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Some aspects of social critical pedagogics

In the XX century when the resource model of ideas in the society became dominant the paradigm of theoretical pedagogical cognition expanded. Existential views were complemented by economic and political ones that defined a new vector of human understanding in social pedagogy as a cultural, labor and social capital. The aggregate of social and age related characteristics of subjects that potentially represented the social and labor capital of the society were getting into the system of understanding of Social Pedagogics. The origin of establishment of social work as a theory and practice has a different logic of process formation. Historically the social work as area of cognition and practice evolved towards the expansion of clients groups. Therewith the clients regardless of their significant distinctive characteristics were conceived as socially defective cripples within specific historical time period.

In the late 1960's and early 70's pedagogical theory was suffering a severe crisis of its basis. The philosophical concept that was the paradigm of pedagogical knowledge during the postwar period, namely the spiritual-historicist concept of W. Dilthey and his followers (primarily H. Nohl) and preserved as a paradigmal one till the mid 1960's, was criticized and began to be replaced by other statements of the problem on the essence of pedagogical relations and tasks of Pedagogics. The criticism of W. Dilthey and H. Nohl philosophy of education was under the banner of the need for „realistic rotation", account of accomplishments of Anglo-American philosophy that should be incorporated in continental and primarily in German philosophy of education.

A number of continental philosophers of education tried to advance critical theory as a paradigm of pedagogical science (K. Mollenhauer, H. Blankertz, V. Lempert, W. Klafki). As far back as 1972 in the book of K. Mollenhauer *Theories of upbringing process* the refusal from spiritual-humanitarian philosophy of education on the one hand and from orientation for formation of empirical philosophy of education on the other hand became absolutely evident. Later on the abovementioned group came apart since some of its representatives (for instance W. Klafki) referred to critical rationalism of K. Popper as a philosophical concept that allows comprehending and discovering the basis of pedagogical knowledge; the other (particularly K. Mollenhauer himself) referred to the idea of emancipation as the focal point for Pedagogics and correlated it with the legacy of Frankfurt School and ideas of J. Habermas.

The shift to philosophical anthropology signified the reference to the basis that could provide the pedagogical science with categorical and methodological means for exploring the human being within the educational process.

In the early decades of the 20th century, but especially since the 1920s, the German educationist H. Nohl interpreted social pedagogy in terms of a theoretical framework for professional social work on the basis of the hermeneutic philosophy of science. The hermeneutic perspective has had a dominant position in the German tradition of social pedagogy ever since. After the Second World War the original hermeneutic approach became more critical, revealing a critical attitude towards society and taking the structural factors of society that produce social suffering into consideration. The most important representatives of the critical hermeneutic approach in German social pedagogy are K. Mollenhauer and H. Thiersch, who have developed new theoretical interpretations and originated new interpretative paradigms. Both of these authors have been influenced by the critical theory developed by the Frankfurt school. H. Thiersch plays a central role in developing concepts of social work oriented towards everyday life (alltagsorientierte Soziale Arbeit) and anti-colonializing social work (lebensweltorientierte Soziale Arbeit). