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# JAN WLADYSLAW DAWID

(1859-1914)  
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All his life, Jan Wladyslaw Dawid was closely associated with the teaching profession: he was born into a family of teachers, was himself a teacher for many years, and educators made use of his work in science and journalism. Shortly before the end of his industrious life, he wrote his famous discourse 'The Souls of Teachers' which attempted to provide a synthesis of their virtues. Although, during his politically active years, he strayed somewhat from educational problems, he still remained an educator in the broad sense of the term: he taught all Polish society the principles of social justice and the laws of revolution looking towards a better future for the nation.<sup>2</sup>

To this brief description of Dawid's personality, by W. Okon, should be added many other facets. Dawid was an excellent teacher, a clear-sighted pioneer, the successful author of several books and scientific articles, a talented journalist, and above all, an unremitting patriot, utterly devoted to the cause of Polish freedom, a country divided during his lifetime among three enemy nations.

## Dawid and his times

He was born on 26 June 1859 in Lublin. His family was intellectually distinguished and passionately devoted to the nation's traditions. Dawid completed his secondary schooling in 1877 and in the same year began to study law at the University of Warsaw, which, according to the Tsar and his government, was intended to 'Russify' Polish youth. After obtaining his law degree, he turned to natural sciences at Warsaw for a year, and then was present at Leipzig and Halle from 1882 to 1884. There, he studied psychology and the educational sciences, which continued to be strong interests for him to the end of his life. In Germany, he was strongly influenced by W. Wundt who, in 1879, had established an experimental psychology laboratory in Leipzig, the first in history. The attitude to work and the scientific experiments conducted there made a profound impression on Dawid who believed that these experiments were fundamental to the blossoming and development of psychology, an idea that was only reinforced after he met H. Ebbinghaus who was conducting research on memory.

Dawid was also interested in the science of education and followed the discussions of the education movement developing rapidly during his stay in Germany, the prime movers of which were W. Dilthey, A. Lichtwark, W.T. Preyer and W. Rein, amongst others. This movement was attempting to rethink traditional schooling, whose curricula methods and organization were considered ossified. According to the critics, this ossification made it impossible for children to flourish and made the school an institution that was responsible for its pupils' neuroses. Such a view drew its authority from the psychological research of the period, as for example, W.T. Preyer's work, *Die Seele des Kindes* (The Child's Soul, 1882).

On returning to Warsaw, Dawid began his scientific, journalistic and teaching career, and published his first work: 'Programme of Psycho-Educational Observations of Children from Birth to the Age of 20' (1887). This described the stages of childrens' and adolescents' mental and

physiological development and not only, as Preyer had done, the infant stage. About this time, Dawid began to publish his scientific treatises in Polish journals, addressing several problems of developmental psychology and education, the history of educational thinking, educational theory, teaching, an understanding of nature and so on. At the same time, he devoted much of his energy to commenting on social and political affairs, particularly by describing the difficult socio-political conditions of the Poles under Russian occupation. Finally, it was during this period that his career as a teacher in private schools began.

After the failure of the Polish January Insurrection (in the autumn of 1864), the Russian occupiers took the most severe reprisals against the Polish people and their education system. Russification was aimed in particular at secondary education, where the Polish language was completely banned, and the education system was made subject to military discipline. Polish society reacted by starting to organize a movement to preserve national education, the main features of which were education in the home and the development of private schools. As a teacher in private schools himself, Dawid took an active part in this movement where he met other Polish personalities: writers such as B. Prus, A. Dygasinski and A. Swietochowski, and scientists such as Z. Heryng, P. Chmielowski and T. Korzon.

In 1886 and 1887 Dawid concentrated his activity on the translation of German, French, Russian and English texts. He also began to write his work 'Object Lessons', which would become the major work of his life.

In 1890, despite his youth, Dawid became editor-in-chief of the 'Educational Review', an excellent weekly for teachers. He published his own articles there as well as extracts from his 'Object Lessons', publication of which was completed in 1891.

