

A History and Present Situation of Social Pedagogy

Abstract

The attention of this contribution is paid to the prehistory, history and the present time situation of social pedagogy in our country and abroad. Social pedagogy must now solve numerous problems that have remained unsolved over its more than 150-year-long history. It is about the subject's elaboration, terminology, clarification of its relation to different sciences, specification of contemporary problems that have priority, and the profession of social pedagogues.

Key words: *Social, social pedagogy, social work, directions of social pedagogy, socialization, supporting professions, prevention, environment, formative education.*

The prehistory of social pedagogy comes out of the social-educational care (state or private) developed to prevent and remove moral and spiritual decadence of children and youth, which represented a substitute of family and relational formative educational services (Schilling, J., 1999).

Swiss pedagogue J. H. Pestalozzi (1746–1827) has been recognized as a real founder of social pedagogy by many authors, though he himself did not use the notion “social pedagogy”, and pedagogy no longer lived in the period of the establishment of social. According to R. Wroczyński, Pestalozzi laid foundation of the pedagogy of social care as part of social pedagogy through his theoretical works (“Linhart and Gertrude”, „How Gertrude Teaches her Children“) as well as by his practical educational activity in the Institute for formative education of poor children in Neuhof, and also in the asylum for abandoned children in Stanza. In his works Pestalozzi formulated basic theses that were later developed by social pedagogy: The 1st Thesis on formative role of the environment, and the 2nd Thesis on the need of intentional activities for the formation of positive develop-

mental incentives in the environment that are identical with the goals of the intentional educational work (Wroczyński, R., 1968, p. 48). An important role in the formation of the conception of social pedagogy also played by the opinions and practical social formative activity of Robert Owen, Fridrich Fröbel, Charles Loch, and other representatives of social educational care.

Historical institutional roots of social pedagogy are viewed by J. Schilling (1999, p. 53) within the following facilities of practical social-educational care:

1. Caring for abandoned children and orphans (the 12th–13th centuries)
2. Schools for the poor (the 14th–16th centuries)
3. Orphanages and reformatories (the 17th–18th centuries)
4. Reformatories and nurseries (the 18th–19th centuries)
5. Social care – social help to children and the youth at modern times (the 20th century)

The history of social pedagogy began to develop in Germany in the middle of the 19th century. Social pedagogy was undoubtedly born under a strong influence of sociology as well as philosophy and other sciences in reaction to individual pedagogy and herbartism. The name was created by joining the words “social” and “pedagogy”, which points to the nexus of social and educational aspects. The ambiguity of the word “social” in the past as well as nowadays made it extremely difficult to define the subject of social pedagogy not only at the time of its origin but also later during its development. According to J. Schilling (1999, pp. 192–194), “until now the notion ‘social’ is obscure in the German language.” The notion “social” is usually understood at three levels (Krebs, V., 1997, p. 16):

- in its broader sense as societal;
- in its narrower sense as heading towards the perfection of human living conditions;
- in its broadest sense more or less in a curative way, in the sense of a solution to disadvantageous or emergency social situations. The answer to the question as to of these aspects has been emphasized by social pedagogy is not at all unambiguous.

The notion “social pedagogy” according to J. Schilling (1999, p. 109) was introduced by Karl Mager in 1848. Other authors (Wroczyński 1968, F. Hájek 1975, K. Galla 1967, S. Klapilová 1996, B. Kraus 2001) consider A. Diesterweg to be the author of this notion as he uses the name “social pedagogy” in his work “A Handbook of Education for German Teachers”. In the 4th edition of this book from 1850 we find a part called “A treatise on social pedagogy”. However, Diesterweg does not give a more precise definition of social pedagogy. The fact that he used the combination “Sozial – pädagogik“, clearly points to the link of social and educational tasks (Štverák, V., 1983). K. Mager and A. Diesterweg are respected repre-

representatives of the so-called practical orientation of social pedagogy; its attribute was a strong orientation towards practice as well as combination of social and educational aspects when handling with existing social problems. According to H. Marburger (1979), social pedagogy at its origins was to a great extent a reaction to the social-political situation in Germany in the second part of the 19th century, and it was developing under the influence of the German social-democratic movement. According to her, the revolution influenced the origin and development of social pedagogy that was to help fight the “social danger.” In this context she mentions an idea of A. Diesterweg recorded in 1850: “A great danger threatens in the growing city riff-raff. This riff-raff expands in a state without general education where there is no care of youths’ spiritual and moral lag. The basic need is to prevent it.” (H. Marburger, 1979, p. 40). Social pedagogy, as well as formation and education generally, were to help decrease social contradictions and to unite society, which certainly witnesses to the influence of positivist sociology emphasizing the adaptation function of formative education and the stabilization of the 19th century society.

