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ARNO STERN'S ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF PLAY-OF-PAINTING AS A RESULT OF HIS LIFE PATH AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE*

Introduction: Arno Stern is known for developing his own concept of play-of-painting. The contribution he made to understanding a child's drawing was influenced by his life experience.

Research Aim: The aim of this article is to present Stern's life achievements and to point to crucial events and significant people that influenced his work and experiment in the field of fine arts.

Evidence-based Facts: In Poland, there is a lack of scientific studies on play-of-painting. In a few studies, we find only references to his artistic experiment.

Summary: It is advisable to undertake research in Poland on the way of working involving the experimental method of Stern and adapting play-of-painting to support the child's development.

Keywords: artistic evolution, the *Closlieu*, play-of-painting, organic memory

INTRODUCTION

In scholarly studies on the development of children's visual art and art education, we find few notes of Arno Stern's work (Szuścik, 2019). In many respects, his views can be called revolutionary. We had the chance to get to know Stern as one of the protagonists of the famous film *Alphabet*, directed by Erwin Wagenhofer (2013). As a man with an exceptional personality and an interesting story, he became famous for his research on the drawing trace of a child and created an innovative space for painting activities. He attempted to answer the question of how to look

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at drawings and what conditions need to be met to unleash creativity and natural expression. His achievements undoubtedly shed new light and prompted an in-depth reflection on the child's artistic development. His original proposal for play-of-painting is also reflected in artistic activities in Poland. The colourful walls of the innovative painting activity space and the paint palette placed in the middle of the studio have become a hallmark of the *Closlieux* worldwide.

RESEARCH PROBLEM AND GOAL

The aim of this article is to present Arno Stern's life's work and to point out the significant events and meaningful people that influenced his work and experiment in the field of art. To explore the course of his life and the professional activities that led him to the discovery of the new phenomenon of the Formulation, the biographical approach was used. Łobocki (2000) defines this type of research as "a method consisting in the description and analysis of the course of human life, considered in the context of a specific part of social reality" (p. 294). Śliwerski points out that the aim of using the biographical method "is not so much a quantitative analysis of a given phenomenon, but its description and understanding through the study of individual human fates" (Milerski and Śliwerski, 2000, p. 30). Lalak puts the choice of this approach somewhat lyrically: "I treat the biography in its theoretical dimension as a reflection on life – an endless project, inherently incomplete [...]. The biography lives as a text, a memory, an encounter, a dialogue, a lesson, but it is not only a description of life, but also its interpretation and construction. One's biography thus becomes my version of his or her life" (Lalak, 2010, pp. 14–15).

Documents used for biographical analysis and research in pedagogy, according to the compilation of Skrzyniarz (2018), are "all written, image, audio, electronic information and objects constituting a source of knowledge about a person, on the basis of which it is possible to speak/write/make hypotheses about his/her biography and the educational and upbringing processes appearing in it, as well as the pedagogical influences on the biographed person, and his/her influence on other persons or the life environment" (p. 278).

A query was made of written and unwritten material on Arno Stern available on the Internet. The biography was fragmentarily dispersed in the books written by Arno Stern: *Happy as a Child Who Paints* and *Discovering the Trace. What Is the Play-of-Painting* and a book co-written with his son, André: *My Father. My Friend*. The information contained in transcripts of interviews and speeches, and in non-written documents such as storytelling about his own life and interviews published in the mass media, documentary film, photographs, lectures, recordings of training sessions and pages on social networks, have been organised. The scientific studies and articles are written mainly in French, German and Spanish. The

analysis of the documents was designed to get to the story of life and discoveries. Attention was paid to such components of Arno Stern's biography as family roots and the influence of significant people and landmark events in life on professional achievements.

EVIDENCE BASED REVIEW

Arno Stern was born in 1924 into a well-to-do family in pre-war Germany in the city of Kassel and lived there until the age of nine. He always speaks very highly of his family, especially his father, an enterprising and committed man who was brought up in a very pious Jewish family. "We lived in complete harmony and had boundless trust in each other. The conflict-free relationship we had from the early years of my childhood became the pillar of our family's happiness. [...] My father played an extraordinary role in my life and was himself also very attached to his parents" (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016). Childhood memories, repeatedly recalled, testify to the respect and attachment to his parents. In another place he writes: "My father had a long experience of poverty behind him. He worked himself up to a position because he was a man capable of making sacrifices, flexible, modest and able to enjoy everything. He was able to give up all luxuries, but he was also able, especially when he had the means to do so, to be extremely generous" (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016).

The cordial relationship with his mother gave him a sense of security – "we often sat together: my happy, always cheerful mother and I" (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 35). In his family home, the important values were good manners, hygiene, diligent fulfilment of duties and education. "My mother would read me Hauff's or Andersen's fairy tales and sometimes stories from the magazine *School and Family Home*, which, as a progressive mother, she diligently subscribed" (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 38).

In 1933, shortly after Hitler came to power, the Stern family decided to leave Germany. During an exodus that lasted twelve years, the family wandered around France and spent several years in a refugee camp on the French-Swiss border. A healthy relationship with his immediate family, mutual care, support and a sense of community, enabled Stern not only to survive the difficult moments during the war, but also shaped his approach to parenting, the education of his own children and guided his later research and professional activities. His parental example of diligence, self-discipline, responsibility and zest for life whatever the circumstances, shaped a man who was equally cheerful, courageous and creative.

Stern's sensitivity to the truth, goodness and beauty of the world is rooted in his family ties. He is not indifferent to the stories of his grandparents, great-grandparents and extended family. He cherishes the finest memories, writes them down

in his books and is happy to talk about them. We can see the upbringing and pedagogical principles, derived from home and later so clearly marked in the elaborated rules of work in the painting studio. “Twelve years of living in uncertainty, a daily life marked by a sense of danger, wandering among traps and escaping from those who wanted to catch and kill me – such experiences make one appreciate life, but they also make one humble. No one praised me and I did not expect honours. My daily enthusiasm was not born out of any recognition and needed no response” (Stern A-re, 2018, p. 73).

Despite growing up in the middle of warfare, Arno Stern remained a trusting child, full of commitment, enthusiasm and curiosity. He passed on this optimistic approach to life to his children. “Then, where did this sense of happiness come from?” – asks his son in one of his books – “From the deep bond between him and his parents. From the safe harbour in the middle of the storm” (Stern A-re, 2018, p. 67).

Life in exile was difficult for both the parents and the nine-year-old child, unfamiliar with the French language, whose hitherto prosperous life had turned into wandering and fear of losing his life. The years of education abroad were difficult, Stern recalls the use of corporal punishment, lack of understanding and discrimination from schoolmates. “Because of mistakes in counting, the teacher used to beat us with a ruler” (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 44). However, he was able to find lifelong friends even in the most difficult moments and in the least friendly environment. “Because he did not speak French, he was placed in a class with students four years younger than himself. Only one of his classmates – little Jacques Greys – had any affection for him. The rest of the boys would beat him and call »salabocha« – a filthy German (Stern A-re, 2021, p. 17).

After graduating primary school, he was sent to a Jewish boarding school in Boulogne, close to Paris. He recalls this difficult period in one of his books: “I suffered there the whole school year and was glad when all lessons were cancelled in the autumn due to the threat of war” (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 44). After the outbreak of war, the Stern family, fleeing the threat of deportation to a concentration camp, moved successively to Mulhouse, Montbéliard, Valence.

In all the towns where we were looking for some kind of accommodation, we slept in warehouses prepared as an emergency, among the countless masses of refugees. Most of the refugees, however, later returned to their homes. Only the inhabitants of the exclusion zone, located near the French areas on the eastern border, could not return. This was the case for those in real danger, so for us, too. Therefore, we had to make every effort to find refuge in the non-occupied zone (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 49).