His marriage to Jadwiga Szczawinska, in 1893, brought a profound change to his life. His wife, like himself, was a journalist, and was also devoted to the struggle for national independence. They were both militants in the political movement that fought for the liberation of Poland and for a reconstruction of social and political relations along progressive lines. The Dawids' political activity led to retaliation against them by the police of the occupying power. Dawid thus had to give up his position at the 'Educational Review' in 1897 and the pace of his scientific work slowed down markedly. That situation continued until 1905, the year of the revolution. One of his colleagues, the famous sociologist L. Kryzwicki, later explained the reasons for what he considered to be a sacrifice: 'Dawid, like many other of his contemporaries, followed the trends of the time: soloists and composers, famous and talented, forsook their Muse, because it would have been shameful, they believed, to refine the beauty of their sounds when others were dying of hunger; poets neglected their talent and threw all their energies into writing books that were accessible to the public; thinkers [...] were deported to Siberia or sentenced to hard labour for having published booklets or written articles in banned magazines. If Dawid had devoted himself entirely to teaching, he would have felt guilty of forgetting those who were starving and miserable in the interests of his own pleasure. He therefore fought for the people's right to liberty and humanity, but basically he remained a teacher, for if the conditions shaping his life had been different he would never have been diverted from his vocation'.<sup>3</sup>

In 1900, Dawid accepted the position of editor-in-chief of *Głos* (The Voice), a progressive socio-political weekly which was not associated with any political party. By that time, his opinions had become radical. In several articles he maintained that only a revolution could bring complete autonomy to Poland: 'We shall win everything that can be won, not by docility and moderation, but by the strength of Action, Action by all the revolutionary elements united'.<sup>4</sup>

The revolution of 1905 was overcome by the Tsarist regime, the weekly publication *Głos* was suppressed and reprisals against Dawid and his wife were intensified just as their financial situation worsened. Dawid's health also became worse, reflecting his despair at the failure of the revolution. In February 1910, his wife, worn down by these events, took her own life. This was a terrible blow for Dawid bringing radical changes both to his interests and his scientific work. At that

time he confided: ‘All I have left is my anguish which is a mortal illness. But death approaches slowly, so slowly [...]’.<sup>5</sup>

Fleeing from the Tsarist police, Dawid took refuge in Cracow. He lived there alone, earning his living by giving occasional lectures. He wrote as intensively as ever, as if he were seeking oblivion through his unremitting work. At this time, in addition to publishing numerous articles, he wrote his discourse ‘The Souls of Teachers’ (1912) which is still read to this day. In his ‘Object Lessons’ Dawid had appeared as an empiricist, basing his educational theory on the meticulous analysis and correlation of *concrete facts*. In his pamphlet ‘The Souls of Teachers’, facts are no longer so important. In their place he puts educational ideals, particularly ‘love of the human spirit’, which for him was the most important characteristic of a teacher. This great change, reflecting his work on Bergson’s philosophy and on the psychology of religion, can be explained, according to some of his biographers, as a consequence of his wife’s premature death and the subsequent events in his life.<sup>6</sup>

Although the Poles in Cracow, which was under Austrian occupation, enjoyed a measure of autonomy, Dawid did not feel comfortable there. Thus in 1913, he took advantage of an amnesty and returned to Warsaw. He resumed his teaching activities, continuing his theoretical work and even planning new experiments. His premature death on 9 February 1914 put an end to his projects. He would not be there to greet Polish independence, proclaimed in 1918.

## A pioneer

I have referred above to the great diversity of Dawid’s interests and scientific work: he was interested in philosophy, sociology, the history of civilization and of art, politics and what today is called politology; and for a time he was fascinated by ethics and economics, the history of education and physics, particularly magnetism. But the greater part of his energy and labour was devoted to psychology and the educational sciences, which he believed should be based on facts that were empirically verified.

This approach can be seen in his very first work: ‘The Moral Crisis: a Psychological and Social Study’ (1886). Claiming that teachers generally are not trained in psychology—which means that they only know how to ‘stuff their students’ heads with knowledge’—he devotes part of the book to an analysis of suggestion and imitation which, in his opinion, play an important role in instruction and education.

In the following year he published his ‘Programme of Psycho-Educational Observations of Children from Birth to the Age of 20’, which is in two parts. In the first part, which is methodological, Dawid stresses the importance—for the theory and practice of teaching—of experiments based on observation. The second part consists of a questionnaire dealing with the emergence and development of mental and physiological processes in children. Five hundred questions are divided among eleven chapters: family, education and social background; the child’s psychological development and state of health; the senses; concentration and intelligence; the richness of experiences; imagination; reasoning; language; feelings; memory and the association of ideas; and physical skill.

