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Jan WNEK\*

## Jean-Jacques Rousseau in Polish Education

### Jan Jakub Rousseau w pedagogice polskiej

#### Abstract

**Introduction.** The article presents the historical reception of Rousseau’s body of work in Poland. Since the publication of *Emile* in 1762, Polish pedagogues and historians of education have continued to be interested in the pedagogical ideas presented within the treatise. Over the years, Polish literature on the history of pedagogy has expanded to include various works on Rousseau’s approach to education. This article emphasises that particular attention is given to this luminary of pedagogy within history of education textbooks. Historical analyses have also been published that present the role of the French Enlightenment in laying the foundations of modern education and upbringing. The current Polish historical and pedagogical literature lacks a study showing the reception of the Geneva philosopher’s pedagogical thought in Poland. This article may be a starting point for further research on the development of Polish educators’ interest in innovative Western European educational thought. Starting from the end of the 18th century, interest in the work of the author of

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\* e-mail: [j.wnek@interia.pl](mailto:j.wnek@interia.pl)

Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University, Gustawa Herlinga-Grudzińskiego 1,  
30-705 Kraków, Poland

Krakowska Akademia im. Andrzeja Frycza Modrzewskiego, Gustawa Herlinga-Grudzińskiego 1, 30-705 Kraków, Polska

ORCID: 0000-0001-8299-6822

*Emile* is visible in each of the following eras. This undoubtedly proves the popularity and originality of his pedagogical views and their strong influence on educational theory and practice in other countries.

**Aim.** The aim of the article is a general characterization of the reception of Rousseau's educational thought by Polish educators.

**Materials and methods.** Method of document analysis.

**Results.** The article provides a general overview of major works on Rousseau's approach to education written by Polish authors.

**Keywords:** history of education, naturalistic education, Rousseau, Enlightenment, reception.

### **Abstrakt**

**Wprowadzenie.** Artykuł ukazuje dzieje recepcji myśli pedagogicznej Rousseau w Polsce. W teście zasygnalizowano, że począwszy od ukazania się *Emila* w 1762 r. aż po czasy najnowsze trwa zaciekawienie polskich pedagogów i historyków wychowania ideami pedagogicznymi zawartymi w tym dziele. Na przestrzeni lat polska literatura historyczno-pedagogiczna została wzbogacona różnej wartości pracami traktującymi o pedagogice Rousseau. W artykule podkreślono, że szczególnie dużo uwagi poświęca się temu klasykowi pedagogiki w podręcznikach do historii wychowania. Powstają także opracowania historyczne wskazujące na rolę francuskiego oświecenia w budowaniu zrębów nowoczesnej myśli oświatowo-wychowawczej. W dotychczasowej polskiej literaturze historyczno-pedagogicznej brakuje opracowania ukazującego recepcję w Polsce myśli pedagogicznej genezy filozofa. Niniejszy artykuł może stanowić punkt wyjścia do dalszych badań nad rozwojem zainteresowań polskich pedagogów zachodnioeuropejską nowatorską myślą edukacyjną. Począwszy od końca XVIII wieku w każdej z następujących epok widoczne jest zaciekawienie twórczością autora *Emila*. Świadczy to bez wątpienia o popularności i oryginalności jego poglądów pedagogicznych, silnego ich oddziaływania na teorię i praktykę edukacyjną w innych krajach.

**Cel.** Celem artykułu jest ogólna charakterystyka recepcji przez polskich pedagogów myśli wychowawczej Rousseau.

**Materiały i metody.** W artykule zastosowano metodę analizy dokumentów.

**Wyniki.** Artykuł daje ogólny przegląd najważniejszych prac jakie o pedagogice Rousseau napisali Polacy.

**Słowa kluczowe:** historia wychowania, pedagogika naturalna, Rousseau, oświecenie, recepcja.

Historians of pedagogy are united in the opinion that Jean-Jacques Rousseau played a prominent role in laying the foundations of modern pedagogical theory and practice. The Genevan philosopher gained recognition in the field of education with his 1762 treatise *Emile, or On Education*, which, thanks to being translated into various languages, became popular with readers from many different countries. Even during Rousseau's lifetime, the contents of *Emile*, which put a strong emphasis on the role of the mother in child-rearing, were praised by some and harshly criticised by others. Many rejected the premise that child-rearing should take place in a rural environment, beyond the bounds of civilisation, and that it is only vital to know the nature of the child and adapt the teaching methods to it in order to ensure the child's freedom. The treatise was publicly burnt in protest. The ideas contained within continue to exert their influence to this day, and the number of works that popularise Rousseau's approach to education is impressively large. Chief among these works are dissertations and articles published in scholarly periodicals. Ample encyclopaedia and dictionary entries also exist that present in detail the tenets of Rousseau's naturalistic education. However, textbooks on the history of education remain by far the most influential means by which the views of the author of *Emile* are disseminated among young students. These present the thoughts on education of the most prominent theorists in the history of the field. The impressively extensive body of literature pertaining to Rousseau continues to grow, and new works analysing his approach to philosophy and pedagogy continue to be published. Rousseau's output is interpreted in various ways, although many believe him to be among the most brilliant and influential thinkers of the Enlightenment.

