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Social Pedagogy Training in Poland and Hungary

Abstract

In the present study we compare the formation and development of Polish and Hungarian social pedagogy. The main aspects of the comparison are the principal stages in the history of social pedagogy, the development of training, and the current situation in Hungary and Poland.

The history of social pedagogy can be divided into three stages, following key events in the history of Central and Eastern Europe, as these historical events had an impact on the appearance and development of social pedagogy. The first stage is the early period, in the era before 1945, the second is the period after 1945, when the number of orphaned children increased significantly after the Second World War and communism determined the socio-economic development of both Poland and Hungary. The third period started after 1989 when, after the collapse of communism, the development of both countries was placed on new socio-economic foundations, and new social problems appeared in the subsystems of society, which were partly addressed by social pedagogical solutions. In what follows, we give a brief overview of the 20th century history of Polish and Hungarian social pedagogy, the initial period of its formation.

Keywords

Social pedagogy, training, Poland, Hungary.

1. Introduction

There are many interesting areas of comparison between education in Poland and in Hungary. One of these is social pedagogy, which explores the social function of upbringing and attempts to meet the current needs of societies. It takes into consideration their specificity and adjusts the rules and forms of educating pedagogues, as well as the choice of goals and methods of upbringing. The comparison of this activity in both countries aims not only at identifying similarities and differences, but also at opening the way for an exchange of experience and mutual learning. In this way, social pedagogy strengthens its universal dimension.

To allow the development of social pedagogy, it is necessary to become acquainted with the current state of pedagogy and its historical determinants. The comparison between social pedagogy in Poland and in Hungary will be conducted using historical periods common to both countries, in which 1945 and 1989 are the key dates. The periods before 1945, between 1945 and 1989, and after 1989 will highlight the specificity and similarities between assumptions and the process of implementing social pedagogy in both countries.

2. Before 1945 in Poland

Helena Radlińska (1879–1954) is considered to be the pioneer of social pedagogy in Poland. She influenced the development of the new discipline. From the very beginning, Radlińska emphasised the importance of developing competence in resolving individual and social problems. The idea of education understood as a way to unlock the developmental potential of individuals and social groups, was of great significance for her. Creating the College of Social-Educational Work (1925) and the Department of Social Pedagogy (1945) at the University of Łódź was the climax of this time. The synthetic vision of discipline was also formulated then. It was the time of creating academic centres for this discipline and the work of social pedagogues in Warsaw, Poznań and Łódź.

¹ B. Smolińska-Theiss, *Pedagogika społeczna w Polsce z perspektywy zjazdów pedagogicznych*, "Pedagogika Społeczna" 2 (2015), pp. 39–51.

² M. Cichosz, Kształtowanie się dyscypliny – główne nurty polskiej pedagogiki społecznej w ujęciu historycznym, in: E. Marynowicz-Hetka (ed.), Pedagogika społeczna, vol. 2, Warszawa 2007, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, pp. 20–39.

This was the period of practising social pedagogy based on empirical research and methodological reflection. Radlińska's major achievement was her endeavour to attach greater academic significance to social pedagogy. She defined the main subject and aims, the nature of social pedagogy and the main concepts used in the field, in particular the concept of the environment.³ In the department which she set up, social pedagogues and social workers could get higher education in the following fields: the education of adults, the organisation of social life, librarianship, care for mothers and children. The department taught its students how to apply such knowledge to life.⁴

3. Before 1945 in Hungary

In the period before 1945, the tasks of social assistance were performed primarily by non-governmental organizations, foundations and religious associations. This is the period, when civil society became more and more active in Hungary. In the last quarter of the 19th century numerous associations and foundations were formed, attempting to provide a solution to social problems. Foundations played a particularly important role in orphan care.

At the end of the 19th century, Hungarian pedagogy was renewed and influenced by German theories of philosophy and education, as well as new initiatives in psychology and sociology.