Dawid’s questionnaire made a decisive contribution to the subsequent development of experiments in educational psychology on children and adolescents in Poland; it was also used widely and effectively in the in-service training of teachers who, according to Dawid, are in ‘the most human of all professions’.<sup>7</sup>

The best known of Dawid’s experiments dealt with children’s mental resources. Their principles, the manner in which the experiments were carried out and their results, were presented and analysed in his book entitled ‘Children’s Intellectual Potential: an Essay in Experimental Psychology’ (1886) which enjoyed great success in the educational world at the end of the nineteenth century. The starting-point was to interview 520 children aged between 6 and 12 years.

The aim was to define the quantity and quality of information (Dawid would have said 'images') that the interviewed children had about fauna, flora, the earth, man and his work, the countryside and the town. The children also had to answer 136 questions relating to their 'direct experience'. The following questions are samples:

Have you ever seen: (1) a flock of sheep in a field? (2) a hen with chicks? (11) a live squirrel? (40) bunches of grapes on a vine? (70) the sunrise ? (136) a fire?

Have you ever been: (108) in a water-mill? (111) in a factory?

Have you travelled: (115) on a train? (117) on a ship?

Analysis of the answers showed that most of the information and experiences related to nature, far fewer to geography, and very few to man and his work. Thus, only 1.4 per cent of the children interviewed had never seen 'a starry sky', and 2.9 per cent 'lilacs'; by comparison, 54 per cent had never been in a city, and 32.3 per cent had never been to the countryside.

Drawing general conclusions from results of the experiments, Dawid observed that neither the sex, the nationality, nor the race of Polish children of all religions—including Catholics and Jews—had any influence on 'the level of the children's knowledge', that is, on the quantity and quality of their information. The range of their knowledge depended almost entirely on two factors: the place where the child lived (urban or rural); and the type of school attended (public or private).

These observations are close to the ideas put forward by psychologists and educators of that period such as K. Lange, B. Harmann, G. Stanley Hall, N. Greenwood and others, particularly the observation that children begin quite early to manipulate several abstract ideas defining the properties of objects such as their shape, numbers and colours. However, Dawid analysed differently from his foreign colleagues the influence of innate predispositions on the development of the child's mind. He did not share the opinion of the radicals who believed that innate forces played an exclusive role of these predispositions, and demonstrated that the influence of the environment in which the child lives and grows is also of equally great importance. Furthermore, Dawid's experiments contributed to the rejection of the widely held opinion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the effect that the intellectual level of girls was inferior to that of boys.

In his scientific research, Dawid attached great importance to elementary education. His work, 'Object Lessons', devoted to this level of education, is still largely relevant and is used today as a reference, which does not happen very often in educational literature!

'Object Lessons' instituted the method of teaching through seeing and hearing, or, in today's terms, audio-visual teaching. The work provided the teacher with effective aid in teaching students about the objects and the phenomena of their biological, social and cultural environment, and also in refining their senses, intelligence and imagination. This method, it was believed, would endow children with the knowledge required by the century 'of steam and electricity', and would facilitate the continuation of their studies at the succeeding levels of education.

In 'Object Lessons', Dawid presents the genesis and development of audio-visual instruction, describing in detail its form and content. In particular, he analyses the theoretical bases of his method. In this, he is critical of the 'nature study lesson' concepts propounded by Pestalozzi and Herbart, which were very popular at the end of the nineteenth century. The first one, based on the formula 'number-form-word' was too schematic in Dawid's view; the second stifled teaching in the restrictive embrace of four (in Herbart's case) or five (in the case of Herbart's followers) excessively formal levels.<sup>8</sup>

Dawid mentioned the *Didactica Magna* of Comenius as a source of inspiration for his 'Object Lessons'. But while the great Czech thinker had only sketched the outlines of these lessons, Dawid, making use of an abundant literature on the subject (including the works of Rabelais, Pestalozzi, Rousseau, Fröbel, and also contemporary authors such as Dickhoff, Gréard, Salomon and others), developed a coherent theory of elementary-level audio-visual instruction. It is no

exaggeration to say that this theory, or at least its foundations, contributed to the later development of the methodology of science teaching. It also strongly stressed the need to overcome the contradictions between the concept of formal and encyclopaedic instruction and practical teaching, questions that were widely discussed at the time. Educational activity consists, he wrote ‘first of all, in stimulating capacities and an interest in the indirect knowledge of concrete things; secondly, in the material preparation of students for such knowledge’.<sup>9</sup>

Unlike some contemporary theorists, Dawid was also convinced that the new method—the object lessons—should not be considered as serving only the elementary education of the mind, but also as serving the education of children’s feelings, will and character. This is indeed a very modern view.