Poland has been, and continues to be, influenced by his approach to education. Starting from the second half of the 18th century, Polish educational literature has begun to include works that have successfully popularised the Genevan philosopher's output, whose reception was subject to various sociopolitical conditions across the centuries. Attempts at interpreting *Emile, or On Education*, which was only translated into Polish in the 20th century, have been made by prominent Polish educators, as well as more obscure individuals who were not academics. References to naturalistic education can be found in various Polish publications, particularly in textbooks on the history of education used by pedagogy students. The purpose of this article is to present the history of the popularisation of Rousseau's ideas in Poland. This brilliant author, similarly to other great educational thinkers, was of great interest to Polish historians of education, who stress that his contributions to the development of modern pedagogical ideas are so important as to have exerted influence on the initiators of the New Education movement that was born in the United States of America and Western Europe at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is generally agreed that research on the history of education and the training of future educators by universities are impossible without referring to Rousseau's ideas on teaching.

## Reception of Rousseau's Views in Poland in the Commission of National Education Period

In 1773, Polish King Stanisław August Poniatowski established the Commission of National Education (*Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, KEN), which remained the central body responsible for education in Poland until 1794. The commission enacted a reform of tertiary and secondary education, developed new curricula and created new school textbooks, in addition to ensuring better teacher training standards, among other efforts. The guiding principles of the commission were rooted in the Enlightenment. At the time, various innovative approaches to education emerging in France thanks to the influence of such revolutionary thinkers as Rousseau were making their way to Poland. These foreign ideas were of interest not only to those involved in the commission's work, however. They became popular among progressive teachers and those interested in teaching innovations, including members of various religious orders. In more affluent circles, French language and culture were becoming increasingly fashionable, and French nationals were employed as private tutors for children. Members of the Polish elite, particularly its highest tier, the magnates, travelled to France, bringing back various books written by foreign authors. The achievements of the Great French Revolution were quickly disseminated across Europe, and Poland was no exception. Poles had access to the latest works of *belles-lettres* and scholarly literature, which were read to glean knowledge of the Enlightenment ideas that were quickly taking root in Europe at the time. These foreign works were of interest to Polish thinkers, inspiring them to build upon the achievements of the Enlightenment. The striving for knowledge that began during the KEN period spawned a need to seek new education-related ideals and templates. After the abolition of the Jesuit order by Pope Clement XIV in 1773, Enlightenment activists became increasingly convinced that existing Jesuit pedagogy had to be replaced by a new approach to education, one based on the values extolled by the Enlightenment. With the publication of *Emile* and the dissemination of its ideas among readers across Europe, the approach to children and childhood began to change. Rousseau demanded that mothers should feed their children themselves, and that they take great care raising their newborns. The child-rearing methods espoused by him were of great interest to the Polish education activist and writer Michał Dymitr Krajewski. Having joined the Piarist order as a young man, he spent several years working as a teacher before becoming the president of the Collegium Nobilium in 1784 – an exclusive school for the sons of magnates and noblemen administered by the Piarists in Warsaw. His novels are influenced by Rousseau's ideas on education, as well as those of the British philosopher John Locke (Sporny, 1972, pp. 99–110). Krajewski was aware of the views contained in *Emile* regarding maternal breastfeeding, the use of swaddling, teaching morality, and early learning (Bartnicka, 1992, pp. 37–86). In his novel *A Podolian Raised in the State of Nature, Describing her Life and Adventures* (*Podolanka*

wychowana w stanie natury, życie i przypadki swoje opisująca, 1784), he depicts a girl raised in isolation who, after leaving her confinement, criticises the world around her. Krajewski's works served to popularise certain ideas presented in *Emile* (Szyjkowski, 1913, p. 216). However, it would be an overstatement to claim that they instantly became popular with readers, who were not very well acquainted with the Genevan philosopher's output at the time. It took time before his ideas made their way to Poland.

Rousseau's approach to education was incorporated into the guidelines for schools developed by the Commission of National Education. This is evident when we analyse the parts referring to the mental, moral, and physical education of children, as well as the definitions of the roles of the family and schools in the education process. The *Statutes of the Commission of National Education for the Academia and Schools in the Lands of the Commonwealth (Ustawy Komisji Edukacji Narodowej dla stanu akademickiego i na szkoły w krajach Rzeczypospolitej przepisane, 1783)* emphasise the importance of developing curricula adapted to the developmental stage of children. As advocated in *Emile*, members of the commission promoted combining physical and moral education and directing children in such a way as to enable them to independently acquire knowledge and learn information that will be useful in life. Polish literature on the history of education also agrees that the commission made use of Rousseau's ideas when developing guidelines for the teaching of boys and girls. The ideas presented in *Emile* were seen as controversial, and the treatise itself was condemned by the Church (Kamińska, Szybiak, 2012, pp. 273–280). But even despite this fact, they continued to spread across Europe, including Poland, which was experiencing severe difficulties as a state after being partitioned for the first time by Prussia, Russia and Austria in 1772.

During the KEN period, Rousseau's ideas on education gained limited traction among Polish activists and writers. *Emile* was read in the original language at the time, and some of its theses were analysed and mentioned in certain works of prose and articles concerning education written by Antoni Popławski (Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa, 1973, pp. 34–36). Polish pedagogical output from the period drew inspiration from Enlightenment pedagogy and philosophy. These Enlightenment ideas, backed by scientific knowledge, became fashionable among authors of education literature. Rousseau, who was active in France, was also known in Poland due to his 1772 work *Considerations on the Government of Poland*. This particular essay was of little interest to Polish educators, however, and was primarily read by political activists.