In Valencia, Stern managed to continue his studies at evening courses in drawing and painting. This episode was of great importance for his subsequent career path. “The director of the school [...] paid special attention to me. I worked every

day in his private atelier and helped with the commissions he received” (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 53). From his school days, he had already shown artistic skills, patience and precision.

In his spare time, he made cardboard toys and wooden animal figures, first for himself and later for his friends' children. Young Arno devoted himself to each job with enthusiasm and joy.

Sometimes, I spent hours painting a picture. [...] sometimes in the evenings I made toys for the children of monsieur Berzenat, the headmaster of my school. I remember making a railway out of old cardboard and a dolls' house, for the construction of which I took care of every detail: there were folded towels and sheets in a small cupboard with a mirrored door and small dishes in the kitchen. For the railway, every window and every handle had to be made very precisely. My parents enjoyed these little things with me. (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 59)

He realised his own ideas and did not forget to have fun. He was passionate about painting, making friends and developing musical and literary interests.

The Sterns spent the last three years of the war in refugee camps on the French-Swiss border. “The living conditions were miserable and the work was hard, but we managed to survive” (Stern A-re, 2021, p. 18). While in the camp, he won the first prize in a competition organised by the Red Cross to design a toy for refugee children. “The opportunity arose: I made a town [...] out of paperboard destined for waste paper. It was shown at an exhibition in Geneva and was awarded a prize, to the great pride of the camp's management” (Stern A-re, 2018, p. 70). The method of cutting out and combining cardboard into three-dimensional objects found recognition. After the war, an album-style publication was published, demonstrating the use of this method.

His manual skills allowed Stern to become known in the community and indirectly contributed to his first job. During his three years of internment, Arno imposed a great deal of discipline in his self-education. “Forced labour in the fields did not prevent him from discovering music, German poetry, artistic emotions – thanks to several books, Sunday trips to the museum and daily exercises in drawing with whatever means were available – in the evenings, before laying down to sleep among the other internees” (Stern A-re, 2018, p. 70). He read the books available in the library and found a close friend, Herbert Kallman, with whom he had many hours of conversations about art, music and literature. Together they wrote and staged plays. During their passes, they visited antique shops in Zurich. “For every modest weekly allowance, I bought works recommended to me by Herbert” (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 69). Music, too, occupied an important place in Stern's life, although, for reasons that are not entirely clear, it was the only activity that did not find total acceptance and recognition from his father. “Music, which had been absent from my life as a child, enthralled me fully during my time in the

camp. It was during the war that, abstracting from all the cruelties and restrictions I suffered at the time, I met some valuable people who had a significant impact on my cultural life” (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 93).

In 1944, after the liberation of France, the family moved again to the Paris area. Like his father during the most difficult times, Stern took up various jobs. Among other things, he helped his parents to run a small business producing tailoring accessories. Thanks to his industriousness and friendly disposition, it is in Paris that Stern’s professional path, research and painting experiments begin.

In 1946, at the age of 22, Arno Stern had a very difficult experience behind him: poverty, constant fear for his life and a stay in a refugee camp. These events, thanks to the sense of security provided by his parents, did not break him as a person. It is important to stress at this point that the stage of life in which young people usually acquire higher education and choose a career path, Arno spent in a refugee camp. Circumstances were not conducive to completing higher education. For this reason, among others, and despite conducting years of research and discovery, he never engaged in scientific activities. He writes with regret: “My stay in the orphanage near Paris came almost directly after three years of internment in a Swiss labour camp, where I was a civilian refugee. Other young people were studying and gaining diplomas that were their ticket to further careers. I should have done the same. However, life wrote a different script” (Stern A-no, 2016, p. 15).