The concept of ‘object lessons’ played an important role in the development of Polish education. It was a milestone and a source of inspiration for empirical experiments on the teaching process, which is reflected in the works of B. Nawroczyński (‘The Student and the Class’, 1923), W. Okon (‘The Process of Teaching’, 1954) or of B. Suchodolski (‘A Model of an Educated Pole’, 1980). Dawid’s concept was a veritable treasure house of methodological knowledge for Polish teachers and for trainee teachers. It was also, *par excellence*, an antidote to the weaknesses and excesses of teaching and instruction, such as verbalism and formalism, which were very widespread in Polish education at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the starting-point for the reconstruction offered by ‘object lessons’—this time in an independent Poland—following, among other things, the progressive approach of ‘learning by doing’.

Dawid’s last work, ‘The Souls of Teachers’ (1912), created a great stir. Unlike his other works, which were largely based on empirical experiments, this one contained axiological and ethical reflections, as the title itself indicates. Dawid considered that ‘the love of human souls is the characteristic trait of a good teacher’. He believed that the teacher should not be content ‘to simply give a lecture, but should also fulfil other functions, those of a educator, protector, counsellor, partner, initiator of many cognitive activities by the students, referee, and finally judge [...] This requires, of course, a sense of responsibility, sensitivity to human suffering, continuous reorientation, an interest in society, a considerable intellectual and moral culture, tolerance, objectivity in judging others, and most of all in judging oneself’.<sup>10</sup>

The principal aim of Dawid’s organizational activities was the establishment of an institution to train such teachers. He almost succeeded in Cracow but when the First World War broke out in 1914 he had to give up that project too, of which nothing remained except the organization of seminars for teachers later on in independent Poland. One work also remains from this effort, ‘Intelligence, Will and Aptitude for Work’ (1911) in which Dawid described his empirical psychological and educational experiments and drew practical consequences from them for the training of teachers. Its principal thesis is that ‘to know, to want and to do are the three sources that animate human life’. *To know* is to be intelligent, *to want* is to demonstrate an aim, *to do* is to work and to transform plans into reality. These three sources are closely linked and act upon each other so that neither can function effectively if it is separated from the others. I believe that the educational consequences of this observation need no further comment.

Of these three sources, intelligence was the one to which Dawid devoted the most attention. In Dawid’s view, intelligence is not inherited in a ready-made form, but is a faculty which can grow and be cultivated, and which governs the conditions indispensable to human development. These conditions are the senses, attention, memory, thought, imagination, and their respective activities. They do not constitute, by themselves, intelligence, although they are like ‘a fertile soil from which it draws the vital sap and where it grows’. The essence of intelligence ‘is reflection or the gift of creating abstract ideas, reaching conclusions, explaining and verifying’. In a very modern way, Dawid defined thought as ‘the tendency to uncover relationships among things, phenomena and processes; as the desire to study something that is inaccessible to the senses; as that which does not exist in memory, and that our mind adds to reality’.<sup>11</sup> Viewed in this way, thought

consists of the internalized fulfilment of our projects, while action consists of bringing them to life and concrete existence.

In Dawid's view, intelligence can be measured. However, he was not convinced that it was possible to do it effectively and adequately using Binet's 'measurement scale', which was very popular at the time. Dawid believed that this scale subordinated intelligence to the quantity of knowledge that the individual possessed and required the subject who underwent the test to act in artificial conditions, often very remote from those of real life. To avoid this disadvantage, Dawid developed a 'test of reasons and consequences' which he entitled: 'What happened and why?' He explained it in these terms: 'I was looking for a method which would be closer to the circumstances in which most people apply their intelligence in life, in relation to concrete objects and phenomena, where observation and imagination are combined; a method independent, as far as possible, of experiences and knowledge, of the type and level of education and literary culture, and even of the ability of self-expression; lastly, a method which could be used independently of the level of development and intellectual potential'.<sup>12</sup>

The aim of Dawid's test was to arrange some pictures in relation to each other according to the 'cause-effect' criterion, so as to demonstrate the different phases of events of varying complexity.