"The institutions established by society began to be called social pedagogical institutions, and the pedagogy dealing with them was called social pedagogy, as a new direction, and the issues and institutions of education were examined from the perspective of society. According to Sándor Imre, the essence of the interpretation of social pedagogy was the equality and adequacy of social education and national education. Imre saw the emergence of social pedagogy in the world outside school." "As the social component of social pedagogy represented the basic idea, direction, spirituality, and practical consequences of education,

³ S. Kawula, *Pedagogika społeczna*, in: T. Pilch (ed.), *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, vol. 4, Warszawa 2005, Wydawnictwo Akademickie Żak, pp. 264–282.

⁴ W. Theiss, Edukacja i zaangażowanie. Sto lat pedagogiki społecznej w Polsce (1908–2008). Wprowadzenie, "Pedagogika Społeczna" 2 (2018), pp. 9–34.

 $^{^5}$ I. Pornói, Aszociál
pedagógia gondolata a századfordulón, "Szociál
pedagógia" 12 (2018), pp. 7–14.

he also considered those notions as a misunderstanding that social pedagogy means out-of-school, community-created institutions, including, among others, free education institutions."⁶

"The institutionalization of social training in Hungary can be traced back to the period between the two world wars, but the roots, the first steps of training, the first elements of organizing it into a profession already appeared in the first decades of the 20th century. Back then the so-called 'Népművelő Társaság' (People's Cultivation Society) directed the attention of officials to social problems and the need for training. Thus, at first the social field came to the fore from the aspect of education and andragogy, which also determined its later community character."

In the 1920s, social training, mainly in the form of courses, was primarily organized by the Hungarian Red Cross. Significant progress was made in 1937 when the National Social Institute opened the Social Academy.⁸ "The foundations of social training in higher education were established in Hungary by Decree 4150/1942 ME, published in 1942, which made it possible to establish university social courses. Five universities – the József Nádor University in Budapest, the Faculty of Economics in Kolozsvár and the Faculties of Political Science and Law in Pécs, Szeged and Debrecen – started the training, which included three semesters of theoretical courses and six months of practical training. The content of the training was defined by the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Religion and Public Education in Decree 800/1942."9

Social pedagogy was born much earlier in Poland than in Hungary. The Polish school of social pedagogy started off in 1925, while in Hungary the training in this period was only through courses. These courses transmitted social knowledge, not specifically called social pedagogy. In Poland, Radlińska defined the subject, purpose and main conceptual framework of social pedagogy, thus laying the foundations for the development of social pedagogy in that country. Compared to Poland, the development of social pedagogy in Hungary can

 $^{^6}$ I. Pornói, Aszociál
pedagógia gondolata a századfordulón, "Szociál
pedagógia" 12 (2018), pp. 7–14.

⁷ I. Budai, J. Csoba, R. Goldmann, *A szociális képzések magyarországi fejlődésének főbb állomásai*, "Esély" 2 (2006), pp. 49–70.

⁸ A. Csizmadia, *A szociális gondoskodás változásai Magyarországon*, Budapest 1977, MTA Állam- és Jogtudományi Intézete.

⁹ A. Csizmadia, *A szociális gondoskodás változásai Magyarországon*, Budapest 1977, MTA Állam- és Jogtudományi Intézete.

be characterized as lagging behind. Within pedagogy, the concept of social pedagogy appeared, however it did not carry the weight of meaning as currently used.

4. After 1945 in Poland

During the period of communism, the ideology and values were imposed on people, but Radlińska ignored the canons of Marxism. She combined social pedagogy with the study of man, society, culture and ethics. In this way, she expressed her stand against the communist utopia. In 1952, all institutions set up by Radlińska were closed. However, in 1957, after the thaw following Stalin's death, the Department of Social Pedagogy at the University of Warsaw was opened and in 1961, the Department of Social Pedagogy at the University of Łódź was re-established.¹⁰

Radlińska's students and co-workers played a crucial role in this period. Doe of them was Ryszard Wroczyński (1909–1987). The basics of his conception were his reflections on the way of understanding upbringing. During this period, school played a central role in the process of upbringing. However, Wroczyński took on a broader, environmental way of understanding it. He promoted the idea of the value of culture, democracy, objectivity and pursuit of the truth despite difficulties created by the communist authorities. A quantitative rise in empirical research was observed in this period. Wroczyński enhanced its quality. Thus, the importance and value of this kind of research increased.

