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The Anthropological Foundations of Inclusive Education[1]

Abstract

The aim of the study is examination and identification of anthropological background of inclusive education. We proceed from our existing studies on the reflection of human and from the model of education in the traditions of European thinking (Kudláčová, 2003, 2006a), since we consider the history of education of the disabled being a part of general history of education. The outcome of our analyses is a tabular summary of the development of approach to disabled people in a wider context of understanding of human and ideas of education in European thinking. Relationship between education and educational science is analysed at the end of our article.

Introduction

The attitude of society towards the disabled individuals across the history of humankind has been developing throughout diverse periods - from the physical disposal, through various forms of repressive attitudes, to the accepting, kind-hearted and helping attitude. We've specified five historical periods (traditions) from the perspective of society`s care for disabled people in European history: the period of antiquity (Greek and Roman antiquity), Jewish-Christian tradition (Judaism, Christian Antiquity and Middle Ages), Modern Times, 19th century and the first half of the 20th century and the Post-Modern. Preconditions for origination of the inclusive attitude towards disabled people and consequently inclusive education were formed during the last of the mentioned periods.

Post-Modern as the foundation of inclusive education

Concerning the socio-historical aspect, the period from the 1970s can be called as *a postindustrial epoch* in which we can witness important European integration processes and a new political and territorial (non)separation of Europe. Under the influence of internationalisation of society occurs the interaction of educational environment of individual countries with the international educational environment, which creates the educational

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environment of the EU. Internationalisation of society (including labour market), informatisation and development of information and communication technologies and the growing impact of science and technology (Buchberger and coll., 2000) significantly contribute to the above mentioned process. Education becomes a tool for the development of human resources and creation of human capital, which makes it a considerable part of the investments to the economical development. Polish pedagogue Łomny (1997) asserts that the system of education together with the labour market will bear the heaviest responsibility for the quality of life of the rising generation.

Concerning the understanding of human, the last third of the 20th century is labeled as the *period of Post-Modern.* Gál and Marcelli (1991) assert that the plurality of conceptions of the world, the plurality of truths and value relativism are all typical for the Post-Modern. It is connected with the following typical attribute of Post-Modern – *fragmentation*, which carries both positive and negative aspect. Fragmentation in case of a person may be regarded as a certain stage of overcoming the univocal and universalistic understanding of the position of man in the world and liberation of the formerly hidden possibilities for their free self-creation (Rajský, 2002). It was the process of fragmentation that was important right for the liberation of human from such a univocally defined position and which can be the basis for the process of integration of human and acquisition of their *integrality*. According to Šlosiar (2007) the post-modern philosophy accomplished the second anthropocentric about-turn and by its reformulated questions (in a contrast to the metaphysical ones) opened an absolutely new sphere of reality in which each human has the opportunity to form themselves freely on the basis of self-selected criteria. Through this actuality, Post-Modern opened a new sphere of human's reality and their opportunities in the world.

Education in the period of Post-Modern in the developed European countries proceeds often in an excellently organised and well equipped institutions, however, on the other hand we can see a man who searches for the meaning of life which is not provided by these institutions and which even can't be provided by them. In the former countries of the Eastern Bloc there existed excellently organised school systems coming out from unified socialistic education, which in a certain sense protected the human in front of the post-modern estrangement and the loss of the meaning. After the loosening of this clasp and after the revolutionary changes at the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s these well organised systems were shaken and up to now haven't found and defined an initial idea platform of their existence. This can be seen in the up to the present unfinished reforms, especially in the curricular sphere and in many, mostly unsystematic, more or less successful experiments without deeper analyses and evaluation. British philosopher of education Carr

(2004) discusses the isolation of philosophy and education in Western societies: on one hand, there exist small scientific academic communities with a small practical coverage of their researches in practice; on the other hand there can be observed groups of politicians, officials, teachers who create and make practical decisions with a great reach, however, without any deeper systematic reflexion of the basic philosophical foundations that stand behind their decisions.

Concerning the approach to disabled people, culmination of the trend of segregation and separation in the middle of the twentieth century caused the need of integration. It's still the case of dual system where exists a parallel integrated and segregated education. The notion of *inclusion* appeared in special education in Europe at the end of 1990s (Clough – Garner, 2003; Scholz, 2007) and the notion of *inclusive education* in connection with it. The issue of education of disabled children which gradually detached from general education as special/therapeutic education under the influence of the trend of inclusion turns again into being a part of general education. Lechta et al. (2007a) characterises it in this conception as a discipline of educational sciences that deals with possibilities of optimal education of disabled children under the conditions of common school facilities. Concerning the aim, segregated, integrated and inclusive education shares the same goal: *social adaptation of human*. But they differ in understanding of the process of achieving it. According to Horňáková (2006) the concept of integration follows from the needs of disabled child and the concept of inclusion follows from the need of equality of all children. With the connection to the inclusive trend the understanding of disability not being certain disadvantagedness but being *otherness* gets into the awareness of people. Human with disability can be equally enrichment for another individual, community and society just like any other human. Partnerships and matrimonies of an intact individual and a disabled individual are no longer rare nowadays. There are also cases when parents refuse any specialised facility for their disabled child and prefer their education in an ordinary school. Trend of inclusion is nowadays being implemented also into the European legislation. These facts open up conditions for real inclusion for the disabled people.