Dawid's test was very successful in Poland among teachers, particularly those who wanted to conduct empirical studies of teaching. With these people in mind, Dawid published an article, 'On the Spirit of Experimental Education' (1912) in which he advised them 'to study [...] concrete educational processes, the real mental life of the students, and the factors that influence this life. It is then and only on that basis that educational activities can be undertaken and can lead to good results'. Later, he added: 'Teaching is not learned from books, not even the best ones. It is based on strict laws that must be known and understood in full awareness of their consequences. For that reason, it is necessary to observe and analyse real educational processes and phenomena, while still not forgetting these laws'.<sup>13</sup>

As already mentioned, Dawid was a fierce adversary of everything in instruction that had the slightest relationship with formalism. He thus always stressed very strongly that future teachers should learn to analyse profoundly and minutely every educational situation, thereby overcoming the possible domination of any single educational theory or concept. I believe that this is still appropriate today.

In addition to the publications cited so far, Dawid wrote several other works and articles, including 'Psychological Essays' (1880), 'A Course of Science and Psychology' (1886)—as a supplement to the periodical 'Educational Review', 'Brain and Soul' (1908), and 'On Intuition in Mysticism, Philosophy and Art' (1913). In all his publications one can see his erudition, his great attention to the needs of educational practice, the continuing criticism of what he called 'the defunct scholastic past', and a deep conviction as to the importance of the mission that teachers must fulfil.

## **Translator and editor**

Dawid's work as a translator is impressive. It includes several books translated from French, Russian, German and English—languages that Dawid spoke fluently—as well as many speeches and articles. Dawid's first translations were about magnetism, hypnosis and spiritualism,<sup>14</sup> which were the subject of keen interest in the West at the end of the nineteenth century.

Later, he translated works dealing with educational and psychological questions, particularly the foundations of education and the modern psychology of women.<sup>15</sup> Finally, there were translations of texts on ethics, philosophy and economics.<sup>16</sup> His translation of Paulsen's book on Kant stimulated Dawid's interest in philosophy while he was living in Cracow and was still affected by his wife's sudden and tragic death. It was then that Dawid's philosophical and religious thinking turned towards mysticism. It was then, too, that he was working on Bergson's philosophy

and the psychology of religion.<sup>17</sup> Some of Dawid's biographers believe that he was seeking in this way to 'go beyond the excessively mechanistic limits of science and to deepen his own research in mysticism'.<sup>18</sup>

Dawid's publishing activities began in January 1890 when he took the position of editor-in-chief of the 'Educational Review'. This periodical published the contributions of many famous Polish writers and scholars, including S. Dickstein, A. Dygasiński, T. Korzon, L. Krzywicki, I. Moszczenska, W. Osterloff and others. The 'Educational Review' also maintained very close relations with its readers, most of whom were teachers trying to improve their professional skills, using the sections in the review entitled 'Educational Guide', 'Kindergarten' or 'Systematic Course of Elementary Education'. The review also published supplements in book form such as 'Object Lessons' by Dawid himself, 'Outline of Geography' by W. Nalkowski, 'Algebra for Beginners' by J. Todhunter, translated from English, etc.

The 'Educational Guide' section was a great success with the readers. It addressed such subjects as 'Mentally handicapped children', 'How to prepare children for school', 'How to learn to teach', 'How to tackle stuttering' and many others. Dawid was often the author of these articles thereby showing proof of his talent, of his willingness to popularize these questions and of his concern for society's needs.

In 1893, Dawid published the results of his investigation on the theme of 'What had the greatest influence on my life?', which was a huge success not only among ordinary readers but also among psychologists. The study made it possible to discover what were the values most prized by the Polish intelligentsia of the period, namely patriotism and liberty, and the importance of science and culture.

