

Summary

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Evolution of the problem of suicide in Polish psychology in the years 1877-2017

This thesis is an attempt to summarize the subject of the evolution of Polish psychology of suicide in the years 1877–2017. The dissertation covers a number of issues related to the interdisciplinary subject of suicides: apart from the causes and the possibility of prevention, there were analyzed the scientific and practical achievements of theoreticians and practitioners dealing with this issue over almost a century and a half. There has been done a review of the contexts in which considerations on suicide appeared in Polish psychological and related literature. A particular attention is paid to the issues of definition, considerations concerning the genesis and assessment of self-destructive acts and preventive measures. This study is of an overview and conceptual nature. Its objective was to collect the most essential Polish literature on suicide and self-destructive activities, to establish the development of knowledge and practice in the field of identifying and preventing these phenomena. On the grounds of the literature review, the following basic theoretical and formal research questions have been formulated: How has the problem of the psychology of suicide in Polish psychology evolved? What aspects of suicide were most often analyzed by Polish psychologists? What is the original contribution of Polish psychologists to the theory and research on the problem of suicide? What are the prospects for the development of psychology of suicide in Poland in the 21st century?

The dissertation deals with the issue of suicide as an existential and civilization problem. It discusses the classical philosophical, medical and psychological reflection, philosophy and culture of the ancient period. The issues of early Christian thought, as well as modern and contemporary philosophy are described. The focus is also put on sociological and psychological thought as well as on social activities in identifying suicidology prevention. Another aspect of the paper is the psychology of suicide in Poland until 1918. The most important activists of this period were: Leon Blumenstok, Alexander Kraushar, Adolf Rothe, Maurycy hr. Dzieduszycki, Rev. Stanisław Załęski, Wiktor Mauserberger, Jan Władysław Dawid and Władysław Chodecki.

The paper also discusses the issue of suicide in terms of Polish psychology of the interwar period. The views of Kazimierz Dąbrowski and his activities in favor of psychological practice in the Institute of Mental Hygiene have been reviewed. Important authors of this period

include: Jan Władysław Nelken, Maria Grzywa-Dąbrowska, Wiktor Grzywo-Dąbrowski, Wacław Odyniec, Franciszek Białokur, Adolf Klęska, Roman Markuszewicz, and the activities of Jewish authors such as Chaim Knopping, Josef Chaim Ajdelman and Abraham Wirszubski.

The next stage covered the problem of suicide in Polish psychology until 1945 when the experience of wars took its toll. The problem of the soul suffering of Antoni Kępiński and the attitude to the issue of suicide before the establishment of the Polish Suicidological Society are described. The attention has been paid to the practical activities of psychologists aimed at identification of the problem of suicide. A large part of the paper has been devoted to the analysis of selected research directions in the years 1945–2002 concerning psychological issues as well as individual risk and protective factors. The dissertation also describes the situation of the Polish psychology of suicide after the Polish Suicidological Society was founded and the activities of Brunon Hołyst with respect to life restoration. It presents some selected directions of contemporary research on the psychological aspects of suicide, taking into account the causes of suicide, personality, individual factors and the profession. It was also considered crucial to make the suicide risk assessment and include psychopathology. The thesis was concluded with an attempt to synthesize the evolution of the psychology of suicide in Poland.

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