After the war ended, he got a job at a home for war orphans. The children, whose families had been deported, interned and exterminated, spent the turbulent war period in hiding. The young Arno Stern’s task was to provide the children with interesting, artistic entertainment in their time away from lessons and other duties. “I was not prepared to meet the children and could only refer to my own childhood experiences” (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2016, p. 84). The underfunded institution could not offer wide range of activities for children. Stern, like his father when he emigrated, relied on intuition and this attitude yielded spectacular results. “In France just after the war there was nothing to paint with, so all I could find were crayons and old paper. Some time later I acquired paints. I realised very quickly that I did not have to offer them anything, or even that I was not able to contribute anything from myself, I could only give them the means to play. They got a lot of pleasure out of it. For me it was a great discovery” (Nowak, 2018, p. 2). Initially, the classes took place in a small room, but later, thanks to his own efforts, he adapted a room in a former stable. The ordinary activity of painting, thanks to chance, keen observation and an open attitude, led to the creation of an innovative place for painting activities. One of the children wanted to paint on a larger sheet, but it did not fit on the table. Arno came up with the idea of hanging the sheet on the wall. The other children wanted to paint in the same way, so tables and benches became unnecessary. Once the superfluous equipment was removed, all that was

left in the room was a narrow bench with paints and brushes. By covering the windows with boards, an uninterrupted surface was created around the entire room on which large-scale paintings could be created by joining sheets of paper together. The work at the orphanage lasted two years until it was closed. The experience gained during this time, the joy of the children, the enthusiasm and the positive effect of painting on all the participants, inspired Arno Stern to continue his work outside the centre which is continued to this day.

In 1950, he created the first atelier in Paris, which he called the “Thursday Academy” (*Académie du Jeudi*). Thursdays in post-war France, were days off from school. He applied the organisational solutions that had previously worked well at the orphanage: in the painting atelier, all the walls were adapted for hanging large sheets of paper. In the middle stood a table palette designed by Arno for paints and brushes. The atelier was very popular. 150 children regularly participated in the classes. Arno accompanied the children and made observations, which led him to draw important conclusions and prompted his research.

Photo 1.

Arno Stern in the Closlieu in Paris



Source: www1.

The basic concepts associated with Arno Stern's work are formulation, trace discovery, tropes, organic memory and play-of-painting. These were introduced to describe his own activities because the existing terminology did not suit his conception. Stern noticed that all children, regardless of age, background and ex-

perience, depicted the same elements in their paintings. Stern called this phenomenon “formulation”. Stern asked himself the research question of whether children living in a modern post-industrial society depict the same elements as children who never went to school, were not taught drawing or painting and grew up separated from modern civilisation. In order to answer this question, he undertook eight journeys. In the furthest corners of the world he reached, he organised the play-of-painting for the children.

I gave them painting materials, and just imagine that these children painted exactly the same things as the children of our world. This allowed me to conclude that Formulation is inherent to man, independent and older than civilisation. It is a kind of universal code. It is, after all, culture that creates the difference between the nomad and the big city dweller: they differ in the way they dress, eat, believe, speak. But it turns out that this is not fundamental. So what do we have in common? The genetic code. I think this is the source of Formulation. (Hawranek and Opryszek, 2016)

The basis of the formulation are the seventy characters he discovered, catalogued and researched (Wagenhofer et al., 2018, p. 59).

In his book *Happy as a Child Who Paints*, Stern explains what the play-of-painting is. According to him, painting and drawing are the result of a natural need and take place according to certain universal laws. Arno Stern has run a studio called *Closlieu* or *Malort* for over seventy years. By creating the *Closlieu*, he has made it possible for the participants of the play-of-painting to express themselves freely, but not to communicate. So what is the play-of-painting? It is a flow into the spontaneous activity of painting with brushes and paints in a specific room designed in detail by Stern. Painting is purely for fun and is not subject to judgement or interpretation. Stern repeatedly emphasises the purifying and ludic nature of the play-of-painting. According to Stern, play-of-painting is a source of great pleasure for children, develops skills, stimulates creativity, and allows them to get to know themselves and their talents better. It takes place in a safe, judgement-free and non-competitive environment. Only in a place like the *Closlieu*, in an atmosphere of safety and acceptance, a child can express himself. What is painted is a trace, an autonomous and reproducible element of formulation. A drawing trace should not be compared to art. Thus, neither the play-of-painting is an artistic creation nor is a trace a work of art. It is a completely different phenomenon not subject to evaluation and interpretation. It shows nothing and fulfils no one’s expectations. “In the years that followed, I discovered that the aforementioned trace of the child, which can be seen in his drawings, is not to be attributed to art, contrary to the common judgment. Indeed, it is part of a separate phenomenon” (Stern A-no, 2016, p. 16).

Photo 2.
Play-of-painting in the Closlieu in Paris



Source: www2.

This interesting concept of spontaneous painting play has been called by Szuścik the concept of “non-disruption” of the child’s plastic development (Szuścik, 2019, p. 87). A trace is created as a result of internal stimuli and impulses and this process cannot be interfered with in any way. “The child expects nothing more than an acknowledgement of presence” (Stern A-no, 2016, p. 93). In doing so, it is not appropriate to give praise or guidance to the child. Stern is critical of the behaviour of parents and caregivers who interfere in the creative process through praise and motivation. He believes that they thus accustom the child to doing artwork designed to please the parent, to satisfy the needs of others and, thus, lose spontaneity. “The play with trace has to take place from the beginning in different circumstances, in a »right now« atmosphere without any »after«. In practice, this means that the adults should be present during the play and not only later looking at the finished »product«” (Stern A-no, 2016, p. 93). During the play, the child is given space, organisational help and time. He or she stands in front of a big white sheet of paper as if in front of a mirror in which, by indulging in the play, the formulation is revealed and the child can manifest in the form of a trace his or her inner needs and achieve happiness.

The components of the formulation are: first shapes, object-images and most important (main) shapes. The object-images are intentional motifs and sponta-

neous tropes. The interruption of the process of formulation, according to Stern, creates an acute gap. The author argues that only the play-of-painting makes it possible to return to this process. Formulation is characterised by two basic features: repetition and evolution. Over thirty years of research led Arno Stern to discover “a particular kind of code [...] Everything had to be discovered, because I had no pattern, no imitation of any method, no way of teaching” (Stern A-no, 2018a, section 2). Stern believes that he was given the opportunity to make this discovery precisely due to the fact that he was not guided by learned patterns, theories about children’s drawing development and the research of various authors. “I came from nowhere, from a child’s place of work. I wasn’t influenced by anyone, I didn’t apply any ideas. I had quite a fresh approach to what was taking place before my eyes” (Stern A-no, 2018a, episode 2). Stern believes that since psychologists and educators have taken an interest in the child’s drawing, the wrong starting point has been taken. Historically, drawing has always communicated something, had a meaning, conveyed information and was useful. This was also the point taken in the analysis of the child’s drawing. The first researchers who dealt with the child’s drawing interpreted it in terms of a work of art and the artist. At the same time, they argued that it was an imperfect product that needed to be perfected. This gave rise to observational drawing, with which, according to Stern, “generations of children were persecuted” by demanding perfect proportions and a reflection of reality. According to Stern, a trace for communication is therefore not the only possibility. There is another kind of “trace” that has not been considered before due to the fact that no one else has created the right conditions for its creation. Stern created the space of the *Closlieu* without assuming or revising anything: a room without windows, without furniture, equipped only with the necessary utensils for painting. “In conditions of complete detachment from everyday life, where nothing penetrates inside and nothing goes outside, a trace can be created. All that matters is the here and now. What matters is play and peace. This place has allowed a trace that is not a message to reveal itself for the first time in history” (Stern A-no, 2018b, episode 3). A human being has usually their first memories from the second or third year of life. What comes before, i.e. the first months of life and the development of the organism during the prenatal period, is blurred in the memory. According to the author, recovering the memory of our beginning is possible through the play-of-painting in conditions of the *Closlieu* (Stern A-no, 2018c, episode 6). The formulation goes back to organic memory and “contains unique records of our origins and prenatal development. These records are not subject to any consideration. Thus, in addition to the time-limited memory, there is a forgotten space beyond the limits of reason, which takes the form of a collection of images, a kind of photo album” (Stern A-no, 2016, p. 17). The evolution within the formulation takes place, in a sense, on two levels. The trace consists of spontaneous tropes that impose themselves on the hand and intentional images that arise under the influence of