In 1897, as noted above, Dawid left the editorship of the 'Educational Review' on being accused of having radicalized its content, thereby harming 'the public interest'. Three years later, Dawid resumed his activity as editor, this time as editor-in-chief of the weekly *Głos* ('The Voice'). This periodical published authors of very diverse political, social and artistic opinions, in accordance with the views of Dawid who believed that the principal criterion in choosing articles should be the independence of the thoughts expressed, their modernity and their critical weight and not their uniformity. At first, Dawid published articles on cultural subjects, such as 'Criticism and Creation' and 'The Importance and Goal of Culture'. During the years preceding the revolution of 1905, the articles were increasingly focused on social and political problems. Later on, Dawid explained what motivated him: 'Many people held my political, social and journalistic activity against me, saying that it took me away from my scientific work. [...] But I could not do otherwise. I was always sensitive to any false note, to any injustice, to any evil, and it was this sensitivity that drove me to action'.<sup>19</sup>

After the failure of the revolution of 1905, 'The Voice' stopped publishing, but Dawid soon returned to his editorial vocation and, starting in 1906, he wrote for the 'Social Review' where, over a two-year period, he published more than thirty articles on socio-political problems. This collaboration ended when the Tsarist authorities suppressed the 'Social Review'. Thus ended an important stage of Dawid's life during which his socio-political and scientific work was carried on at the same time as his activity as a teacher.

## The teacher

Dawid was primarily a theorist. His actual teaching work was sporadic, such as when he taught in private schools or gave lectures. Thanks to his wife, he took an interest in the 'mobile' university, the clandestine school of higher education for women that, despite harrying from the police, operated continuously from 1885 to 1906 when it was legalized under the name of 'The Society for Science Courses'. Nationally renowned scholars taught in this 'mobile' university—so called because it had no fixed headquarters—including P. Chmielowski and I. Chrzanowski (Polish

philology), W. Smolenski (history), A. Mahrburg (education and psychology), L. Krzywicki (sociology), M. Hertz (mathematics), O. Bujwid (natural sciences), and many others. Thanks to this collaboration, the university enjoyed great prestige in society and, although it was reserved for women, many men wanted to study there too.

As a teacher, Dawid was not highly appreciated by his students. He seemed unapproachable, taciturn and, according to one of his students, he was ‘as if indifferent to everyday problems’. Nor was he a good speaker, even though his lectures, according to the same student, ‘were profound and very full of knowledge, and the precision with which his thoughts were formulated clearly showed the importance of the problems he addressed’.<sup>20</sup>

## **Dawid’s influence on the development of educational psychology in Poland**

When Dawid began his scientific activity, there were two competing educational trends in Poland: positivism and naturalism. Believers in positivism thought that education consisted of ‘adapting young people to life under the conditions affecting them, and above all teaching them how to get their food, clothing and a roof over their heads’.<sup>21</sup> It should be remembered that ‘the conditions affecting them’ in Poland were then dictated by the occupying powers and that socio-economic relationships were those of the pre-capitalist era. The goal of education formulated in this way did not take into consideration ‘the preparation of young people for work and the exchange of goods’, objectives which were nevertheless important for the positivist approach to education throughout the rest of Western Europe.<sup>22</sup> For their part, the representatives of the naturalist tendency spoke of the determining influence of genetic factors on the process and outcomes of education. They pinned all their hopes on biological and psychological experiments, whose effects, so they believed, ‘would at last shake the old foundations of education and mark out a new and more efficient direction for it’.<sup>23</sup>

Dawid, in his concept of the role of the school and education, had gone beyond both positivist utilitarianism and naturalism. He believed that education should be based on the one hand on the results of psychological experiments—of which, it should be remembered, he was both a follower and a practitioner—and on the other hand on practice, taking into account the mental and physiological interests and capacities of children and adolescents. It may then rightly be believed that in demonstrating the narrowness of currently popular educational thinking ‘[...] Dawid was ahead of his times and that, in Polish education, he rose to rank as one of the most modern representatives of this discipline’.<sup>24</sup>

Dawid was also responsible for influencing the creation and popularization with teachers of a new pattern of schooling. Rejecting the traditional pattern, based on the encyclopaedic approach and the formalism of the followers of Herbart, which, furthermore, was distorted in Poland by the policy of ‘de-Polonization’ and of loyalty towards the occupying powers, Dawid advocated the model of a school as ‘humanitarian, based on the training of character and inculcating in the students a humanitarian view of the world’.<sup>25</sup>

In his model of schooling, Dawid refused to overload the students. He argued for harmony between theory and practice and for a necessary concentration and integration of instruction. He also recommended that children should be stimulated with the desire to know about things by giving them many chances to do so. He wanted schools to teach students to ‘know, want and do’.<sup>26</sup> As we have seen, he was also a supporter of ‘object lessons’ in which he saw an effective weapon in the struggle against verbalism. In particular, he demanded that teachers should understand their students as well as possible, thanks to educational psychology experiments, among other things, and that work with them should be based on the idea of ‘partnership’, mutual esteem and trust.