Paul Natorp (1854–1924) the founder of the theoretical orientation in social pedagogy developed social pedagogy under a strong influence of I. Kant’s philosophy, H. Spencer’s evolution thoughts, and J. H. Pestalozzi as well. His social pedagogy is marked as “normative one”, because he mainly emphasized the questions of educational goals derived from Kant’s goals of social development. He is the author of the first theoretical writings on social pedagogy such as the treatise called: “Religion within the Boundaries of Humanity” with a subtitle “A Chapter on the Basis of social pedagogy”, which appeared in 1894, and especially the work *Social Pedagogy (Socialpädagogik)* from 1898, in which he clarified the grounds and goals of social pedagogy as a theoretical science (H. Marburger, 1979, p. 26). In these works Natorp comes out of the basic sociological theses that emphasize the social basis of human education as well as development, while attacking individual pedagogy that emphasizes the uniqueness of an individual: “A human being will be human only in a society. A human being as an individual exists only abstractly like an atom in physics. A human being without society is not human.” (P. Natorp, 1974, p. 90). Society depends on human beings as well. An individual and society are mutually tied up. Likewise education; formation and education cannot exist without society: “All educational and formative activities are implemented on the ground of society” (Natorp, 1927, p. 24). According to Natorp (1908, p. 31), “The whole human content of education comes from society. Human society develops mainly by the education of its members through appropriate education of an individual”. The main task and goal of social pedagogy is to provide education to everybody according to the extent of his/her abilities, to all classes of society. In

the treatise „The Democracy of Education” he calls for abolition of social disparities in education, a common education was to contribute to the decrease of tensions in society.

Thoughts on social pedagogy based on philosophical sociological grounds were also developed by another representative of the German social pedagogy Paul Barth (1858–1922) in his work “A History of Social Pedagogical Ideas” (*Geschichte der sozialpädagogischen Ideen*. Berlin, 1920), in which he describes the basics of social formative education directed to the formation of will and reason (In: Wroczyński, R., 1968, p. 53).

Social pedagogical ideas in the 19th century were developed also by significant Czech pedagogue G. A. Lindner (1828–1887) in his work “A Pedagogy Based on the Teaching of the Natural, Cultural, and Moral Development” (published in Prague in 1888). According to Lindner, pedagogy cannot come out of the conception of an individual because he is only part of a social entity, and therefore it must use the services of sociology. Throughout his work, Lindner stresses the social character of education as well as its directivity for future development.

Mutual linkage of man and society was also emphasized by a representative of the empirical orientation in social pedagogy Paul Bergemann (1862 – 1946), who refused deductive setting of educational goals typical of Natorp and Barth, and who asked for grounds of goals and norms of education through the “empirical basis”. He also emphasized the idea that “A human being without society is like a mill without water. He is a part, a member of society.” (P. Bergemann, 1900, p. 516). Bergemann attracted the attention of social pedagogy to the relation of education and social environment, and he emphasized its prophylactic dimension. He asked for public social control over the activity of family in order to prevent wrong development of children in dysfunctional families. He also paid attention to the problems of the extra-school formative education of children and the youth as the factors of the prevention of social pathological phenomena, which is emphasized by present social pedagogy as well.

The social pedagogy of the practical orientation originated in 1848 (Mager, or Diesterweg in 1850) and it has over 150-year-long history. The whole 20th century, marked as “a century of social pedagogy” was not able to give an adequate answer to the question: “What is the subject of social pedagogy?”. This ambiguity has remained until now. One of the reasons for it is the above-mentioned ambiguity of the notion social, but particularly the fact that social pedagogy in its more than 150-year-long history paid attention to the large variety of social educational problems that it attempted to solve. These problems were miscellaneous, specific and differentiated in particular periods and countries, which caused the emergence

of various streams of opinion and approaches to the definition of its subject. I will mention at least some of them:

- Social pedagogy as providing practical social educational care oriented towards the solution of social problems in society (A. Diesterweg, J. H. Pestalozzi, R. Owen, S. Tešedík).
- Social pedagogy as a theoretical science researching social goals of education and emphasizing the social determination of education and human development (P. Natorp, P. Barth, K. Mollenhauer).
- Social pedagogy as a science examining the relation of education and social environment including the pedagogy of social care and extra school education (P. Bergemann, H. Radlinská, R. Wroczyński, H. Nohl, M. Přádka).
- Social pedagogy as an answer to the problems of modern society (H. Marburger, J. Schilling, P. Ondrejkoivič ...).
- Social pedagogy as a science on social aspects of education (O. Baláž, B. Kraus, J. Hroncová).
- Social pedagogy as a tertiary educational institution whose core is social help to children and the youth (J. Schilling).
- Social pedagogy as a science examining the deviations of the social behaviour (N. Hupertz, E. Schinzler, P. Gabura, but also P. Ondrejkoivič and others).
- Social pedagogy as a science examining the questions of human right for education and formation (J. Lukas, I. Jaccobi-Schmitz, L. J. Mess).
- Social pedagogy as an application of concrete social ethics and development of social formation and pro-social behaviour.
- Social pedagogy as a help to all age categories with a special emphasis on helping children and the youth (J. Schilling).
- Social pedagogy as social educational activity emphasizing preventive activity as well as intervention into the socialization processes of children and the youth (P. Ondrejkoivič, J. Hroncová, Z. Bakošová ...).