Anthropological background of inclusive approach to disabled people

In the Modern Times human extricated themselves from the medieval over-exposed pillar of transcendence by an excessive exposing of intellect and believed that everything is explainable. However, rationality gradually reached its limits and didn't offer the human answers for the fundamental questions. Post-Modern opened the new sphere of reality to the full and points out to the third pillar of European human: the possibility of an individual to

form themselves freely on the basis of the self-selected criteria. However, the overexposure of freedom and its unlimitation by responsibility in its final implication turns against the human themselves and the boundless freedom pushes them into the emptiness of meaninglessness. Despite the fact that in particular periods of European history and thinking transcendence, intellect and freedom were overexposed and into a certain extent became a disincentive to its further development, each of these three matters is inevitable for human and in a certain period it opened new opportunities and horizons. According to us *genius loci* of the European tradition and a typical picture of human of the 21st century which can offer them stability and open new horizons is represented exactly by a combination of these three pillars: *intellect, freedom and transcendence*[2]. Concept of *homo educandus* – reliance of human on education is typical for European thinking. On one hand, the necessity of education and on the other hand, the ability to educate belongs to the essence of human. The innovation arises in a fact that at present pedagogues and teachers become more supporters of the process of education and should teach students how to learn, while the knowledge gained at school become rapidly outdated and the students will have educate themselves throughout their entire lives. (Ainley, 2001-2002). Another change is linked with this, namely, students need to be led to the gradual taking of responsibility for the progress and results of education, which can be called as the transition from the outer regulation to auto regulation (Boekaerts, 1999). By acceptance of the aspect of continuity and the aspect of novelty in European thinking (Kudláčová, 2003, 2006b) education can be *reinterpreted* in a new period actuality. The foundation of education and within it the approach to disabled people as well, according to us, should at the present European society come out from the above mentioned three pillars. In this conception of education the reason for differentiating in the approach to intact individuals and the disabled individuals disappears, which is the reason for the real performance of inclusion as the natural transition to equality. It has been affirmed also by the latest classification of WHO, which released a new *Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health* (ICF) in 2001, in which the original terminology from 1980 was replaced (*Impairment – Disability – Handicap)* in order to eliminate evaluating and discriminating notions (Lechta, 2007b).

The development of the care for disabled people in the history of European thinking

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[2] Frankl (2007) draws attention to the necessity of transcendency in his work *Suffering Man* (orig. Trpiaci človek)*,* where he analyses the misunderstanding of the position of human in Post-modern period. According to him the transcendency is the dimension needed by the present-day human in order to manage the opportunities opened by freedom and intellect.

By the origination of special education the history of education began to be divided into two segregate areas: history of the care for disabled people (history of special education) and history of general education (history of education). Studying both of these phenomena from philosophical-anthropological point of view exposes the fact that the approaches to disabled people are related with history of human and general education. History of special education forms a part of history education and research into its development can be realised only in this relation. The development of the approach to disabled people in the wider context of understanding of human and ideas of education in European thinking is given in Table 1 (Kudláčová, 2008).

Table 1: The development of the care for disabled people in the history of European thinking

(Kudláčová, 2008)

Period		Legal norm, ethical norm	Understanding of human	Idea of education	Approach to disabled people
Ancient antiquity (from 1200 BC)	Greece (from 8th cen. BC)	Lykurg's Laws (Sparta, about 9th cen. BC). Solon's Laws (Athens, end of 6th cen. BC). Origination of philosophy and ethics.	Human as speaking being and understanding being and social being (Aristotle).	*Paideia* – care for soul, preparation for good life, integration into community.	Rejecting and repressing.
	Roman republic (from 510 BC)	Twelve Tables (449 BC).	Human as *animal rationale* – Rational Animal, human as individuality.	*Vir bonus* – good citizen, *vir iustus* – legally thinking human.	Rejecting and repressing.
Jewishness and Christian Antiquity and Middle Ages (from 1800 BC - history of Israeli nation – end of 15th century to Reformation)	Judaism (from 6th cen. BC)	Ten Commandments (1800 BC).	Human as image of God in the whole spiritual-physical essence who has intellect and free will.	Belief into the one and only God, realisation of one's sinfulness and gaining of eternal life – participation in God's life.	Accepting approach, forbiddance of killing of disabled individuals. Disability was seen as being negative, as divine retribution.
	Christian Antiquity (7th-6th [?] BC – 476 AD)	Ten Commandments + New Testament: love for one's neighbours, Golden Rule of behaviour (50-125 AD), Constantine (313 AD) – forbiddance to kill people with disability.	Human as image of God whose perfect image is Christ – God's Son, through his deliverance act human can become God's child.	Education towards the belief in God and Christ, earthly life seen as preparation for eternal life.	Individual demonstrations of the care for the disabled, continuing of repressive approach to the disabled and the negative understanding of disability is being mixed with individual demonstrations of care for the disabled.
	Christian Middle Ages (from 476 – end of 15th cen.)	Ten Commandments + New Testament: love for one's neighbours (50-125 AD), Constantine (313 AD) – forbiddance to kill people with disability, elaboration of scholastic theology.	Human as image of God whose perfect image is Christ – God's Son, through his deliverance act human can become God's child, autonomy of transcendence.	Education towards the belief in God and Christ, towards Christian perfection and activity in religious community in order to gain eternal life.	Individual demonstrations of the care for the disabled, negative understanding of disability is being mixed with charitable demonstrations and care for the disabled.
Modern Times (16th cen. – 18th cen.)		Idea of general human dignity.	*I think, therefore I am* (Descartes), autonomy of	End of metaphysical embedment of education, idea of	Beginnings of special care for the disabled people, first theories

			intellect, human as an autonomous being, turnabout to human.	general education, effort to accomplish felicity in earthly life.	and publications.
19th cen. and first half of 20th century		Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959).	The beginning mass existence, human starts to be interchangeable.	Institutional character of education, to be useful and successful in a society. Constituting of theory of education as a scientific discipline. Orientation towards child.	Beginnings of institutionalised, organised and directed care for the disabled people. Constitution of special education. Trend of segregation and separation of disabled people, followed by trend of integration.
Post-modern period (from 1970s)		International classification of *impairment – disability – handicap* (WHO, 1980) was replaced by new terms: *functioning, disability and health* (WHO, 2001).	Plurality, autonomy of freedom, human as a free being that can do everything – crisis of human, loss of the meaning.	Idea of learning and epistemic society, idea of lifelong learning. Educational policy as social priority that is being decided about by politicians. Plurality of educational institutions and approaches.	Systematic and instit. care for disabled people. Possibility of choice of spec. or ordinary institution. Trend of inclusion headed towards trend of equality of intact and disabled people, beginnings of inclusive education.

Conclusion

Conception of the inclusive approach to disabled people is the continuation of the natural development in the understanding of human and of the disabled human, too. In a way we may speak also about a political requirement of our age that founds the right for the equality of opportunities: noone can be disadvantaged and personality of each individual needs to be maximally developed in all appropriate dimensions. Conception of inclusion needs to be perceived in a broader context of inclusive society. It shall be assumed that even this conception, just like all of the other approaches to disabled people, has its positives and negatives and it shall be apprehended realistically. It was not the task of our study to evaluate this approach. To study concrete advantages and disadvantages of this approach is the challenge and the task of pedagogues and special pedagogues, possibly psychologists and last but not least it is the disabled individuals who shall express their viewpoints concerning this approach, who are still being often forgotten. Inclusive education can be also talked about as being one of the developing new scientific disciplines of educational sciences. It is a usual developmental trend in every scientific discipline that differentiation of individual subdisciplines is followed by their integration, however, not at the original level, but at a qualitatively higher level. Constituting of special/therapeutical education and its separation from educational sciences in the last century was necessary in order to let it fully develop.

However, special education hasn't lost its reference to and affiliation with educational sciences and it can be further developed only after repeated "return" to educational sciences, but already at a qualitatively different level, and its outcome is a new content intersection and a new educational discipline – *inclusive education*. Sovák in 1980 in his *Outline of special education (*orig. *Nárys špeciálnej pedagogiky*) asserts that special education can't cure special-educational problems, but on the contrary it is special education that in the scientific-explorative field can pass valuable knowledge to educational sciences and thus enrich it. In the course of history this has exceptionally already happened for example in the case of Pestalozzi, Makarenko and it was distinctive for the whole 20th century. However, at the beginning of 21st century we don't deal with the enrichment of theory of education via one special-educational theory, possibly research, but with a qualitatively new content intersection of general education and special education and redefinition of their relationship, what doesn't constitute a reason for elimination of special education and its termination. The outcome of these processes of differentiation and consequently of integration is inclusive education. Vygotskij (1983) reached the same conclusions more than twenty years ago. According to him concerning the psychological viewpoint there is no reason for existence of independent education of children with disability. In his viewpoint education of children with disability is a part of general education. Proceeding from the analysis of possible relations among paradigms in the field of pedagogical sciences, according to Shulman (1986)[3], the relation between general education and inclusive education is an example of *complementary relation*.

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[3] Shulman (1986) specified four possible relations: competition (rivalry), coexistence, integration and complementarity.