## The Partition Period, 1795–1918

In 1795, Poland ceased to exist as an independent state after being absorbed by Prussia, Russia, and Austria for 123 years. The partitioning powers eradicated Polishness

and combatted Polish education and schools, which stifled the development of Polish pedagogy and the incorporation of foreign ideas on the subject. Despite these difficulties, the Polish people remained steadfast as a nation, striving to preserve its identity, language, and traditions. Polish education activists and authors of pedagogical literature were well aware that only by persevering in educating and raising children and young people could Polish society be reborn and regain its freedom. The partitioning powers' attempts at repressing and eroding the Polish national identity were unsuccessful. The Polish people survived, and Poland regained independence after the end of World War I. In addition, Polish literature on the philosophy of education continued to be published between 1795 and 1918, containing many innovative ideas and references to foreign thinkers. Polish educators from this period carefully studied publications from other countries and commented on some of their contents, as they correctly believed that knowledge of European educational literature was indispensable due to its wealth of innovative ideas on how to educate and raise new generations.

In the early 19th century, echoes of Rousseau's ideas on education became relatively rare in Polish memoirs and novels, with some authors being critical of his approach. The Genevan philosopher's writings were regarded very highly by Countess Izabela Czartoryska, née Flemming, who at the time was considered to be among the most creative and influential Polish women (Żołądź-Strzelczyk, 2015, pp. 7–14). During this period, *i.e.*, the early 19th century, the ideas on education presented in *Emile* found purchase with the Polish scholar Jędrzej Śniadecki, author of the essay *Remarks on the Physical Education of Children (Uwagi o fizycznym wychowaniu dzieci)*. The essay was published in the *Dziennik Wileński* daily in 1805, and was a pioneering work on early education and child nutrition in Polish literature. That Śniadecki was influenced by Rousseau is evident in his ideas on early education and the development of the senses. Similarly to the Genevan philosopher, he recommends that the education process should take into account the abilities and interests of the child (Śniadecki, 1805). References to Rousseau's output can also be found in philosopher Józef Bychowiec's *Advice for a Good Mother (Rady Dobrej Matce)*, published in Wilno (modern-day Vilnius) in 1827. Bychowiec, similar to the Genevan philosopher, championed naturalistic education, claiming that it should be the primary method of child-rearing (Bychowiec, 1827). Polish literature of the Enlightenment period thus incorporated references to Rousseau's naturalistic education, in addition to acknowledging his contributions to promoting innovative approaches to upbringing and new methods of working with children.

The Romanticism period brought with it new literary and pedagogical ideas. Various historians identify references to *Emile* in certain works of Polish literature from the period, including Adam Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve (Dziady)* (Matkowski, 1907). At the time, Rousseau was most extensively discussed by Poland's most prominent Romanticist philosopher and educator – Bronisław Ferdynand Trentowski, author of the

monumental work *Chowanna, a System of National Pedagogy as the Ability to Raise, Teach and Enlighten, or to Educate our Youth* (*Chowanna czyli system pedagogiki narodowej jako umiejętności wychowania, nauki i oświaty, słowem wykształcenia naszej młodzieży*). Trentowski devoted parts of his work to presenting the history of schools and education in Europe, including in Poland. A pioneering endeavour from the perspective of Polish literature, *Chowanna* was the first Polish-language study offering such a broad approach to the history of education. Trentowski recalls Rousseau's difficult early life, the breakthrough that came with his winning the Dijon academy competition, and the fame he gained for his subsequent essays. He also states that *Emile, or On Education* was admired by some and ruthlessly criticised by others: 'In Paris, Geneva, and other cities, the treatise was publicly torn apart by an executioner and tossed into the fire; yet it spread across the globe quickly, its power greater than that of modern English steam engines' (Trentowski, 1970, p. 700). *Chowanna* includes an exhaustive characterisation of Rousseau's ideas on naturalistic education, the development of children's physicality and moral sensibilities, distinguishing good from evil, teaching particular subjects, and exploring religious life. According to Trentowski, 'Rousseau's pedagogy is shallow, similar to Locke's, though it does have its benefits. These include: directing Europe's attention towards nature, which had been completely forgotten in education for two thousand years; furthermore: insistence on fostering the child's independence, which begets originality, distinctiveness, and individuality, and is the foremost trait of our times; finally: liberating pedagogy from the school and the school from all mediaeval superstition' (Trentowski, 1970, p. 702). To Trentowski, it was obvious that, despite years having passed since the publication of *Emile*, the book remained a potentially interesting read to an educator. In *Chowanna*, he makes various references to the treatise, and despite his criticisms pertaining to Rousseau's approach to education, Trentowski evidently valued the philosopher, acknowledging the courage and freshness contained within his ideas.

In the Positivism period, Polish educators, particularly those active in the Russian partition, were predominantly interested in British approaches to education. The theories of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer were received with great interest by the world, and Polish scholarly publications were no exception. Educators such as Aleksander Głowacki, Henryk Wernic, Aleksander Świętochowski, and Aniela Szycówna believed that only modern knowledge generated by Positivist sources was of any utility and could be successfully applied in education and schooling (Wroczyński, 1958). This resulted in the waning popularity of older approaches to pedagogy. One of the works discussing the Genevan philosopher published during that time was educator and historian Piotr Chmielowski's *Rousseau. On the One-hundredth Anniversary of his Death. (Rousseau. W stuletnią rocznicę jego śmierci)* (Chmielowski, 1878). This short book provides readers with a general overview of the pedagogical tenets presented in



*Emile*. This analysis is not as in-depth as that conducted later by historians of education. However, it still gave readers a general idea of Rousseau's pedagogy, and was one of the few references to the grand pedagogical ideas of the French Enlightenment published in the Positivism period.

