 272).

In the discussion about the goals and ideals of education, it is impossible to ignore left-wing circles. They were quite active all over the country. However, they did not play a major role in the field of education. The creators of Polish socialist pedagogy include Adam Próchnik, Stefania Sempołowska, Stefan Rudniański, Władysław Radwan and Władysław Spasowski. Their concept of upbringing and education aimed at comprehensive development of the child’s personality. This could be achieved through easier access to education and culture (Możdżeń 2006, 123).

In Polish pedagogy, there were also attempts to subvert the “new education”. Although this slogan reached Poland from the countries of Western Europe, many educators created their own concepts, theories, and educational proposals. Those include the Polish concept of a school of work or educational systems proposed by Janusz Korczak and Kazimierz Jeżewski. The creators the school of work were Henryk Rowid, Jerzy Ostrowski and Władysław Spasowski. The first of them,

defined it as a “creative school” and emphasized the role of students’ independent physical and mental work. A class of no more than 30 students was divided into 4-5 teams and it constituted a workshop for them. Rowid attributed a special role to the teacher, who was supposed to be a friend and helper for the students. The curriculum of the “creative school” referred to the primary school (Grzowna 2006, 443). Jerzy Ostrowski addressed the secondary school, describing it as a “living school”. The aim of this school was to shape an individual into a citizen capable of creative work. The purpose of the work was to serve the state. The author proposed eliminating traditional subjects, grades, and textbooks. The essence of the process of education and upbringing was to be careful observation of life. Władysław Spasowski created his own concept of the school of work. He saw a deeper value in work. The aim of the school was to provide the young man with technical knowledge. Students were able to learn practical skills in workshops, studios, factories, gardens, libraries, and museums (Drynda 2006, 868).

Polish pedagogical thought of the interwar period also noted original educational systems. They were created by the above-mentioned Janusz Korczak and Kazimierz Jeżewski. Janusz Korczak (Henryk Goldszmidt) was a doctor by profession and a teacher by vocation. He left behind rich literary legacy. Thanks to his efforts, a home for Jewish children was established at Krochmalna Street in Warsaw (“Orphans’ Home”). In the 1920s, he helped Maryna Falska in opening another such home for Polish orphans in Bielany (“Our Home”) and later created similar houses in the ghetto during the first years of the German occupation. The guiding idea of Janusz Korczak’s educational method was sensitivity to the harm inflicted to children and respect for the child. A novelty in his educational work was the creation of a pupil council, where the children of the orphanage themselves acted as judges and defenders. The same laws applied to both educators and pupils (Korczak 1978, vol. 2, 77). Korczak, consistent in his choices, died together with his pupils in the Treblinka extermination camp in 1942.

Another interesting educational proposal created by Kazimierz Jeżewski was the Association of Orphans’ Nests and Kościuszko Villages. Jeżewski was convinced that a family is the best upbringing environment for the child as it provided children with a whole range of experiences. Orphans should not be deprived of those most important goods. Consequently, Jeżewski encouraged the creation of “orphans’ nests”, which in practice would play the role of foster families. Several “nests” formed the so-called Kosciuszko village. Its task was to care for pupils, teach them and prepare for work on their own farms. The author of “nests” was very critical of the existing shelters for children. He claimed that the atmosphere and conditions prevailing in such institutions did not offer pupils real joy and meaning in life (Meissner-Łozińska 2003, 472). It is worth noting that the educational ideas

advocated by Kazimierz Jeżewski are still valid for contemporary pedagogical thought and practice.³

In the interwar period, an important role was played by Catholic pedagogy. Its revival and participation in the discussion on education was triggered by the encyclical of Pope Pius XI "On the Christian Education of Youth" (*Divini Illius Magistri*, December 31, 1929). Supporters of the papal teaching tried to find a place for Catholic pedagogy in a wide range of educational trends and methods (Jędrzejczak 1998, 38). Three pedagogical magazines with Catholic overtones were published at that time, namely, "Miesięcznik Katechetyczny i Wychowawczy" (1911-1939), "Ku szczytom" (1927-1939) and "Ateneum Kapłańskie" (1909). Classes in pedagogy were introduced to the programs of higher theological seminaries in order to improve the formation of seminarians. Several universities opened departments devoted to reflection on upbringing (Jan Kazimierz University, Catholic University of Lublin). Among the theoreticians of education, special attention is due to Fr. Zygmunt Bielawski, lecturer at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv. Bielawski dealt mainly with religious and moral upbringing and education. The community of Catholic educators at the Faculty of Theology of the Jagiellonian University was represented by Fr. Konstanty Michalski, who in his educational reflections referred to Thomistic theology. Michalski maintained that Catholic education should aim at shaping new moral structures and skills (love and prudence) in a young child. (Ziemann 2008, k. 802).

Fr. Wincenty Granat, Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin had an important impact on the development of Catholic pedagogy by pointing to the spiritual character of educational work. In the process of upbringing, one should refer to the principles and truths contained in the Gospel, which are still valid. The views of Fr. Wincenty Granat were referred to by Fr. Karol Mazurkiewicz, who claimed that the driving force of the upbringing process was the Creator. The innovative thought of Fr. Mazurkiewicz was an interdisciplinary understanding of the upbringing process (Jędrzejczak 1998, 176).

The greatest contribution to Catholic pedagogy was undoubtedly made by Fr. Jacek Woroniecki who left behind many publications on education, including the most famous of his works, *Katolicka etyka wychowawcza* [Catholic educational ethics] from 1925. In his reflections, Fr. Woroniecki referred to the great legacy of St. Thomas claiming that pedagogy was not an independent science, but part of ethics. Thus in education, the guiding idea is the primacy of God. The reason for failure is the fact that the educator focuses more on the child than on the spiritual dimension. Fr. Woroniecki assigned an important role in upbringing to the virtue of justice, which he understood as faithfulness to the Decalogue. The aim of education for him was Christian perfection, its source lied in the sanctifying grace and in the action

3 Other outstanding educators of the interwar period include Helena Radlińska (social pedagogy) and Maria Grzegorzewska (special pedagogy).

of virtues. The main task of the teacher was to help the child strive for perfection. That is why educators should know the principles governing the student's personality development, its phases, and components, such as memory, emotions, reason, feelings, perseverance. Jacek Woroniecki also emphasized the great importance of community in pedagogical work. A child or a young person needs a group, friends and peers. Their constant presence guarantees proper growth, maturation of personality and character development. Therefore, he appealed to the family and school to become communities that are guided in life by prudence, order, common sense, and specific standards. The goal and ideal of Catholic education, according to Fr. Woroniecki, should be the formation of the so-called permanent habit (*habitus*). Otherwise, education will form in the pupil only a custom (*consuetudo*) (Woroniecki 2008, 140)⁴.

The above vision of education and upbringing was supported by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Poland. On August 28-30, 1926, a national congress of teachers was held in Warsaw. At this meeting, a paper presenting the position of the Church was delivered by the Ordinary of Warsaw, Cardinal Aleksander Kakowski who stated that: "Youth, the future and the flower of the nation, must be brought up in the national and Catholic spirit, should be carefully guarded and shielded from influences that distort and corrupt young characters, producing a lineage of physical and spiritual dwarfs, rather than great self-sacrificing people of ideas acting for the pride and glory of the nation. Therefore, the fight for the Catholic school is a fight for the souls of the young generation, a fight for our fundamental postulates and rights, from which it is unlawful for any Catholic to withdraw. (*Księga pamiątkowa zjazdu katolickiego w Warszawie 28-30 sierpnia 1926*, 390).

3. Attempts to transfer the educational ideals of Don Bosco in the area of education and upbringing in the Second Polish Republic

Salesian centres throughout the country started an intensive development with the regaining of independence by Poland in 1918. This was caused, foremostly, by huge demand for educational activities among the poor and neglected Polish youth. Another reason was a high number of orphans as a result of the war. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Poland fully supported the initiatives undertaken by the Salesians along with the creation of new educational institutions. A similar position was taken by state authorities, both at the government, ministerial and local government levels. Representatives of the authorities, usually very positive

⁴ Other influential representatives of Catholic education include Fr. Walery Jasiński, Fr. Michal Klepacz, Fr. Bronislaw Markiewicz, Fr. Henryk Szuman, Karol Górski, Franciszek Sawicki, Andrzej Niesiołowski.

about the activities of the Salesians, supported the emerging educational works (Niewęgłowski 1997, 203).