reason. The tropes emanate from an inner need and are hidden in the images. The image and the tropes should function in balance, but through didacticism and interference this balance is disturbed and reason begins to dominate. According to Stern, only painting in the *Closlieu's* space allows this balance to be maintained and organic memory to be reached. "When a trace is released, the need for which is deeply organic, there is an unspeakable joy that joins the pleasure of play. It is known only to Closlieu's children – the big and the small. And it is also their secret, the adventure they experience without expressing it in words" (Stern A-no, 2020).

One of the pillars of the play-of-painting, in addition to the room, rules and tools, is the figure of the *servant*. The servant's tasks include teaching the use of paints and brushes, fixing sheets of paper on the wall, passing pins, propping up a stool or ladder. The servant is the *silent witness* of the play, who never paints himself or talks about the painting results. During a painting session, he carries on a casual conversation designed to create the appropriate atmosphere. He establishes verbal or non-verbal relationships, based sometimes only on showing how to place the hands properly and *catching* the drips. He does not impose himself, does not tell what to paint and does not give instructions.

The servant archives the works because they never leave the *Closlieu*. In the archive set up at the studio, he has collected 500,000 works. Each work is described and safeguarded. Arno Stern believes that this gives the child a sign that his or her work is important and is taken seriously. In this way, the child paints for his or her own enjoyment and not with a view to judgement or the impression the work makes on outsiders (Hawranek and Opryszek, 2016).

From the very beginning of the Thursday Academy, Arno has been committed to disseminating his work. His activities have been recognised by the Paris municipal authorities. He was sent as a UNESCO expert to the first International Congress on Early Childhood Care and Education in Bristol. Then, he took part in symposia and was a speaker at universities, museums and educational centres. He was entrusted with running *Closlieus* in two Parisian hospitals. For ten years, in collaboration with the administration of Paris, he directed a training centre for students from all over the world, preparing them to run their own *Closlieus* according to his original concept. In parallel, he participated in seminars, gave lectures and conducted training courses in various countries (Dauber, 2017, pp. 9–10). In 2018, the first training course with Arno Stern took place in Wrocław.

On 23 June 2024, Arno Stern will celebrate his 100th birthday. He never ceases to amaze and inspire. He continuously runs a studio, workshops and online courses. His books have been translated into many languages and are gaining worldwide recognition. Together with his children, Andre and Eleonore, he runs the Arno Stern Institute, which conducts research into spontaneous creativity, digitises works, collects publications on formulation, popularises the idea of play-of-painting and certifies people who want to set up their own *Closlieu* and act as a servant.

On completion of the course, a certificate is issued by the Institute, which gives the authority to run a studio according to Arno Stern's criteria. Several thousand such studios have already been established around the world. The first ones appeared in Poland in 2018 and their number is gradually increasing after successive editions of the courses.

In Poland, Aleksander and Dominika Baj and Wydawnictwo "Element" [publishing house] are involved in the cooperation with the Arno Stern Institute. On the publisher's website, you can find the applicable list of criteria, which is a translation of the rules on the official website of the Arno Stern Institute. In Poland, there exist *Closlieus* mainly in large urban areas. They are run by foundations and associations, private individuals, kindergartens and schools. Many people refer to Arno Stern, his discoveries and concepts and offer to take part in activities, although they only marginally meet the necessary criteria. The issue of the detailed organisation of painting play, the threat of commercialisation and the reception of Arno Stern's original concept are, however, beyond the scope of this article and require an in-depth analysis.