Rousseau's impact on early education in the Polish lands and abroad was characterised by Jan Władysław Dawid – a leading Polish psychologist and educator of the 19/20th centuries. This characterisation is presented in his 1892 book *Teaching About Things. An Overview of its Historical Development, Psychological Foundations, Methodology and Lesson Templates*. (*Nauka o rzeczach. Rys jej historycznego rozwoju, podstawy psychologiczne, metoda, oraz wzory lekcji*). In it, the author presents various contributions to the theory and practice of early education. Although he acknowledges Rousseau's influence on Polish pedagogy, he notes that, as far as early education is concerned, 19th century Polish educators largely drew upon the views of another pedagogue – Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who is considered to be the founder of the modern people's school (Dawid, 1892). In the 19th century, the body of Polish pedagogical literature on the education of young children expanded considerably. Although they also implemented their own ideas, Polish pedagogues were very much interested in both old and new foreign education literature concerning children and childhood.

In the early 20th century, the teacher Franciszek Majchrowicz wrote an interesting analysis of Rousseau's pedagogy titled *The History of Pedagogy for Use by Teachers Colleges* (*Historia pedagogii dla użytku seminariów nauczycielskich*). The book discusses Rousseau's time as a young man, his most important works and the main tenets of his pedagogy. Its author provides accounts of the views on physical, moral, and religious education of the author of *Emile*. Majchrowicz primarily praises Rousseau for identifying new avenues for education and emphasising its tremendous importance in life: 'The advantages of this pedagogy include also the demand for fostering independence as part of education, which begets genuineness and produces outstanding individuals. Rousseau expels all things mechanical and routine from education, restores the proper meaning to the senses and observation, does away with empty verbosity, and assigns the proper value to teaching about things' (Majchrowicz, 1901, p. 115). The author of *The History of Pedagogy* also acknowledges the flaws in Rousseau's approach to education. He criticises Rousseau's rejection of the cultural achievements of his era, his suggestion that education should begin at later stages of the child's life, as well as his preference for private over public education.

On Rousseau's 200th birthday, the *Nowe Tory* journal published the article *Rousseau's Science of Education (Rousseau nauka o wychowaniu)*, written by social activist and pedagogue Maksymilian Bienenstock. The article praised the tenets presented in *Emile*, and its author expressed the opinion that Rousseau's approach to education had inspired the actions of the Commission of National Education, as well as the writers



and poets of the 18th and 19th centuries (Dworakowska, 2015, pp. 52–53). Bienenstock glorified Rousseau, holding his ideas on education in high regard. The deliberations published by *Nowe Tory* were successful in popularising the fundamental ideas contained in *Emile* and expanding upon characterisations of Rousseau's pedagogy presented in other compendiums from the turn of the century.

Between 1795 and 1918, Polish pedagogues made significant progress in popularising the ideas on education laid out in *Emile*. Although contact with foreign civilisations and culture centres was more difficult for Poles at the time, new ideas on education were still received, with some being considered of particular importance to raising Polish youth. References to Rousseau's ideas have a presence in Polish works written in the 19th and early 20th centuries. They were considered relevant by the greatest Polish pedagogues of the period, who saw them as foundations of Enlightenment education, which aimed at breaking away from stiff rigorousness when working with children and replacing it with new forms of educational practice. However, in the 19th century, Rousseau's naturalistic education was not as popular among Polish pedagogues as the ideas of the brilliant German educator Johann Friedrich Herbart, for example.

### **Reborn Poland, 1918–1939**

Poland's regaining of national sovereignty after many years of subjugation created new conditions for the development of education and culture. No longer fettered by the decisions of the partitioning powers, the country began reorganising education and schooling in accordance with its own traditions and principles. Compulsory education was introduced, schooling was expanded on all levels, and extensive pedagogical research was conducted. This spurred a return to the pedagogical philosophies of various great thinkers responsible for laying the foundations of the theory and practice of education across centuries. Polish pedagogues were still attracted by Rousseau's approach to education, with members of what was referred to as the New Education movement making frequent references to his works. The author of *Emile* was perceived as the precursor of paidocentrism, which developed rapidly in various educational centres around the world in the 19th and 20th centuries. Writers emphasised that Rousseau inspired such brilliant members of the movement as John Dewey, Ellen Key, and Maria Montessori.

In the interwar period, *Emile* was translated into Polish for the very first time. Contrary to expectations, however, the translation failed to arouse major interest in the work. This was because the publication coincided with translations of works written by New Education pedagogues, which were of greater interest to Polish critics. The translation of *Emile* lacked a foreword explaining the premises of Rousseau's pedagogy, and no reviews of the work were published in any major journals. The philosopher's

ideas on education continued to be referenced in Polish pedagogical literature, however, including authors both prominent and more obscure. In his work *The Principles of Teaching (Zasady nauczania)*, the popular educator Bogdan Nawroczyński stated that Rousseau had placed the child at the centre of pedagogical analysis (Nawroczyński, 1931). Some authors made attempts at summarising Rousseau's views on physical education and emphasising the importance of naturalistic education to the history of pedagogy. Articles on these subjects were published in such journals as *Wiedza i Życie* and *Wychowanie Fizyczne*.

On the 150th anniversary of Rousseau's death, an article was published in *Praca Szkolna* by Stefan Rudniański, a prominent psychologist and educator who was also a communist activist. His essay presents Rousseau as a proponent of social education. Rudniański summarises the fundamental tenets espoused by author of *Emile* regarding education, stating that certain ideas could be implemented only in the modern era and its changing conditions of community life (Rudniański, 1928, pp. 193–197). Having attended Vladimir Lenin's lectures, Rudniański believed that the posited construction of a new social system could also benefit education. He himself was partial to the ideas of the Russian pedagogue and psychologist Pavel Blonsky, who developed his own labour school. Rudniański was not well versed in the history of pedagogy, and so his summary of Rousseau's views was shallow and rather inaccurate, deviating from commonly accepted views on the output of the Genevan philosopher, and failed to properly acknowledge the educational value of *Emile, or On Education*.

In 1934, a second edition of Stanisław Kot's *History of Education (Historia wychowania)* was published in Lwów (modern-day Lviv). Kot was a prominent Polish humanist affiliated with the Jagiellonian University. His textbook on the history of education was first published in 1924, and the second edition published in the 1930s was expanded to include new content. The author provides a characterisation of naturalistic education, acknowledging Rousseau as a brilliant thinker whose output influenced Western European views on aesthetics, politics, and morality. Kot presents to his readers Rousseau's ideas on raising and educating children, explaining the meanings of negative and progressive education. The textbook also illustrates the four stages of education posited in *Emile*, as well as providing a summary of Rousseau's views on the education of women. Kot also mentions the impact *Emile* had on Rousseau's contemporaries and successors: '*Emile* marks the establishment of the philosophy of education in Europe. For an entire century, anyone who wrote about education generally remained within the boundaries of *Emile's* ideas, combating, revitalising, or correcting them, but even Rousseau's detractors could not completely shield themselves from his influence. Pedagogical theory could no longer return to the state it had been in before *Emile*. It had been overtaken by its great guiding principle: developing the body, character, mind, and soul of the child. Let us emphasise: developing, whereas

before Rousseau, even the greatest pedagogues had referred only to shaping it' (Kot, 1934, p. 24). Kot's textbook thus strongly emphasises that the publication of *Emile* was a groundbreaking event in the history of education, as no pedagogy book written in previous centuries had inspired so many analyses and unending disputes on teaching. It is also worth mentioning that Kot's textbook remains in use by universities to this day, popularising Rousseau's views on pedagogy.

In the interwar period, Polish literature on the history of education grew to include new works on Rousseau's ideas. The translation of *Emile* into Polish made the treatise accessible to teachers who did not speak French. The number of publications on Enlightenment approaches to education was modest at the time, however, as the developing paidocentrist school, popularised in the field of children's education by the New Education movement, was at the centre of attention among writers. Rousseau's ideas were presented as having spurred the major changes in education that took place between the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as after the end of World War I.

### **The Polish People's Republic Period, 1945–1989**

After World War II, Poland found itself within the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. This had an enormous impact on the development of Polish pedagogical ideals and the reception of foreign literature on the subject. Polish scholars were forced to follow Moscow's guidelines regarding their research policies, which tried to Sovietise science in countries under Russian control. Schools were required to teach compulsory Russian language classes, and the example to be followed was that given by the pedagogues active in the Soviet Union. Russian-language texts on education were translated into Polish, and very few works written by American or Western European authors ever made their way to Polish readers. This difficult political situation also had a negative effect on the popularisation of Rousseau's ideas on education in the country.

In the 1950s, an important event from the perspective of Polish pedagogy was the publication of a Polish version of *Emile* with an extensive introduction and commentary by Jan Legowicz. It was published as part of the *Pedagogical Classics Library* (*Biblioteka Klasyków Pedagogiki*) series of the Pedagogical Sciences Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences. This happened during the Stalinist period, which was a difficult time for the development of scholarship. Legowicz presented Rousseau as a philosopher who combated feudalism and social oppression, demanding that humans be treated with dignity. In his introduction, Legowicz described *Emile* as follows: 'Its modern reader, before they delve into these deliberations on the raising of children, must first glean at least a cursory overview of Jean-Jacques's long, contradictory and embattled journey, understand the age that influenced it and all that which shaped and

constituted the ideological consciousness of the Genevan philosopher, so that one may realise the meaning and historical significance of his rebellion against his contemporaries and the social value of his views on education' (Legowicz, 1955, p. V). The introduction discusses Rousseau's childhood, his journeys as a young man, self-development efforts, his creative period, exile, and his final years. Legowicz presents Rousseau within the context of French society in the first half of the 18th century, before discussing the origins and contents of *Emile*, identifying the social factors that influenced Rousseau's treatise. A great deal of information is provided about each individual book containing Rousseau's thoughts on infancy, childhood, early structured education, and adolescence, as well as the upbringing of Sophie – Emile's companion. Legowicz's introduction also discusses the publication of *Emile*, news of which quickly rippled through the public. Also analysed are the public's reception of the treatise and the reasons for its popularity, as well as the progressive nature of Rousseau's views on education, their reach, and the type of influence they exerted. Legowicz ends the introduction with his thoughts on the enduring values of *Emile*: 'Thus, although Rousseau himself, his actions and philosophical legacy are rife with contradictions, and although the myriad details of his ideas regarding society and world view should be evaluated differently, one nevertheless cannot help but see within him and his *Emile* a singular, historically enduring event: the beginning of a battle for human education, a battle for a humanist pedagogy in the broadest sense of the term' (Legowicz, 1955, p. LXXXI). Legowicz's extensive introduction to the translation of *Emile* provides a thorough characterisation of Rousseau's naturalistic education approach. Other pedagogues writing about Enlightenment education have made, and continue to make, references to Legowicz's introduction.

Stefan Wołoszyn presents the history of education and pedagogy from a Marxist perspective. His 1964 textbook was harshly criticised by certain Polish historians of education who had established themselves before the outbreak of World War II, remained in academia after 1945, and were engaged in successful research projects. Wołoszyn saw Rousseau's pedagogy as containing revolutionary and democratic elements, and points out that the Genevan philosopher criticised feudalism and the indentured servitude system of his time. In Wołoszyn's view, Rousseau's approach to education was inextricably bound with his social philosophy, whose tenets posited social equality. The author of the textbook identified progressive elements in Rousseau's pedagogy: 'it is progressive to require that the teacher thoroughly familiarise themselves with the child and acknowledge the distinctiveness of the child's psyche; it is reasonable to demand that children be loved, and stress the necessity – from the early years – of physical development; it is reasonable to demand that observation methods be used in education and that the child be taught self-sufficiency; it is reasonable to stress the child's right to freedom; it is progressive to educate children via labour, etc.' (Wołoszyn, 1964, p. 181) On the other hand, Wołoszyn criticised those of Rousseau's views that

idealised the nature of children, posited that they should be granted unlimited freedom, and neglected intellectual development. Wołoszyn's textbook failed to have a major impact on the popularisation of Rousseau's views on education in Poland.

In 1967, Polish readers gained access to the enormous, two-volume publication *History of Education (Historia edukacji)*, written by a team of scholars led by Łukasz Kurdybacha, head of the History of Education Research Unit of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The book contained a wealth of information about the pedagogical ideas of the French Enlightenment. J. Legowicz, who at the time was considered among the foremost experts on Rousseau's approach to education, was asked to write the section on the pedagogy of French naturalism. He begins by stating that *Emile, or On Education* is both a novel and a pedagogical treatise that presents education as an art, a mission to transform the child into a mature, fully-fledged human who is useful to society. In his description of the naturalistic education of children, Legowicz emphasises that the role of the mother presented in the treatise and Rousseau's general remarks about motherhood constitute a beautiful episode in the history of education. The book describes Rousseau's views on childhood, the period of shaping the mind, socio-ideological education and how one should raise women. Legowicz had this to say about Rousseau's significance: 'Despite their many errors and contradictions, Rousseau's views on education had an epoch-making impact. For the first time, a book has presented the life of a man in all its aspects. [...] Rousseau's proposal to account for the human nature in education, to respect the rights of the child laid down by nature, to focus on humanist contents and values, to base the principles of pedagogy on anthropology and psychology, particularly children's psychology, the strong emphasis on the importance of physical education and independent intellectual and moral upbringing – all this – though previously known – had only now been properly presented, eventually becoming property of the whole of modern pedagogy' (Legowicz, 1967, pp. 619–620). Legowicz had tremendous respect for the author of *Emile*, and stressed that the contents of the treatise had inspired discussions concerning education among the French elite as early as the second half of the 18th century, before being analysed by educators from various other countries.

The difficult communist period was not conducive to the reception of ideas formulated by educators from the United States and Western Europe. At the time, Rousseau was primarily discussed in textbooks on the history of education, which had large print runs. Of major importance was the fact that the ideas contained in *Emile* were presented by competent authors who, like Legowicz, were well versed in the scholarship of the French Enlightenment. Between 1945 and 1989, no major contributions were made to the exploration of Rousseau's ideas on pedagogy in Poland. Works of literature on the history of education from the period only solidified the current state of research on the Genevan philosopher's views. It is also worth adding that textbooks on the history of education published in the 1960s continue to be used by Polish universities.

## The Third Republic of Poland

The year 1989 was a breakthrough year for Poland, as that is when the country regained complete independence. Over the course of the last several decades, Poland has witnessed a rapid growth in tertiary education, and Poland's 2004 accession to the European Union opened new doors to international education partnerships. After 1989, pedagogical and historical literature experienced a boom. Publications from the period make numerous references to the history of education, promoting many luminaries of the discipline. Similarly to the previous periods, Rousseau is discussed in textbooks on the history of education, education encyclopaedias, scholarly articles, and monographs centred around his ideas. Polish authors were able to fully appreciate the groundbreaking ideas presented in *Emile*, which to this day continue to influence educators and spur historians of education to engage in lengthy discussions regarding the role of Enlightenment education in the history of the discipline.

Rousseau's views on education are presented exhaustively in the latest encyclopaedic work on pedagogy, the *21st Century Encyclopaedia of Education (Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI w.)*. In this compendium, Rousseau is presented by Sylwia Jaronowska, who discusses the contents of Rousseau's works that criticise culture and civilisation. In her characterisation of the philosopher's pedagogical interests, she mentions his criticisms of the methods of upbringing in use at the time, which he considered imperfect and misaligned with the nature of children. Instead, he proposed solutions that would ensure a well-rounded development that was in line with nature. Jaronowska mentions that critics of *Emile* 'claimed that the very premise on which the author had based his system of education was false, as his educational practice was based on subtle manipulation and letting the child enjoy an illusory sense of freedom. However, these accusations proved ineffective in comparison to the enormous success of the novel at the time' (Jaronowska, 2006, p. 442). The above encyclopaedia entry also mentions the late period of Rousseau's output and the reception of his views. The author mentions that Rousseau's ideals of equality and freedom were later utilised during the French Revolution of 1789, and his works inspired philosophers from various other countries. The *Encyclopaedia* remains a valued and useful source of information on the classics of education for Polish readers.

In the first decade of the 21st century, major contributors to the popularisation of Rousseau's pedagogical principles included textbooks on the history of education. In 2001, the Żak publishing house and the Pułtusk Academy of Humanities published *An Overview of the History of Education (Zarys historii wychowania)*, written by Kalina Bartnicka and Irena Szybiak. Both authors are prominent historians of education who have previously written works on Enlightenment pedagogy. In their characterisation of the French Enlightenment's views on education, they refer to Rousseau's ideas as the



pedagogy of emotion, part of a sentimentalist movement in education. The *Overview* discusses Rousseau's opinions on the education and upbringing methods of his era, as well as the stages of development presented in *Emile*. The authors assess the contents of the treatise as follows: 'Rousseau was a genius to draw attention to the nature of childhood, which is rooted in the present, not in the future. He addressed mothers and fathers, defining their role as the first natural educators of their children, appealing to their feelings. Despite all the contradictions and the utopian nature of *Emile*, the novel played an important role in understanding the period of childhood and the importance of being raised at one's family home, and contributed to the development of education theory' (Bartnicka, Szybiak, 2001, pp. 126–127). Bartnicka and Szybiak provide an exhaustive account of Rousseau's approach, identifying not only its innovations related to naturalistic education, but also the utopian aspects of some of its elements.

Stefan Ignacy Możdżeń single-handedly wrote a three-volume work on the history of education, the first volume of which contains an analysis of Rousseau's naturalistic approach. In it, the author presents Rousseau's biography and gives a shorthand account of his works, focusing, understandably, on *Emile* and its most important pedagogical tenets. Możdżeń quotes Rousseau, who stated that everything is good as it leaves nature, but degenerates in the hands of man. A newborn child is naturally good, but degenerates under the influence of the society that surrounds it. Możdżeń presents Rousseau's opinions on the principles of negative education, which enables the child to develop freely and spontaneously. He also discusses the Genevan philosopher's views on intellectual, moral and religious education and the role of the educator, who should refrain from interfering too much in the behaviour of their pupil. 'A positive aspect,' Możdżeń states, 'of his theories is also the demand that independence be fostered in children, which produces outstanding individuals. J.J. Rousseau is the enemy of all things routine and formulaic, of verbalism. He made deft use of the works of F. Bacon, J.A. Comenius and J. Locke, expertly expanding them and making them his own. Still, his mistakes lay in his biased condemnation of culture, delaying the child's intellectual development, neglecting the impact of the parents on the upbringing and not appreciating the importance of educating women' (Możdżeń, 2006, p. 365). In his presentation of the fundamental tenets of naturalistic education, Możdżeń points out that Rousseau's ideas gave rise to the individualistic approaches to education of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

A very good textbook analysis is presented in *A History of Education: Before the Great French Revolution (Historia wychowania: do Wielkiej Rewolucji Francuskiej)*, written by Stanisław Litak, a professor at the Catholic University of Lublin. The introduction mentions that Rousseau caused a paradigm shift in 18th-century education, and its author includes a short biography of the thinker, characterises his interest in philosophy, and discusses his literary output. More attention is given to the naturalistic



education programme and the four stages of education the Genevan philosopher posits in *Emile*. Also mentioned are Rousseau's views on the role of religion and aesthetics in education, as well as the education of girls. The impact of naturalistic education on skill development is also discussed. Litak ends his discussion of Rousseau thusly: 'Jean-Jacques' influence on the future generations of pedagogues, and even education within families, was significant. Rousseau became very popular. References to his works were made by Basedow, Wolke, Campe, Salzmann and Pestalozzi. However, Rousseau's education was elitist, intended for the burgher class. In Poland, it was received more as a curiosity, and failed to have a major impact on the school reforms of the KEN, even though Rousseau's works were known to all members of the Enlightenment elite in Poland. Despite his democratic leanings, Rousseau writes about an individualistic education, possible to implement only at the highest strata of society. He never even mentions schools' (Litak, 2008, p. 201). Thus, Litak was critical of naturalistic upbringing, being fully aware that the ideas laid out in *Emile* could never be fully implemented or find widespread use in educating all social strata.