After 1918, many Polish bishops, due to the shortage of clergy, considered inviting various religious congregations to work in their own dioceses. They typically selected those active, open, zealous, and involved in pastoral work. The Salesian Society was undoubtedly characterized by the above features. Another very important asset was the charism of Don Bosco, which was comprehensive work with young people, especially with those abandoned and neglected. At this point, it should be noted that the promotion of the above-mentioned educational method in Poland was mainly contributed by Fr. Achilles Ratti, Apostolic Nuncio, and later Pope Pius XI. As a young priest, Ratti met Don Bosco and became acquainted with his method and educational activity at Valdocco in Turin, which he greatly promoted while staying at the diplomatic mission in Poland (Ślósarczyk 1960-1969, vol. 2, 620).

Before 1918, the Salesians could officially operate only in the territory of the Austrian partition. Attempts to transfer the charism of Don Bosco to the lands of the German and Russian partitions failed. After regaining independence, the Salesian Society was actively involved in the reconstruction of the young country. The first years were very difficult. Economic issues posed the greatest difficulties. The first ten educational houses were opened in old and abandoned monasteries. Most of them were very badly devastated. Despite the first and indispensable adaptation works, most of them were not fully suitable for working with young people. Twenty-two educational institutions were located in facilities that were donated. Sixteen institutions were taken over by the Salesian Society from various institutions. Their condition was satisfactory. However, most of them were old mansions or other farm buildings that required thorough renovation and high financial investment. Material problems were often accompanied by staffing difficulties. In the meantime, the loans and debts that weighed heavily on many Salesian houses were paid off. This difficult situation was further exacerbated by the worldwide crisis of the 1920s. This, in turn, contributed to the pauperization of Polish society. Although the administration of numerous facilities was not easy and the difficulties did not decrease, the number of educational centres run by the Salesians increased year by year. (Wilk 1998, 21).

In the first place, the Salesians drew attention to one of the greatest needs of the country and Polish society, namely the lack of vocational schools. Between 1918 and 1939, the Salesians opened and ran eight vocational schools. Several of them, due to the high level of professionalism, received the status of vocational secondary schools. It should be noted that they were all very popular among young people. However, the most famous were: the Lower Secondary School of Graphics with an Experimental Graphic Studio in Warsaw, the Lower Secondary School of Mechanics and the Carpentry School in Oświęcim, the Lower and Upper Technical Secondary School in Łódź and the Organist School in Przemyśl. The Salesians organized and ran lower secondary schools. There were eight

of them in the interwar period. Due to their meeting the criteria and requirements of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, they did not wait long to obtain state authorisations. This made it easier for their graduates to continue their secondary education. There were five Minor Theological Seminaries. Two of them admitted older boys who intended to enter the major seminary in the future. Many pupils chose the path of vocation, both monastic and priestly. However, the most important fact was that many older boys were given the opportunity to complete school education (Świda 1974, 50).

Another form of educational activity of the Salesians were dormitories. They were located at most schools and educational institutions and established to accommodate pupils from distant regions. By 1939, there were sixteen of them. Hundreds of students lived there. A preventive system was used in each dormitory. Particular attention was paid to the so-called assistance, i.e., the constant supervision of pupils by tutors.

A serious social problem in Poland, especially in the first years after regaining independence, were orphans, morally neglected and poor youth. In the years 1918-1939, the Salesians ran several such houses. Pupils living there attended workshops or public schools in order to gain a profession. Several such institutions organized education at the primary school level. The educational staff, taking into account the mental condition of the boys, tried to create a family atmosphere in the facility. It is one of the most important elements of the educational method of Don Bosco. In this way, the Salesians tried to compensate the pupils for the lack of parents and families, or for traumatic experiences related to the First World War. It should be noted that many pupils studying in schools and living in dormitories did not pay tuition and living fees. They came from the poorer classes. The costs related to their maintenance were covered by the management of the dormitory (ASC, F 000, T. 3133).

Oratories were another area of Salesian activity in the interwar period. It was a typical type of work with young people practiced by Don Bosco. It was from this type of work that he began his educational activity in Turin. The Salesians tried to ensure that oratories functioned in every Salesian institution. In several dormitories, the oratories functioned exemplary and played an important educational role and had a positive impact on social problems experienced by Polish society. However, this form of work with young people did not become widespread in Poland as more attention was paid to running schools and typical educational institutions (Wilk 1998, 23).

Parish ministry was another area of the Salesians' work in the years 1918-1939. The Salesian Society ran eleven parishes during the discussed period. Following the recommendations of the higher superiors of the Congregation, parishes were not a priority in Salesian work. Parish work was undertaken provided that it would enable conducting youth activities or creating favourable conditions for organizing a school or educational institution *sensu stricto*.

In all the centres, the Salesians tried to implement the Christian preventive system. It refers to the tradition and educational thought of the Church and refers to the experience of many educators. In the 19th century, its new meaning was discovered by the Turin priest, St. John Bosco. His educational activity aroused great interest in many communities. On the other hand, the preventive system became a popular method of working with young people in the Salesian Society and in many other educational institutions around the world (John Paul II 1988, 3). This method is firmly rooted in the human experience. It cares for a person's integral development, both human and Christian. St. John Bosco, working with young people, opened himself in a special way to youth deprived of the care of official educational institutions. The main idea of prevention is precaution, protection, prediction, prophylactics. It aims at full intellectual development and integral shaping of the child's personality and character (Braido 1981, vol. 2, 271). On the one hand, it mobilizes the pupil to be fully involved in social life, on the other, it aims to protect him from wrongdoing. Don Bosco had a significant impact on the development of the contemporary educational thought and practice through putting into practice his original forms of education, by works that he organized, and above all, thanks to his outstanding personality. He added reason, religion, loving kindness, assistance and family atmosphere to the existing model of upbringing, which decided on a new style of pedagogical influence on children. This unique style was later called the Salesian Preventive System (Jankowski 2016, 221).

Conclusion

As already mentioned, the years 1918-1939 were a time of extremely dynamic development of Salesian houses throughout the country. These were mainly educational institutions of various types. This activity supported the great process of Poland's rebirth. The emergence of new forms of Salesian pedagogy confirms that the educational system proposed by Don Bosco, effectively responded to the needs of the young country and the Polish local community, which accepted the principles it was guided by. Apparently, the work of the Salesians in the interwar period was adequately integrated into the needs of Polish education and upbringing. The educational method of Don Bosco was not an indigenous proposal, but a foreign one. Nevertheless, Polish society, seeing its value and credibility, willingly adapted it to our reality (ASC, E 004, S. 31).

Bibliography

Archivio Salesiano Centrale (Rzym)
F 000, T. 3133. Ispettorie Polonia – Kraków.
E 004, S. 31. Polonia – Lodz – Warszawa.

- Araszkiewicz, W. Feliks. 1978. *Ideale wychowawcze Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*. Warszawa: PWN.
- Balcerek, Marian. 1978. *Rozwój opieki and dzieckiem w Polsce w latach 1918 – 1939*. Warszawa: PWN.
- Braido, Pietro. 1981. *L'Esperienza pedagogica preventiva nel sec. XIX. Don Bosco*. In: *Esperienze di pedagogia cristiana nella storia*, red. Pietro Braido, vol. 2, 271 – 401. Roma: LAS.
- Draus, Jan, Terlecki, Ryszard. 2005. *Historia wychowania. Wiek XIX i XX*. Kraków: WAM.
- Drynda, Danuta. 2006. *Spasowski Władysław*. In: *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, ed. Tadeusz Pilch, vol. 5, 868 – 869. Warszawa: Żak.
- Erekcja Katolickiego Instytutu Wychowawczego. 1933. *Miesięcznik Kościelny dla Archidiecezji Gnieźnieńskiej i Poznańskiej*, 66, 10.
- Grzywna, Monika. 2006. *Rowid Henryk*. W: *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, red. Tadeusz Pilch, vol. 5, 443 – 445. Warszawa: Żak.
- Halecki, Oskar. 1992. *Historia Polski*. Lublin-Londyn: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL.
- Jędrzejczak, Kazimierz. 1998. *Katolicka myśl pedagogiczna w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*. Wolsztyn: Woldruk.
- Jankowski, Stanisław 2016. *Biblijne źródła charyzmatu i systemu wychowawczego świętego Jana Bosko*. Warszawa: Towarzystwo Naukowe Franciszka Salezego.
- Jan Paweł II. 1988. *Ojciec i nauczyciel młodzieży*. Roma: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana.
- Konopczyński, Władysław. 1995. *Historia polityczna Polski 1914-1939*. Warszawa: Inicjatywa Wydawnicza «Ad astra».
- Korczak, Janusz. 1978. *Pisma wybrane*. vol. 2. Warszawa: Nasza Księgarnia.
- Kostkiewicz, Janina. 2013. *Kierunki i koncepcje pedagogiki katolickiej w Polsce 1918 – 1939*. Kraków: Impuls.
- Kot, Stanisław. 1996. *Historia wychowania*, vol. 2. Warszawa: Żak.
- Krasuski, Józef. 1985. *Historia wychowania*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Szkolne i Pedagogiczne.
- Księga pamiątkowa zjazdu katolickiego w Warszawie 28–30 sierpnia 1926. 1926. Warszawa: Drukarnia S. Jabłoński.
- Lepalczyk, Irena. 1988. *Pedagogika opiekuńcza w latach II Rzeczypospolitej*. In: *Źródła do pedagogiki opiekuńczej*, red. Irena Lepalczyk, vol. 1, 155 – 313. Warszawa: PWN.
- Lewandowski, Stefan. 2003. *Jędrzejewicz Janusz*. In: *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, red. Tadeusz Pilch, t. 2, 473. Warszawa: Żak.
- Meissner-Łozińska, Justyna. 2003. *Jeżewski Kazimierz Antoni*, W: *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, red. Tadeusz Pilch, vol. 2, 472 – 473. Warszawa, Żak.
- Możdżeń, S. Ignacy. 2006. *Historia wychowania 1918–1945*. Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne i Drukarnia.
- Niewęglowski, Jan. 1997. *Salezjanie i szkolnictwo*. *Seminare*, 13, 193 – 206.
- Szafran, Joanna. 2010. *Dla dobra polskiej szkoły. Towarzystwo Nauczycieli Szkół Średnich i Wyższych i jego funkcje społeczno-oświatowe w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie.

- Szcześniak, A. Leszek. 1997. *Historia. Dzieje nowożytne i najnowsze. 1815-1939*. Warszawa: Agmen, Bellona.
- Ślósarczyk, Jan. 1960-1969. *Historia Prowincji świętego Jacka Towarzystwa Salezjańskiego w Polsce*, vol. 1-7. Pogrzebień (mps).
- Świda, Andrzej. 1974. *Salezjańskie szkolnictwo w Polsce (zarys)*. In: *75 lat działalności salezjanów w Polsce. Księga pamiątkowa*, red. Remigiusz Popowski, Stanisław Wilk, Marian Lewko, 37 – 57. Łódź-Kraków: Towarzystwo Salezjańskie.
- Wilk, Stanisław. 1998. *Sto lat apostołstwa salezjańskiego w Polsce (1898-1998)*. Lublin-Warszawa: Salezjański Ośrodek Misyjny.
- Zarzecki, Lucjan. 1917. *O wychowaniu narodowym*. Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff.
- Woroniecki, Jacek. 2008. *W szkole wychowania*. Lublin: Fundacja "Servire Veritati" Instytut Edukacji Narodowej.
- Ziemann, Eugeniusz. 2008. *Michalski Konstanty*. W: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, red. E. Ziemann, vol. 12, 802 – 804. Lublin, Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego.