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*Development of Childcare in the Pedagogical Theory and  
Practice of Germany (19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*

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Rozwój opieki nad dzieckiem w pedagogicznej teorii i praktyce Niemiec  
(XIX w.–początek XX w.)

ABSTRACT

The article describes the development of childcare against the social and political background of Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Care embraces different social forms, in particular that of philanthropy, giving paramount significance to charity and assistance, becomes associated with the reform movement, concentrated around humanistic ideas of the community. The origin and functioning of forms of institutional care, including Johann Wichern's "rough houses", Hermann Lietz's homes of learning, Eva-Marie von Tiele-Winckler's "children's homes" have been analyzed, where teachers were considered paragons of caregiving-related activities benefitting the child. Educational activities of the abovementioned institutions was designed to meet children's needs, develop an active, creative, responsible, independent child who would be able to find its place in life and live in harmony with itself and the outer world.

**Key words:** care; child; orphans; forms of institutional care; Germany

INTRODUCTION

Every country and society give a priority to childcare in a bid to provide favorable conditions for the development and education of the child, care for vulnerable categories of children (orphans, children deprived of parental care, homeless, abandoned, street children) as reflected in the Convention on the Rights of

the Child. This concern requires finding new mechanisms, advanced forms of care and educational activities. Finding a solution to this problem is impossible without research on the educational experience of the past, critical analysis of care practices in the pedagogical theory and practice of different countries. Childcare research is approached by various fields such as pedagogy, psychology, medicine, law, sociology, economics and political science; attracting the attention of government agencies and NGOs around the world. Childcare is a multifaceted problem. It is little known and greatly unexplored too.

The integration of Ukraine into the European educational space, the objective need for ensuring adequate care and social education for children and youth require a study of foreign educational experience, the revival of theorists' and practitioners' pedagogical concepts, rethinking of their role and contribution from the perspective of modern pedagogy. The German experience is especially valuable for the Ukrainian society. Studying it will definitely enrich domestic pedagogy with new facts, making a contribution to improving the childcare system in modern social and cultural conditions.

Ukrainian researchers took intermittent interest in social pedagogy of Germany because of different socio-political conditions. The most complete coverage of the representatives of West European and American reformist pedagogical ideas have been presented by O. Decroly, J. Dewey, G. Kerschensteiner, G. Lane, M. Montessori, B. Otto, P. Petersen, C. Stephenson, S. Freinet during the last decades. A number of theses on reforming education in Ukraine have been defended (O. Barylo, I. Bohatyryova, L. Dudnik, M. Zheludenko, V. Zemlyanska, O. Ionova, O. Karamanov, S. Kurkina, T. Petrova, A. Rastrygina, S. Stelmach, T. Khomenko, etc.). However, problems of formation and development of forms of institutional care in Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries have received a merely fragmentary coverage.

#### CHILDCARE IN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE OF GERMANY

Practical and theoretical beginnings and methodological works on educational activities indicate that in Germany there existed appropriate conditions for the emergence of forms of institutional childcare. In the 1830s, Germany faced industrial growth and intensification which entailed revision of attitude to education. Accumulation of people in cities and industrial centers, mechanization of labour and depreciation of old moral values, lack of spiritual unity of the family, poor living conditions caused increased poverty and helplessness of the youth. Sharp social stratification led to the establishment of children's homes. Pedagogy of pietism and philanthropy could not solve the problem of the child and youth care.

The period of social upheaval was also an epoch of secularism. Spiritual values of classically idealistic times, traditional Christian dogmas lost their compul-

sory character. A new modified lifestyle required the rescue of personality through resocialization. The latter is possible only when the society perceives its main task as creation of optimal social conditions, especially for homeless children and youth. Their poverty was not caused by the war but failure to evaluate peculiarities of social reorganization, rapid industrialization of society.

Erwin Hegel, a German scholar, analyzed new ideas and discoveries in science (especially natural), politics and economy, as well as in the clerical life, and concluded that the 19<sup>th</sup> century was one of the most spiritually active periods in Western Europe. Equally important was the emergence of the so-called national and nationalist ideas. While nationalism expressed itself politically, socialism became the enemy of the national idea, and social ideas were treated contemptuously – as “friends without motherland”. National ideas were supported by remnants of Protestants and capitalists, while socialism sought support in the mechanistically-positivistic science. Socialism was, at least according to the communist manifesto, a “horrible ghost” of the bourgeois society (Hegel 1968, p. 31).

This fundamental contradiction of nationalism and socialism significantly affected all spheres of life. These concepts became the benchmark for ideas that eventually reached their ideological peak. This meant that the ideas of nationalism and socialism had become substitutes for religion and made high demands on the person, creating the ideal of a “socialist” person. Pedagogy of each movement had its purpose of education, specific ways and methods. These changes also applied to the nature and objectives of care.

“Grand” determinants of politics, science, art and religion which promised to lead mankind to the new and better future in the 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and before the Second World War served as a camouflage for the tragedy of orphaned and mutilated children. Children who died in air strikes, during escape attempts, in gas chambers denied the alleged “reasonableness” of the World Wars. It became clear – “becoming of age” did not imply virtue, Nietzschean ideology did not create a “superman” and neither did Marxist philosophy, Christian theology was powerless before the innate sinfulness of the man and unable to prevent it. Mass mortality and poverty in the “Century of the Child” demonstrated failure of human ideas and their efforts to make the world better, more perfect. Historical and philosophical interpretation, and, moreover, attempts at justifying wars are doomed because they are based on dehumanization of society. Death and tragic fate of children is a major unsolved problem of our historical reality, much more important than redistribution of power, national ideas or economic interests. Humanization of man should be the goal of historical development.

Philosophical justification of systematic relationship between “education” and “community” was first made by Paul Natorp (1854–1924). Employing Kant’s theory of cognition, Natorp provided a critical assessment of science, psychology and pedagogy. This attempt led to the first fundamental social and educational

concept. Natorp's social pedagogy is a logical implementation of his cultural ideas. Culture as internal world-creation results from "the creative action of the projected object" and is produced through science, morality, art and religion. It is not an individual matter but a mutual achievement of the many based on opposites. Education should serve the cultural community. Since culture is the "inner" space of the human community, education can only be "social". Pedagogy is socially conditioned and education of an individual must be in line with social requirements, in particular, social conditions of education, and thus educational conditions of the social life (Natorp 1974, p. 318).

In pedagogy Natorp defends two principles: 1) a man becomes a man only in a society; 2) integration of a man into a community leads to his development. Individualistic education would only be concerned with an individual and influencing him by means of education and upbringing. But individualistic education must make way for a much more powerful educational influence. The social aspect in education is of great importance. Key individual educational factors lie within society. Thus, individualistic education is forced to address social pedagogy and only with the participation of the latter it can be scientifically justified and practicable (Natorp 2006, p. 111).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and after the Second World War, the content of care and education in some Western Europe countries: Austria, in particular, Switzerland and Germany was predetermined by external factors, especially a poor condition of children and youth. This fact led to the establishment of certain forms of institutional care. Political and economic potential of Germany, controlled by Western powers, was zero. The exception was the church which had survived the collapse of the Third Reich and the communist party – the forces that took over rebuilding the GPR in Central and East Germany. In the West, nationalists of different traditions and Marxists intensified, but there were no organized groups including the effective communist party. Forces of the "New Man" movement were exhausted and muted with the final accession to NSDAP in 1933 (Reble 1962, s. 241).

In respect of the analyzed problem it is important to stress obvious devaluation and impotence of humanistic ideas (idealistic, socialist, Christian) during the war-time and post-war rule of national socialism. Numerous appeals of the "New Man" movement were not able to tame progressive dehumanization of society that mostly influenced innocent children who found themselves in the hell of war. The "Century of the Child" declared by Ellen Key, respect for freedom and children's rights, frank "adolescent self-identification" pathos of the "Meisner formula" were all crucified at the Calvary Cross of the Second World War, destroying lives and crippling future generations. The focus was on the child, its "superiority" and "autocracy". The child had its kingdom which was not to be encroached by anyone but protected against democracy, civilization, mass, materialism and

bureaucracy. Key fought against the so-called general education, which should have been replaced with “individualistic education”. Christianity and its ethics were rejected as such that had outlived themselves. “Life, nature and man are best teachers of life” (Key 2000, p. 175).

This statement could have been the motto of the German Youth Movement whose references to a new man were defeated. “German youth want to arrange their life freely, according to their own definition, self-responsibility and inner conviction. They stand up for a complete internal unity”. This formal, conceptual description with little substance reveals the intention of “breakthrough”: a strong survival of “time” lurked in the irrational and aimed at the hope that was no less irrational or “anachronistic”. “This irrationality was equally unclear when marked by the concept of the inner truth. For the truth as opposed to external authority was interpreted differently just like the personal life truth” (Blüher 1976, p. 213).

Any caregiver knew how important youth movements were for self-education and re-socialization of a young man; how much attention should be paid to therapeutic goals in education, particularly aesthetic (painting, music, dance, theater). In the 1920s, the youth movement took over this untapped field. It influenced education reformers, although youth movements and reformist education were not identical. Klaus Mann emphasized that it was impossible to trace which influenced which but the fact was that the youth movement and reformist education existed in close interplay with each other. In 1910, Paul Geheeb (1870–1961) founded “Odenwaldschule” in Heppenheim / Bergstrasse. In 1906, Gustav Wyneken (1875–1964) founded the “Freien Schulgemeinde *Wickersdorf*” (“Free school community Wickensdorf”) whose central concept of the “youth culture” was highly criticized even within the youth movement itself (Mann 2000).

#### JOHANN WICHERN’S “ROUGH HOUSE” – A NEW FORM OF CARE

The problem of neglected youth did not go unnoticed; it was closely associated with the overall process of social impoverishment in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, “spiritual homelessness”, depreciation of traditional humanistic ideals and Christian values. In the context of religious salvation social aspects of education were most important. It became obvious that social poverty and spiritual decline were in close relationship. Solving the problem could be possible if the society stepped in a bid to build well-ordered public relations in which people were capable of self-identification and spiritual growth. As unrealistic seemed the idea of a harmonious self-contained personality as the goal of education, teachers’ ability to overcome spiritual decline of the youth. The neohumanistic concept of “personality” was increasingly perceived as an abstraction. Conventional pietism of houses of salvation and neohumanistic goals of civic education were equally unrealistic.

Christian pedagogy whose merciful spirit promoted houses of salvation underwent crisis. The ideal of Christian education with its goal of “saving the man for God” became secularized. Despite this Johann Heinrich Wichern tried to promote the idea of houses of salvations. This attempt perfectly demonstrated all problems and controversies of the epoch which he well sensed but did not correct and which would later lead to a crisis of Christian pedagogy. Ultimate mass impoverishment of the population whose tragic impact nobody could withstand, prevented Wichern from speeding up further creative development of social education.

Educational activities of Wichern (1808–1881) – the “father” of all salvation institutions in contemporary Germany – present a pedagogical phenomenon. In 1833, he founded a “rough house” in Hamburg (Wichern 1962, p. 73). In its wake the new direction of care and education quickly became popular abroad, particularly in Switzerland, France, Sweden, the Baltic countries and North America. Thus, in Germany, in 1847 there were 52 towns of salvation. In 1867, their number increased to 404. In Bavaria alone, there were 75 houses of salvation in 1867 (Heuss 1949, p. 91).

The town of salvation served rather as an oligophreno-pedagogical center where the youth found shelter. Wichern’s most important contribution to social pedagogy was the replacement of the old type of orphanage, particularly collective education, with towns of salvation and foster families. Houses of salvation became open, “families” provided education for boys and girls (Heuss 1949, p. 32).

Wichern’s pedagogy is an applied practical discipline related to theology. However, its methods are somewhat different from theological ideas for education is viewed as a function of society, historically associated with the common life of mankind (Wichern 1962, p. 98). Basic theological ideas are employed by pedagogy to show that the relationship with the child should be based on forgiveness. Teachers repeatedly emphasized their desire to create normal living conditions for children, teach them to love God and other people. Forgiveness helped forget the past, sometimes insomuch that children were given new names (Wichern 1962, p. 108).

In my opinion, Wichern’s concept of education is most fully described by a German historian of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Franz Schnabel who distinguished the following features thereof:

- a) education of children should be based on love, not punishment. The child should be given what it lacks: protection, joy, love, all that it could feel in the natural family. Foster families must be allocated in buildings where their members would live and learn together;
- b) foster families and institutions should give children freedom and teach how to use it;
- c) freedom means respect for certain rules. Wichern recognized the need for re-socialization of entrusted children, i.e. the social aspect of education.

In this regard he considered work as a moral category in education, held the opinion that education should take place in a family, not a regulated group. The teacher could not restore the lost family, but he tried to create a similar form – a foster family – within the town of salvation for children; d) in the “rough house” there were family-type groups for 12–14 children of all ages. The group was headed by the oldest member, a “brother”. Wichern believed that in addition to a formal leader (the teacher) children needed an informal one who they would look up to (Schnabel 1955, pp. 94–106).

So, Wichern instilled a new meaning in education: it was no longer seen as salvation of an individual for God, rather as his return to society (resocialization). Thanks to work in the family and town of salvation, children were able to develop their individual abilities. Pedagogy in the houses of salvation took into account the relationship between education and the community; Wichern tried to integrate students into the social community.

#### CHILDCARE IN HERMANN LIETZ'S HOMES OF LEARNING

Hermann Lietz (1868–1919) is one of prominent representatives of the reformist pedagogy. He is the founder of three homes of learning or boarding schools in Ilsenburg (1898), Haubinda (1901), Biberstein in Fulda (1904). To protect students from the negative impact of civilization these schools were located amid nature, in the woods or mountains, away from cities. Lietz reared business, like young people do, with objective perception of the surrounding world through daily training and hard work. The purpose of education consisted in formation of a decent and modest person who would resist material values, sexualism, alcoholism, etc. A school community, according to Lietz, covered a group of 5 to 12 students with a teacher. The main prerequisite that could ensure results was emotional rapprochement. Thus, at that stage reformist pedagogy incorporated education and the community (Lietz 1910, p. 61).

Arrangement of the educational process in Lietz's boarding school in Ilsenburg was adopted from Abbotsholme School (founded by Cecil Reddy, Great Britain). A teacher and a small group of students formed a “family”. The day began with a joint breakfast preceded by reading passages from the Bible or singing. After breakfast there were 5-hour long classes with short breaks. After lunch, students worked in the garden, workshops or in the field. Physical work alternated with music lessons. After dinner students gathered in the chapel and sang spiritual songs which were believed to play an outstanding role in the process of education. Later, church music was replaced with conversations by the river or, if the weather did not permit – indoors. Formation of a harmonious personality was based on a combination of mental and physical labor, development of the national

outlook and good will, social outlook and public awareness; moral attitude to life and the world, religious outlook. As a result, a new person with knowledge of Shakespeare, Goethe, Molière as well as joinery, football, interested in walks and healthy rural lifestyle and deprived of immoral temptations was expected to be formed.

Lietz's life principles and educational techniques were based on strict adherence to aesthetic canons and strong Christian conviction. His colleagues and students claimed that he would not have allowed abuse of power, injustice or humiliation towards his inmates. All of them, without exception, drew attention to the principal traits of their mentor: unusual modesty, simplicity, real willingness to help, permanent concern for each individual child.

Every house was a relatively autonomous school body with its self-government and responsibility for self-functioning. Lietz believed that every student should participate in self-governing activities. Every child must try on the role of a leader, artist, subordinate, etc. "(...) Work and rest, duties and will, activities and leisure were in a healthy ratio: every day was fun, victory over the monotony of everyday life was one of the most important educational objectives" (Meissner 1965, p. 48). However, artificial isolation of students of the same age and sex, the older from the younger, boys from girls and women (teachers, support staff) did not facilitate socialization.

Lietz demanded strict abidance by discipline and did not leave inmates unattended even for a day. This way he was able to convince the public that living in a boarding school could offer children more than school attendance, i.e. provide them with housing. A mentor, just like parents, must always be accessible to the child, help and support it. Teachers should teach children how to keep learning, alternate physical and mental work while enjoying it, look after themselves, formulate and solve different tasks.

Basic forms of life in homes of learning were later reflected in other institutions founded by Lietz's colleagues and students. These included:

- "Family" – a teacher brings together around 5–12 children living in the same house, takes on responsibilities of parents for their care and education approaching every child individually;
- "Guild" – one of the students temporarily manages a group of children performing various assignments around the house, including the care of animals, birds, small repair works, as well as working in the garden, etc.
- "Chapel" – a form of organizing children's free time which is focused on moral education. All students and teachers come together for joint readings, talks, lectures, concerts and performances. The goal is to teach students to understand themselves and others, perceive the unusual with interest and good will;

- “System of prefects” represented an organization of students’ self-government arranged in accordance with the age characteristics of children (Oksa 2005, p. 44).

In general, Lietz’s homes of learning implemented the ideal of rearing a harmoniously developed personality who would be closely connected with the life of ordinary people, hard peasants’ labor in the countryside. He made great efforts to create a new school of the future which would prepare children for life, give them an opportunity to find a job. Boarding schools were designed to become a real home for children. Basics of living together were worked out by students and teachers in charge of the house.

#### ORPHAN CARE IN EVA-MARIE VON TIELE-WINCKLER’S “CHILDREN’S HOMES”

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a common form of care for orphans and street children were “children’s homes” founded by Eva-Maria Tiele-Winckler (1866–1930), also known as Mother Eva. She came into a million-worth inheritance from her father and used the funds to establish “children’s homes” first in Germany and later in India, China and Africa (Thieme 1990, p. 234). She implemented a family-type model of education. In “children’s homes” she created small groups of families with 10–15 children in each taken care of by a “mother” (a sister of charity). Bringing up children by sisters of charity, i.e. foster mothers, was later elaborated on in the concept of SOS Children’s Villages. The content of such education was determined by two key concepts – love of God and motherhood. It modified the young family and placed a “mother” at its centre. She was usually called an “aunt” to stress the connection between the “mother” and her “children” (Thieme 1990, p. 240).

Tiele-Winckler’s contribution to social pedagogy was the support and development of family-type education in her “children’s homes” that made a revolution in educational institutions.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Socio-economic and cultural development of Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries stimulated a search for forms of institutional care. The dominant humanistic ideas and human values, formation of autonomy and initiative in children accounted for creative originality of the proposed approaches. Care adopted different social forms, in particular that of philanthropy, giving paramount significance to charity and assistance, became associated with the reform movement, concentrated around humanistic ideas of the community. Retrospectively and in modern conditions, the forms of institutional care in Germany (Wichern’s “rough

house”, Lietz’s homes of learning, Tiele-Winckler’s “children’s homes”) represent progressive ideas and models of childcare. Educational activities of these institutions were designed to meet children’s needs, develop an active, creative, responsible, independent child who would be able to find its place in life and live in harmony with itself and the outer world. At the center there was a child, its personality, individuality, uniqueness, morality. Teachers were considered paragons of caregiving-related activities benefitting the child.

Research into the legacy of the past is an important source of modern pedagogy, improvement of caregiving and educational activities. Without creative reinterpretation of humanistic values generated by pioneers of social pedagogy, without the analysis of a wide range of prognostic ideas and pedagogical paradigms that emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries it is impossible to develop new attitudes, beliefs, new forms of childcare, etc.

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#### STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł opisuje rozwój opieki nad dzieckiem w kontekście życia społeczno-politycznego w Niemczech w XIX i na początku XX w. Opieka ujmowana jest w różny sposób: ma formę filantropii, dając pierwszoplanowe znaczenie idei miłosierdzia i pomocy bliskim, związana jest z ruchem reformatorskim lub skoncentrowana wokół humanistycznych idei wspólnoty ludzkiej. W artykule dokonano analizy pochodzenia i funkcjonowania instytucjonalnych form opieki, w szczegól-

ności szkołę-przytułek (*Das Rauhe Haus*) Johanna Wicherna, budynki wychowawcze Hermana Litza oraz „domy dziecka” Ewy-Marii Tiele-Winckler. Ci wybitni pedagodzy byli przykładem podejścia opiekuńczego, zwracali oni uwagę na to, by opieka odpowiadała idei dobra dziecka. Działalność opiekuńczo-wychowawcza tych instytucji została zaprojektowana w celu zaspokojenia potrzeb dziecka, rozwoju jego aktywności, kreatywności, odpowiedzialności za realizację działań, zdolności do samodzielnego podejmowania decyzji, znalezienia swojego miejsca w życiu i życia w harmonii ze sobą i światem.

**Słowa kluczowe:** opieka; dziecko; osierocone dzieci; instytucjonalne formy opieki; Niemcy