SUMMARY

Play-of-painting is an experimental practice. It emerged from the particular achievements of Arno Stern and is inseparable from his life and professional experiences. The author is a man with a very friendly disposition. It is a pleasure to listen to his storytelling about the history of the discovery and to his lectures. He is calm and cheerful, but at the same time very principled in professional matters. He always defends his achievements and refuses to compromise. It is difficult to convince him of other points of view in terms of plastic development, which sometimes leads to conflicts with his immediate environment. During the heyday of the Thursday Academy, Stern's work was covered by the major magazines in France and the foreign media, and his books sold in huge numbers. Stern was constantly conducting observations and research, which made his theory evolve. He introduced new concepts and often openly criticised leading researchers on children's art. This did not appeal to the wider public and especially to representatives of the scientific establishment.

When children's painting was held in high esteem, the formulation became the cause of much irritation. Its assumptions are very questionable to some. Children's work can be exhibited, praised and even rewarded, which is an engaging and catchy subject for any kind of publication. What characterises the possibility of expression in such a safe place as the *Closlieu*, however, is that the creativity born here is not intended for any audience. This allows for the expression of the unspeakable. The trace emerges from the person who allows it to do so uncontrollably, knowing that the work produced will

not be looked at or subjected to judgement, whether by the author himself or even more so by others [...] When I became aware of all this and let others know about it, sympathy from people who had hitherto smiled at the sight of children's drawings instantly turned into dislike. Since then, I have been regarded as a provocateur who questions what is commonly taken for granted and rejects what others like. The statement "children's art does not exist" arouses widespread opposition, including among those who generally agree with my views. (A-no Stern and A-re Stern, 2018, p. 86)

In his publications, he is highly critical of art education, the study of drawing, display and grading. He rejects previously accepted notions, methods, publications and commonly accepted beliefs. Play-of-painting and Formulation is considered controversial in many scientific circles, but it undoubtedly brings a new point of view and prompts reflection on artistic activity. Arno Stern believes that unrestrained play-of-painting should replace traditional drawing and art education (Dauber, 2017, p. 42). The concept needs further research in order to bring out its potential.

CONCLUSIONS

Play-of-painting is an experimental activity developed from scratch and put into practice by Arno Stern. The concept is rooted in the course of the author's life, in values drawn from the family home and events taking place during his childhood and youth. Arno Stern's concept is well-known and appreciated all over the world, also in Poland, and needs to be analysed in depth in order to grasp its most important aspects and bring out its potential.

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AUTORSKA KONCEPCJA ZABAWY MALARSKIEJ ARNO STERNA JAKO WYNIK DROGI ŻYCIOWEJ I DOŚWIADCZEŃ ZAWODOWYCH

Wprowadzenie: Arno Stern jest znany z opracowania autorskiej koncepcji zabawy malarskiej. Na wkład, jaki wniósł w dążenia do zrozumienia rysunku dziecka, miała wpływ jego droga życiowa.

Cel badań: Celem artykułu jest zaprezentowanie dorobku życiowego Arno Sterna i wskazanie na istotne wydarzenia i znaczące osoby, które miały wpływ na jego pracę i eksperyment w zakresie plastyki.

Stan wiedzy: W Polsce brakuje opracowań naukowych na temat zabawy malarskiej. W nielicznych opracowaniach odnajdujemy jedynie wzmianki na temat jego eksperymentu plastycznego.

Podsumowanie: Wskazane jest podjęcie badań na gruncie polskim nad sposobem pracy obejmującym eksperymentalną działalność Arno Sterna oraz przystosowanie zabawy malarskiej do wspierania rozwoju dziecka.

Słowa kluczowe: *Malort*, pamięć pierwotna, rozwój plastyczny, zabawa malarska