The latest analysis presented as part of a textbook on the history of education is Czesław Kupisiewicz's *On the History of the Theory and Practice of Education (Z dziejów teorii i praktyki wychowania)*. The author covers extensively the Western European version of the Enlightenment and its importance to education theory and practice. He calls Rousseau a prominent enlightenment thinker, a brilliant philosopher and author of works that sparked deep philosophical and pedagogical analyses. Kupisiewicz reiterates opinions expressed by other educators, stating that Rousseau 'started a "Copernican revolution" in education, placing the child at the centre of educational endeavours' (Kupisiewicz, 2012, p. 150). He provides an account of the pedagogical tenets laid out by the author of *Emile*, noting their widespread popularity around the globe. He also emphasises that Rousseau's contributions to the theory and practice of education consisted in positioning the child at the centre of pedagogical analysis: 'the idea of education was discovered to contain the existential foundations of our era, the path was laid down for education and teaching to follow from birth to death, passing through certain stages; the indispensability of fostering independent thought and action was stressed; and in addition to this, the need was presented very convincingly to concurrently develop the body, character and mind, and not only to shape them, as had been the case previously' (Kupisiewicz, 2012, p. 153). Kupisiewicz also writes that Rousseau's ideas on education had and continue to have their detractors, who spare them no criticisms.

Stanisław Janeczek is a Polish expert on education in the Enlightenment. His 2008 book *Enlightenment Education and Traditional Schooling. On the History of Intellectual and Philosophical Culture. (Edukacja oświeceniowa a szkoła tradycyjna. Z dziejów kultury intelektualnej i filozoficznej)* also contains an overview of

Rousseau's philosophy. In it, Janeczek emphasises the fact that Rousseau opposes traditional schooling, instead focusing on the need to account for children's natural abilities and their feelings, the indispensability of fostering an inquisitive mind and respect for others and the truth. 'It is thus no wonder,' Janeczek writes, 'that Rousseau not only excluded from his education actions that degrade the child, but also restricted the role of the educator only to the necessary prevention, and most importantly – to the fostering of the child's development by arranging amenable external circumstances. He claimed that the upbringing and education of every child was the foundation of an authentic society. The goal of this was to implement practices that would enable the attainment of happiness both individual and public (utilitarianism), preparing the child to fulfil social and civic duties' (Janeczek, 2008, p. 150). The author of *Enlightenment Education and Traditional Schooling* also presents Rousseau's views on teaching, explaining that, according to *Emile*, it should take place at between 12 and 15 years of age and be preceded by physical and moral education. Similarly to other authors, Janeczek states that the impact of Rousseau's philosophy of pedagogy was very strong, and that he sees his ideas on education and upbringing as emblematic of 'a new French pedagogy of the Enlightenment' (Janeczek, 2008, p. 150). Janeczek's book also explains to readers the philosophical and pedagogical ideas of Étienne Condillac, who also had valuable insights on education. The book promotes the idea that Enlightenment France was a place of birth of pioneering ideas on education that inspired local reformers to act, paving the way for pedagogical treatises written by educators from other countries.

Today, Rousseau's approach to pedagogy is popularised not only by encyclopaedias, textbooks, and monographs. Articles are also published containing general overviews of the ideas presented in *Emile*, and Rousseau's views are analysed within the context of key aspects of modern education, for example (Oszwa, 2017, pp. 49–60). Therefore, the Enlightenment approach to education continues to interest Polish pedagogues and historians of education. Publications on the subject written after 1989 are often excellent in their presentations of the changes in the perception of children and childhood that began with the publication of *Emile*. New publications continue to be published that refer to the history of upbringing and appreciate the contributions of prominent pedagogues to the development of modern schools of thought.

## Conclusions

Rousseau's views on education began to be analysed by Polish thinkers shortly after the publication of *Emile*. During this time, the Commission of National Education was

in the process of thoroughly reforming Polish schooling. Towards the end of the 18th century, Poland lost its sovereignty, however, and remained partitioned by Russia, Prussia, and Austria until 1918. The partitioning powers attempted to eradicate the Polish national identity and abolish Polish schooling. Despite the difficult conditions, major progress was made regarding the reception of Rousseau's ideas on education. References to the treatise can be found in works written in the late Enlightenment period, the Romanticism, and Positivism periods, as well as at the turn of the century, when the ideas of the New Education movement began to gain traction. An important event from the perspective of the reception of Rousseau's ideas was the completion of the first Polish translation of *Emile* in the early 1930s. This enabled the contents of the treatise to reach more Polish readers interested in Enlightenment approaches to education.

From 1945 to 1989, when Poland was within the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union, Polish educators found it difficult to explore literature written in the United States and Western Europe, with translations and reception of Soviet pedagogical literature taking priority at the time. In these adverse conditions, a new Polish translation of *Emile* was published, and Rousseau's views were popularised by history of education textbooks. A new chapter in the history of the reception of international pedagogical literature began with the fall of communism and Poland regaining independence in 1989. Historians of education and pedagogues writing about various luminaries stress the importance of Rousseau's contributions to the development of modern ideas on education that have changed the way people perceive upbringing.

The reception of Rousseau's tenets can thus be divided into several stages. The ideas on education presented in *Emile* continue to influence educators, and authors of various compendiums continue to provide accounts of Rousseau as an educator and the tenets of his naturalistic education. Polish educators agree that Rousseau is among the most influential pedagogues of all time. He is depicted as a brilliant and distinguished philosopher, one who was also capable of laying the foundations of modern pedagogical analyses. It is likely that the ideas presented in *Emile* will continue to interest Polish educators and historians in the future, and that their works will delve even deeper into the Genevan's ideas on education.

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