
International Conference – 22nd Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Days: Leaders and Society in the Fields of Education, Culture, and Socio-Political Life. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

At the beginning of March 2024, for the twenty-second time, Czech and Polish historians, educators, social pedagogues, and subject didactics specialists gathered for the international conference Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Days, this time held at the University of Wrocław. The aim of the conference was to compare developments in education, culture, politics, and social life, as well as to introduce significant figures who have left a notable mark on the history of pedagogy and education in the Czech Republic and Poland. The conference was opened by Alicja Szerlag, Director of the Pedagogical Institute and Professor at the University of Wrocław, who warmly welcomed all participants. As is tradition, students of the University of Wrocław also attended the conference lectures. Dr. Marek Podgórný opened the morning plenary session with a presentation in which he posed the question: What kind of leader is needed for the modern era? The first speaker from the Czech side was Dr. Miroslav Jireček from the Department of History at the Faculty of Education, Masaryk University. In his talk, he drew from his extensive experience teaching at an elementary school and a grammar school in Litomyšl. His presentation, a case study, was titled Joys and Struggles of School Principals in the Czech Education System. He was followed by Associate Professor Jiří Němec, former Dean of the Faculty of Education. His presentation focused on the educational potential of the works of Jaroslav Foglar. While Foglar is widely known and respected in the Czech environment, he is relatively unknown in Poland, which opened up a fascinating discussion on youth development, particularly in extracurricular activities such as scouting. The morning session concluded with a presentation by Professor Piotr Goldyn from Kalisz University, titled Teachers of the Second Republic as Leaders of Volunteer Fire Brigades. The second part of the conference was opened by Associate Professor Dušan Klapko from the Department of Social Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education, Masaryk University. He focused on a contemporary issue related to women's roles in his presentation, The Expected Identity of Women: A Comparison Between the Enlightenment and the Present. His colleague, Dr. Veronika Kolaříková, followed with a talk titled The Museum as a Key Player in Contemporary Society: Measuring the Educational Impact of Museums Using the “Generic Learning Outcomes” Concept. A fascinating contribution from the world of sports was then presented by Žaneta Brabcová, M.A., also from the Department of Social Pedagogy. She introduced football as a tool for the social development of children and youth. Finally, Dr. Kamil Štěpánek, a didactics expert from the Department of History at the Faculty of Education, Masaryk University, explored the topic Gender on Postage

Stamps and the Fight for Women's Suffrage in the Context of Historical Education. His colleague, Dr. Jiří Mihola, Head of the Department of History, presented his research findings from a specific research project in his talk, Selected Figures and Events from 20th-Century Czech History Confronted with Stereotypes and Myths and Their Perception by Primary and Secondary School Students. The founder of the Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Days, Dr. Mirosław Piwowarczyk from the University of Wrocław, introduced the life and work of Zofia Moraczewska, whom he described as a leader among women leaders. His colleague, Dr. Anna Haratyk, highlighted another outstanding personality—Archbishop Józef Bilczewski of Lviv, portraying him as a philanthropist and social activist. Several other notable contributions were presented at the conference by Prof. Arkadiusz Urbanek, Associate Professor Martyna Pryszmont, Dr. Violetta Drabik-Podgórna, Dr. Piotr Kwiatkowski, Dr. Ewa Barnas-Baran, Prof. Andrzej Ladyzynski, and Dr. Anna Chmiel. The main conference outcomes were summarized at the end by Dr. Piwowarczyk and Dr. Podgórný. The traditional highlight of the event was the closing discussion, reflecting the engaged interest of all participants.

Jiří Mihola



Lecturer at the 22nd Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Days in March 2024 at the University of Wrocław. Photo: Jiří Mihola