This pattern of schooling was way ahead of its time. What Dawid was arguing about in the overloading of school curricula and the integration, in the students minds, of the content—still artificially divided among different subjects—has yet to be realized even today. The same is true of the postulate that the school should concentrate its efforts solely on intellectual education ('knowing') while Dawid wanted it also to educate sensitivity and the will ('doing' and 'wanting'). In this context, Dawid's model of 'humanitarian' schooling—today we would call it, as von Hentig does, 'humane' (*eine humane Schule*)<sup>27</sup>—still attracts the interest of reformers in Polish education. For example, its influence is quite visible in the 'Report of the Committee of Experts on National Education on the Situation and Directions for the Reconstruction of the Polish Educational System' (1989).<sup>28</sup>

Dawid was aware that putting his model into practice would depend primarily on the teachers. The content and methods of their training, their social and patriotic activities, their attitudes and personalities were at the very centre of his preoccupations.

During the first period of his scientific activity, the principal factor of the work of a teacher was, for Dawid, knowledge of psychological and educational laws and putting this knowledge into practice. As we have seen, Dawid focused all his energy as a researcher on the analysis of these laws and on the principal problems of the theory of teaching (mainly in 'Object Lessons') and the theory of education (mainly in 'Intelligence, Will and Aptitude for Work').

After 1910, he stressed awareness of spiritual community and solidarity with others. In his treatise 'The Souls of Teachers', he called this sentiment 'love of human souls'. This commitment, he believed, is a source of professional enthusiasm, self-confidence and success in schoolwork: 'If one had to choose between a teacher who has professional knowledge, and is familiar with psychology and the methods and techniques of education but who does not have this commitment, and a teacher who, despite modest knowledge and a lack of training, is animated by a lively and active sense of the spiritual community and loves and protects the souls of his students, the second one must be chosen'.<sup>29</sup>

But this alternative was purely formal for him because he wanted teachers to be aware of the importance of their profession and of the impact of the results of their work, and wanted them always to seek to increase their knowledge. These requirements are still topical today.

Dawid also influenced the methodology of experimentation in educational psychology in Poland. He was one of the principal initiators and popularizers of empirical experiments on children's mental content, their imaginary and real universes, their intelligence and their ways of thinking. The idea that he explored with his collaborators of simultaneous development of the mind, will and aptitudes of students is also of interest today. Of topical interest, too, is his concept of 'object lessons' which he set against the then current practice of 'verbal and textual knowledge which arouses reflection in children too early, to the detriment of their aptitudes for knowing about things indirectly'.<sup>30</sup> His concept of teaching based on knowledge integrated by the senses, the mind and practice gave a decisive impetus to Polish education. The concept of the methodology that he developed for elementary education was entirely modern. Several new editions of his works testify to the topicality of his ideas and his approach. They include not only his principal work, 'Object Lessons' (1960), but also his 'Secondary Educational Writings', reprinted in 1968.<sup>31</sup> W. Okon was certainly right to note that 'in the development of contemporary knowledge of the process of teaching and learning, Dawid's work is as current as ever today'.<sup>31</sup> The language barrier being what it is—Dawid wrote only in Polish—his work is not known, studied or appreciated outside Poland.

## Notes and references

1. Czesław Kupisiewicz (*Poland*). Member of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Titular professor of General Didactics at the Faculty of Education of Warsaw University. President of the National Committee of Experts on 'Education: A National Priority' (1989). Member of the Committee on the Future: 'Poland in the Twenty-first Century.'

- Author of numerous works including *Niepowodzenia* [Educational Failure] (1964); *Nauczanie programowane* [Programmed Instruction] (1968); *Podstawy dydaktyki ogólnej* [The Foundations of General Didactics] (1973); *Przemiany edukacyjne w świecie* [Educational Changes in the World] (1978); *Szkolnictwo w procesie przebudowy* [The School in the Process of Change] (1982); *Paradygmaty reform szkolnych* [Paradigms of Educational Reform] (1985); *Koncepcje reform szkolnych w latach 80-tych* [Educational Reform Concepts in the 1980s] (1991).
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