

***Summer School for Young Andragogues
and Counsellogists,
Zielona Góra 21st-24th May 2012***

In May, Zielona Góra was the venue of the Summer School for Young Andragogues and Counsellogists, the 14th one in the series. Under the auspices of Prof. Józef Kargul, the School's founder, research supervisor and head, the seasoned scholars and the young researchers met to learn from each other, to exchange experience, to voice doubt and to dispel it, to search for the 'new' and to inquire. Characteristically of the School's profile, they came primarily to critically assess their own and others' scholarly practice. Arriving from the Universities of Katowice, Łódź, Białystok, Kraków, Toruń, Warszawa and Wrocław, this year the School participants were hosted by the faculty of the University of Zielona Góra, and greatly assisted by the School's busiest secretary, Marcin Szumigraj, Ph.D.

The formula of the school is addressed, first of all, to young scholars. It gives them an opportunity of performing in front of an audience and receiving their feedback: insightful commentaries, opinions, observations and hints eagerly and profusely offered by the participants. Speaking on the forum, however, is generally reckoned a taxing task. The young researchers, namely, cannot count on indulgences and courteous politeness. Thorough analyses and expert assessments come, instead, in bulk. The School is, nevertheless, a unique phenomenon: despite the strain and the challenge, its participants engage with it for years and many acknowledge the yearly meetings as a decisive factor in perfecting their scholarship. The School's formative and magnetic force is materially evidenced also by its professors. Having partaken of the School's debates at the outset of their scholarly careers, now they enthusiastically return to it as guest lecturers and proudly acknowledge their indebtedness to it. The School's students, thus, have an opportunity to listen to experts and debate with them daily. Moreover, its good tradition has it that several professors accompany the young throughout the course. The School is also exceptional in that it resists – successfully so far – superficiality and hastiness, which plague contemporary scholarly symposia. The school lasts 4 days, with debates from 9am to 6pm, except the last day, when a field trip to one of the universities in Poland's neighbour-countries takes place. Notably, one of the School's venerated customs is that young researchers are given the privilege of introducing the visiting professors and moderating their lectures. In this way, the beginner-scholars acquire valuable

experience. Because they need to collect the necessary information to present to the audience, they get a chance to meet in person the experts whom they have known only from their publications so far.

One more of the School's traditions is that the opening ceremony is conducted by the authorities of the host university. Accordingly, this year the School's debates were inaugurated by Prof. Ewa Narkiewicz-Niedbalec, the Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Education, Sociology and the Health Sciences of the University of Zielona Góra, and Prof. Jerzy Kochanowicz, the Vice-Dean of the Department of Education of the University of Lower Silesia. Another ceremonial occasion involves presenting all the participants and guests with the current issue of 'Discourses of the Young Andragogues'. For 12 years, the issues appeared as part of an identically titled series in which papers of the School participants were published. This year, however, Małgorzata Olejarz, Ph.D., its chief editor, and Sylwia Słowińska, Ph.D., the editor's secretary, managed to upgrade 'Discourses' to a scholarly journal.

This year's School programme opened with the inaugural lecture delivered by Prof. Jerzy Kochanowicz. Repeatedly referring to historical contexts, he analysed the present condition of higher education in Poland. His findings based on the in-depth study of 17th-century Latin texts threw a new light on the history of Polish higher education and, consequently, offered a new perspective on its current state. As the debate that followed the lecture was multifarious and multidirectional, I will quote only one of Prof. J. Kochanowicz's closing postulates: 'Only if you study the history of education, will you be able to separate the pedagogical wheat from the chaff'.

Another guest speaker was Prof. Ireneusz Krzemiński from the University of Warszawa. The sociologist focused on one of the current 'hot issues', i.e. how/whether university graduates are being prepared to function on the labour market. The subject was addressed again on the second day of debates, which began with a lecture delivered by Prof. Teresa Bauman from the University of Gdańsk. The reflection she initiated on another important issue – the interdependence of research methodology and the quality of scholarship – was subsequently continued by other lecturers. Prof. Władysław Misiak from the University of Warszawa presented his research results concerning globalisation processes in selected metropolises; and Prof. Mieczysław Malewski, a methodologist and andragogue from the University of Lower Silesia, talked about changes in scholars' approach to methodological assumptions underlying research work. Prof. M. Malewski perceives a decisive shift from orthodoxy to reflectiveness in research methodology, accompanied by changes in the idea of method as such as well as in the researcher's position. To underline this shift, the lecturer defined positivism as the epoch of *My methodology is my ethics*, whereas postmodernism as the epoch of *My ethics is my methodology*. The lecture triggered an interesting discussion that engrossed both the School's guests and its young participants. The discussion was in a sense concluded by Monika Sulik, Ph.D., from the University of Silesia, who conducted an inspiring workshop on

selecting methodological tools suited to the researcher's purposes and 'safe' for the person under study.

Prof. Wojciech Horyń from Military Academy of Land Forces in Wrocław, himself the School's alumnus, lectured on *Women in Uniforms and Stereotypes*. His presentation stirred up a vibrant discussion on the entrenched stereotypes of feminine and masculine jobs, difficulty to self-diagnose them and their resilience to modification.

The third day opened with a lecture delivered by the School's alumna Prof. Elzbieta Siarkiewicz, a counsellogist from the University of Lower Silesia and the University of Zielona Góra. The counsellogical thought has been part of the School's debates since the very beginnings of the project, and the various aspect of guidance discussed in it have always evoked the listeners' interest.

In the first part of her speech, Prof. E. Siarkiewicz talked about her own experiences of 'coping with' methodology and explained why she applies ethno-methodology in her research on counselling. To her listeners' surprise, in an important part of her argument, she compared contemporary counselling to counselling in the ancient Delphi. Juxtaposing the apparently remote worlds, the unusual parallel was the starting point for spinning a web of reflections on current and Delphic counselling. Prof. E. Siarkiewicz is particularly interested in the hitherto unexplored fields of counselling detectable in the two worlds: in what is 'latent' in the counselling practice, in things 'concealed', though happening within institutional walls. She inquires why these things become as if erased by our negligence and forgetfulness or 'lost' in proliferating interpretations. In studying counselling practice, she proposes to look on what is palpably there, but 'hidden by commonplaceness' and 'covered up with obviousness'.

The School always gives floor to its young participants. Each of them is supposed to give a 20 min. speech followed by a 10 min. discussion. This year, they presented research reports and Ph.D. or other dissertation projects. From the diverse range of presentations, I will briefly survey those pertaining to counsellogy. All presentations will be published in the forthcoming, 14th issue of 'Discourses of the Young Andragogues' due in spring 2013.

The presentation delivered by Alicja Czerkawska, Ph.D., from the University of Lower Silesia corresponded closely to Prof. E. Siarkiewicz's lecture. Czerkawska considered possibilities of assessing efficacy (effectiveness) of professional counselling. The researcher presented the thorough and meticulous research she undertook to define and discriminate between the semantic fields of the two terms (efficacy and effectiveness) central to her reflection. Her research interests pertain to processes involved in the counselling situation and to a counselee's psychological changes which improve the quality of his/her life. A. Czerkawska's objective is to explore and explain interdependencies between elements of the helping process and conditions conducive to counselling efficacy. She asks questions fundamental to the therapeutic process: What does the effectiveness of counselling mean? What

conditions it? How can effective counselling help be offered? What happens in a counselee's life in consequence of counselling?

Additionally, a discussion was organised around *Striving to Adapt: Addressing Adler's Work Task in the 21st Century*, an article by Jenifer J. Del Corso, Mark C. Rehuss and Kevin Galvin, sent to the School's head by Prof. Mark Savickas. The authors juxtapose two theories – A. Adler's individual psychology theory and M. Savickas's career construction theory (the CCT) – to show that they complement each other and indicate how career counsellors can help their customers become flexible and active in constructing their career. The authors argue that through career constructing people can adapt to numerous transitions and new work-related tasks. Moreover, if counsellors understand how lifestyles, mindsets and social involvements influence the career adaptability, they can help customers gain self-awareness, form indispensable notions and develop competences necessary to adapt effectively. Grasping the mutual complementarity of Adler's individual psychology theory and the CCT, career theoreticians could suggest to counsellors how to talk with their clients about navigating in the labour world, planning their careers and, ultimately, designing their lives; about why they actually can, must and should do this. The article was translated by Anetta Pereświet-Sołtan, Ph.D., (Univeristy of Lower Silesia) in collaboration with Martin Hozzman, M.A., and presented to the School's participants, who found its theses highly inspiring.

Various counselling-related issues were also tackled by Anna Bilon, M.A, who delivered a presentation on *From hope to despair: Contemporary contexts of social exclusions*, Magdalena Czubak-Koch, M.A., who spoke about negotiating meanings (i.e. about learning by experience in everyday work environments), and Joanna Kłodkowska, M.A., who presented a stage image of the boss of the institution under study in the framework of E. Goffman's reflection on social actors. The presentations delivered by Katarzyna Uzar-Szcześniak, Ph.D., from the Catholic University of Lublin and Joanna Łaszyn, M.A., from Cracow Pedagogical University also in a sense touched upon counselling questions. The former presented the project report *Intergenerational exchange as a form of acquiring social and vocational competences*. And the latter talked about non-formal education of the Roma women, a fascinating phenomenon which defies scholarly exploration. Finally, Marta Koszczyk, Ph.D., from Wrocław's Academy of Physical Education reflected on the 'physical educator's' role in the humanistic service to late adults.

The 14th SSFYAAC was concluded with a field trip to Potsdam, Germany. The participants visited Brandenburgischer Volkshochschulverband e. V., where they could find out about the structure and working methods of such universities. The faculty talked about current research projects, e.g. the parent-targeted *Strong parents – the strong children* and a project on involvement of senior citizens with the media. The participants went also on a sightseeing tour of the Sanssouci palace complex. In the School's tradition, the field trips have always headed for institutions involved in this or that way in helping and/or counselling activities.

The atmosphere of solid work, friendly understanding, support and kindness, contact with first-class specialists, partnership, variety of engagements, time for conversation and scholarly reflection, all add up to a very special 'cocktail'. The participants of the School know that it is immensely addictive. Thank you, Professor, and see you next year!

Anetta Pereświat-Sołtan

(Translated from Polish by Patrycja Poniatońska)