Aleksander Kamiński (1903–1978) was another outstanding student of Helena Radlińska. He assumed that social pedagogy is a theory of social action, which makes it different from social work which is a separate work activity. Such interpretation, inspired by European solutions, eased the close relations between social work and pedagogy. In the next stage of development, social

¹⁰ W. Theiss, Edukacja i zaangażowanie. Sto lat pedagogiki społecznej w Polsce (1908–2008). Wprowadzenie, "Pedagogika Społeczna" 2 (2018), pp. 9–34.

¹¹ I. Lepalczyk, *Helena Radlińska. Życie i twórczość*, Toruń 2001, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek.

¹² W. Theiss, *Ryszard Wroczyński (1909–1987) i jego koncepcja pedagogiki społecznej*, in: S. Kawula (ed.), *Pedagogika Społeczna. Dokonania – aktualność – perspektywy*, Toruń 2003, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, pp. 228–240.

¹³ T. Pilch, W. Theiss, *Richard Wroczyński (1909–1987) – Life and Work*, "Pedagogika Społeczna" 2 (2018), pp. 69–82.

pedagogy entered a time of pedagogical heterodoxy. New ideas and solutions were introduced. After the reform of university studies conducted in 1965, social pedagogy became part of pedagogical degree programmes. The learning outcome was to prepare students to work as pedagogues in post-school educational institutions, in resocialisation and revalidation, and in support and social care. 14

To summarise this period, it may be stated that in classical social pedagogy represented by Radlińska, Wroczyński and Kamiński the basic ideas are: social justice, subjectivity, social education and subsidiarity.¹⁵

5. After 1945 in Hungary

After World War II, all previous social training initiatives ceased to exist, along with social policy measures. The political and ideological considerations of the 1950s also had an impact on the social sphere. The established socialist political system did not allow churches, foundations or associations to maintain institutions for social purposes. From 1948 onwards, the authorities thought that there was no need for social policy, saying poverty had disappeared, and every act of popular democracy was social policy. Accordingly, in 1950 the Ministry of Welfare and the operation of social organizations were abolished. In 1948–50, through the nationalization of schools, hospitals, and social institutions, church institutions lost their area of operation. At the same time, social training ceased and this remained the case during the socialist era. Polish social pedagogy appeared in Hungarian pedagogy in 1971, mainly with Ryszard Wroczyński's work entitled "Social Pedagogy", which was translated into Hungarian. The volume was mainly used in the field of pedagogy, and supplemented the pedagogical knowledge related to family, leisure and child protection.

In terms of their history, the two countries followed a similar path after 1945, as they both belonged to the camp of socialist countries. However, we see differences in the field of social pedagogy. Due to ideological considerations, no social trainings were implemented in Hungary, so there was no trace of the previous

¹⁴ T. Pilch, *Rozwój studiów pedagogicznych*, in: J. Wołczyk, R. Wroczyński (eds.), *Pedagogika i potrzeby społeczne*, Warszawa 1974, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, pp. 179–186.

¹⁵ W. Theiss, *Helena Radlińska: powrót do źródeł i tradycji w ponowoczesnym świecie*, "Pedagogika Społeczna" 7 (2018), pp. 113–123.

 $^{^{16}}$ E. Rákó, A gyermekvédelmi szakellátás helyzete, Debrecen 2011, Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó.

initiatives. In Poland, the trainings were also discontinued during this period, but they were reorganized much earlier than in Hungary, so in 1957 and 1961 there were already departments of social pedagogy at the universities. A significant change in the history of Polish social pedagogy was the fact that from 1965 it became part of pedagogy. We can honour the significant social pedagogical figures of the era in the persons of Wroczyński and Kamiński.

6. After 1989 in Poland

As a result of political and social changes in Poland, a pluralistic society started to be created, which was noticeable in the field of pedagogy. The issue of restoring and creating the identity of pedagogy was a priority. Catholic pedagogy was also reinstated. Western conceptions of alternative and critical pedagogy were more and more noticeable. It was the time of a symbolic return to the origins, and attention was paid to new dimensions in practising pedagogy rooted in the reality of social change, with its mental, social and economic consequences, as well as with its physical openness of space and a variety of different standpoints, cultures, problems and ways of solving them. Is

According to Wojciech Sroczyński, it may be assumed that "in this period the process of disciplinarisation and institutionalisation of social pedagogy was formally completed. Social pedagogy became a degree course at universities, a subject taught to pedagogues and a scientific discipline in which the social determinants of upbringing are researched. In this sense, it is a meta-science which provides theoretical basis for other particular branches of pedagogical knowledge regarding the environment of upbringing, as well as care, social, cultural, recreational and environmental activity." Social pedagogy is currently

W. Theiss, Edukacja i zaangażowanie. Sto lat pedagogiki społecznej w Polsce (1908–2008). Wprowadzenie, "Pedagogika Społeczna" 2 (2018), pp. 9–34.

E. Marynowicz-Hetka, Zerwanie i nieciągłość – atrybuty procesu instytucjonalizacji i dyscyplinaryzacji pedagogiki społecznej w Polsce, in: B. Kromolicka, A. Radziewicz-Winnicki, M. Noszczyk-Bernasiewicz (eds.), Pedagogika społeczna w Polsce po 1989 roku. Przemiany w nauce, obecność międzynarodowa, kręgi tematyczne prac badawczych, Katowice 2007, pp. 19–31.

¹⁹ W. Sroczyński, *Wybrane zagadnienia pedagogiki społecznej. Funkcja środowiskowa i socjalna*, Warszawa 2010, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczo-Humanistycznego in Siedlce.

regarded as an empirical, praxeological, practical and interdisciplinary science. It researches the environmental conditions in which the process of upbringing and care occurs from birth to death²⁰ and addresses the educational challenges of social life in the 21st century.

7. After 1989 in Hungary

The democratic transition gave a significant impetus to the resumption of social trainings. While in the international arena the expansion of social pedagogy has been characteristic since the 1970s – it was reflected in the increase in the number of people working in the field, the participants in training and also the clients – in Hungary, social pedagogical work appeared only much later, in the years after the regime change to democracy.

In the years after the democratic transition, the social problems that had to be addressed increased. Act 3 of 1993, the Social Law was enacted, which focused on solving these problems. The operation of social institutions required specialists with social knowledge, which, in the absence of training, was available only to a very limited extent. It thus became necessary to start professional trainings.

The training of social pedagogues started in Esztergom in the 1989/90 academic year. The former Teacher Training College in Esztergom deserves significant credit in terms of the appearance of the training in Hungary. Foreign experience, mainly from Germany, was also used to develop the training programme, including the SWEEL (Social Work Education at European Level) project. Between 1991 and 1994 further courses were organized to impart the knowledge required for the training. The main goal was to prepare the curriculum, to integrate the theoretical-practical training, to train the instructors and to create a specialized library. The project resulted in the first curriculum for social pedagogical training in 1994. According to this new curriculum, students studied social studies, social policy, legal knowledge, psychology, social health science, pedagogy and social work.²¹

²⁰ W. Okoń, *Nowy Słownik Pedagogiczny*, Warszawa 2004, Wydawnictwo Akademickie Żak.

K. Tordainé Vida, A magyar szociálpedagógia, in: K. Tordainé Vida (ed.), Ifjúság, munka, kultúra, Esztergom 2005, Vitéz János Római Katolikus tanítóképző Főiskola Tudománynapi Kötetei, pp. 175–183.

The development of social pedagogical training in various higher education institutions has been fundamentally determined by the existing human resources. "A significant feature influencing the content of the training was that the courses – almost obviously – were usually adapted to the main profile of the training institution and to the teaching staff available locally."²²

After the training in Esztergom was started, the training of social pedagogues was launched in more and more universities and colleges. Currently there are BA trainings in social pedagogy in nine higher education institutions.

The development of social pedagogy in Hungary and Poland can be interpreted using several approaches: social pedagogy as practical work, social pedagogy as an educational activity, and social pedagogy as a field of research.²³ Of these three dimensions, we will now focus on the educational activity.

8. Social pedagogy as an educational activity

In Hungary social pedagogy – unlike the practice in several European countries (e.g. Germany, Austria) – is not classified as an educational science, but as a social science. From a historical point of view, it is interesting to note that it did not become one of the educational sciences, despite the fact that social pedagogue training in Hungary was started primarily by kindergarten and teacher training colleges. In addition to knowledge in social science, the training content also includes a significant amount of knowledge in the fields of education, psychology, law and health sciences. The training itself is practice-oriented and prepares the students to work in the aforementioned areas. Social pedagogues primarily deal with the learning, social and mental problems of children and young people in a complex system.

A comparison of Polish and Hungarian social pedagogue training is presented in Table 1.

²² Zs. Soós, *A szociális felsőoktatás fejlődése Nyugat-Európában és Magyarországon*, in: E. Rákó, Zs. Soós (eds.), *Kihívások és válaszok Tanulmányok a szociálpedagógia területéről*, Debrecen 2017, Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, pp. 26–39.

H. Juha, *Social Pedagogical Eyes in the Midst of Diverse Understandings, Conceptualisations and Activities*, "International Journal of Social Pedagogy" 1 (2012), pp. 3–16.

Table 1. Social pedagogy in Hungary and Poland

	Social pedagogy in Hungary	Social pedagogy in Poland	Similar or different?
Typical names of profession	Social pedagogy	Social pedagogy	Similar
Traditional practice strongholds	Educational institutions (school, dormitory), child protection institutions (residential home, small-group home, children's day care, temporary child care, aftercare, children's home for handicapped children), social institutions (home for handicapped people, old people, psychiatric patients, addicted people, family assistance centre)	Work in care and educational institutions, centres for children and teenagers (daily support centre, children's home, adoption centre, children's shelter boarding school, psychological and pedagogical counselling centres, work as school pedagogues or day care room supervisors)	Similarities: They work in child protection and social institutions. Differences: In Hungary, more people work in social institu- tions than in Poland.
Typical curriculum	General subjects: Theory of Social Work Psychology (General, Developmental, Personality), Law (Social Law, Child Protection Act), Philosophy, European Studies, Health Study, Communication Specialisation subjects: Social Policy, Family Policy, Employment Policy, Sociology, Counselling Theory and Methodology, Social Pedagogy I–III, Leisure Time Pedagogy, Developmental Education, Recreation and Social Work Theory and Methodology I–V	General subjects: Various Subdisciplines of Pedagogy, Fundamentals of Psy- chology, Sociology, Social Work, Philosophy, Health Study, Communication. Specialisation subjects: Protective Pedagogy, Pedagogical Diagnosis, Methodology of Peda- gogical Work, Social Support, Social Prevention, Protective and Educa- tional Counselling, Developmental Educa- tion	Similar, but there is a more significant emphasis on the knowledge of social sciences in the Hungarian training.

	Social pedagogy in Hungary	Social pedagogy in Poland	Similar or different?
Other aspects	Specialization is not obligatory, but it is possible to do, mostly in the field of family, child and youth protection.	In the educational sector, a degree course in so- cial pedagogy is most frequently part of the specialization related to protective pedagogy, educational pedagogy, occupational therapy or social work.	Similar, in both trainings it is possible to deliver special knowledge.

Source: Own compilation

Based on the data in Table 1, it can be concluded that there are several similarities between the two countries in social pedagogy training. There are, for example, many similarities in the titles given to the training programmes and the names of the courses. However, the presence of social science subjects is more significant in the Hungarian training, which can be justified by the fact that the discipline itself does not belong to the field of education, but to the field of social sciences. The characteristic of the Hungarian training is that it contains both pedagogical and social science knowledge. In the field of practice, the similarity is that Polish and Hungarian social pedagogues work mainly in child protection, and typically work in child welfare and social institutions, and are less present in educational institutions. Another similarity is that in both trainings it is possible to elaborate specializations, which allow students to acquire additional knowledge related to social pedagogy.

Reviewing the training structure in Poland, social pedagogy appears in the field of pedagogy at both bachelor and master level. Doctoral degrees can be obtained in the field of pedagogy, but there is no independent doctoral school for social pedagogy.

In Hungary, after the bachelor's level, it is possible to study for a master's degree in both education and social sciences. After many years of preparatory work, the opportunity to start a master's degree in social pedagogy was opened for the first time in 2017. There are currently six master's degree programmes in social pedagogy in Hungary. There is no independent doctoral school of social pedagogy. In Hungary, students can obtain degrees in schools of education or social sciences.

The strengthening of the scientific background of social pedagogy is indicated by the fact that there are several journals which publish studies and research results related to social pedagogy. In Poland, a stronger historical background to the training is reflected in this area as well, which is why these topics appear in a number of journals.

In Poland the repertoire of journals containing social pedagogical studies is much richer, but the most notable of which is "Pedagogika społeczna" ("Social Pegagogy"), founded in 2001, acting under the auspices of the Social Pedagogy Team at the Committee of Pedagogical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences. In addition, it is important to note the journals "Problemy Opiekuńczo-Wychowawcze" ("Problems in Childcare and Upbringing"), "Praca Socjalna" ("Social Work"), "Edukacja Międzykulturowa" ("Intercultural Education"), "Nauki o Wychowaniu. Studia Interdyscyplinarne" ("Educational Sciences. Interdisciplinary Studies"), and "Papers of Social Pedagogy".

In Hungary the publication of the results of social pedagogical research and the studies on social pedagogy is supported by the journal "Szociálpedagógia" (Social Pedagogy), which was founded in 2013 by the training institutions. The establishment of the journal became necessary as social pedagogy was somewhat relegated to the background in scientific discourse, despite the fact that it had been present independently in higher education for many years. In addition, the journals "Kapocs", ("Link"), "Esély", ("Chance"), "Education", "Párbeszéd", ("Dialogue"), and "Különleges Bánásmód" ("Special Treatment") all offer opportunities for publishing social pedagogical content.

9. Conclusion

Regarding the comparison of Polish and Hungarian social pedagogy, we can make the following statements: In Poland, social pedagogy has a much longer history than in Hungary. Already in the years before 1945, the goal and conceptual framework of social pedagogy was established in Poland. Hungary's status as a "late developer" in this field is well symbolized by the fact that social pedagogy did not really appear until after 1989, after the democratic transformation. Although this kind of training ceased in both countries after 1945, in Poland, after a short break, departments of social pedagogy started to operate again after 1951. In Poland social pedagogy has clearly developed as part of pedagogy. Although social pedagogy has pedagogical roots and, as a matter of fact, teacher training

institutions initiated these trainings in Hungary, it is not considered as a branch of pedagogy but of the social sciences. There are also many similarities and differences in the curriculum of the training in the two countries. The training structure is similar, although in none of these countries does an independent doctoral school of social pedagogy exist; at best it appears as a sub-programme or topic within a doctoral school. In both countries, there is a strong effort to publish social pedagogical research and studies, and a number of journals offer opportunities for this.

There are a few postulates which may be formed on the basis of the conclusions presented in the article. Firstly, comparative studies on social and educational aspects are necessary and should be further developed. They make it possible to better understand the determinants and forms of implementing social pedagogy in Hungary and in Poland. Similar historical determinants and contemporary challenges lead to a better mutual understanding. At the same time, they indicate various solutions which may be valuable for mutual learning.

Secondly, the exchange of experience in educating students about social pedagogy and their professional work is of great importance. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen the international exchange of workers and students. There are a lot of valuable educational programmes such as Erasmus+, NAVA, CEEPUS or the International Visegrad Fund. It seems necessary to extend this offer and to encourage academic workers and students to take part in the programmes.

Thirdly, it is worth encouraging academic reflection about different aspects of upbringing in both countries. Joint research, in particular of a comparative nature, may extend knowledge in this area. Joint projects and publications, as well as the translation and exchange of the most valuable articles and books, will contribute to the development of social pedagogy in the coming decades of the 21st century.

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