The development of social pedagogy in the European context was quite differentiated and uneven in the 20th century. While in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Poland social pedagogy was developing very intensively, it stagnated in Czechoslovakia. Neither in Czechia nor in Slovakia had any integral work from social pedagogy appeared. There were some sociologists social-pedagogically oriented in Czechia such as A. I. Bláha, J. Král, O. Chlup, and in Slovakia J. Čečetka and A. Jurovský. A revival of an interest in social pedagogy started in the 60s of the 20th century when the book "Social Pedagogy" by R. Wroczyński (1968) was translated from Polish and published in Slovakia, which served as the basic university textbook on social pedagogy and influenced the orientation of social pedagogy in Slovakia as well as in Czechia.

It was especially Prof. Ondrej Baláž who dedicated himself together with his coworkers in the Institute of experimental pedagogy of the SAS in Bratislava to the development of social pedagogy in Slovakia before 1989. O. Baláž was engaged in defining the subject and classification of social pedagogy into the system of pedagogical sciences in his book "The Social Aspects of Education" (1981) as well as in numerous scientific studies published in the magazine called *The Unified School* (*Jednotná škola*) and later in the *Pedagogical Review*. During the period of transformation in Slovakia there appeared a rapid development of "supporting professions" that involved social pedagogy and social work as well. The most important representative of social pedagogy in Slovakia continues to be Prof. O. Baláž, who examines the basic questions of social pedagogy, particularly defining its subject, its relation to other sciences and the like. O. Baláž understands social pedagogy as a "science on the aspects of formative education". According to him, "social pedagogy is a pedagogical discipline which, on the basis of exact knowledge, solves the relations of education and society (social environment), takes part in the definition of educational goals, examines the educational aspects of socialization processes, and contributes to the formation and development of personalities through formative educational process in families, schools and in free time, as well as in interest and working activities" (O. Baláž, 1991, p. 610).

When defining the subject of social pedagogy, P. Ondrejkoivič (2000, p. 189), points to a close relationship of social pedagogy and social work saying: "social pedagogy can be understood as a science on education that takes its effectivity in social work and wherein it forms its basic core of activities. In this sense it is also a theory of social work. It is grounded on the process of socialization (especially of children and the youth), it examines and implements the possibilities of interventions into this process, particularly in the case of the endangered and socially disadvantaged groups of children, the youth as well as adults. At the same time, it is the realization of the policy in the area of formation and education that is implemented in special formative educational institutions".

Z. Bakošová (1994) inclines to the understanding of social pedagogy as social help, and she involves into its problems such ones as social pathological phenomena, Roma problems, problems of socially and morally disorganized children and the youth and other problems as well. She puts special emphasis on a "preventive dimension" of social pedagogy.

One of the important representatives of the Czech social pedagogy B. Kraus (2001, p. 12) emphasizes transdisciplinarity when defining the subject of social pedagogy, and he tends to understand social pedagogy more broadly, saying that "this discipline deals not only with the problems of a pathological character, of marginal groups, of a part of population endangered in its development and of

those potentially deviantly acting, but first of all of the whole population in the sense of the formation of harmony between the needs of and individual and society in order to provide an optimal way of life in a given society.”

Based on the above-mentioned approaches it is possible to draw a conclusion that “the subject of social pedagogy as a specific pedagogical science is the social aspects of the formative education and the development of personality. It is focused on the “third area of education” in the area of which it intervenes into the processes of socialization especially in the endangered as well as socially disadvantaged groups of children and the youth but also of adults. It helps families and schools to solve crisis situations and to prevent the formation of dysfunctional processes. Its goal is education for the sake of self-help, the restoration of human normality, and an effort to improve the social conditions under which man lives” (Hroncová, J. – Hudecová, A. – Matulayová, T., 2001, p. 36)

Social pedagogy experiences its renaissance throughout the present transformation period in post-communist countries; however, it continues to struggle with numerous problems that are necessary to be solved. They were expressively specified by B. Kraus (2001, p. 15) in his book “Člověk, výchova, prostředí” (Man, Education, Environment). It concerns chiefly the solution of the following tasks:

- to define more precisely the subject of social pedagogy and its basic terminology;
- to clarify its content in relation to the other sciences and especially to social work and social andragogy (dealt with for example by M. Krystoň, 2003, p. 20);
- to define priority problems that will be examined under the conditions of the Euroregion as well as the global society;
- to work out a profesiogram of social workers and to start endeavour to enhance the possibilities of its use in practice, for instance in the prevention of the social pathological phenomena of children and the youth, which is also dealt with by I. Emmerová (2003, pp. 55, 56).

There are many tasks which are to be dealt with by social pedagogy, but they cannot be solved at once. Following the entry of our country into the European Union the inevitability of the development of supporting professions is more emphasized, for example while solving the Roma problem, the growth of social pathological phenomena of children and the youth, the problems linked to the family crisis, and the like. There constantly emerge new tasks for future in the area of the theory and practice of social pedagogy that are necessary to be solved within its scope.

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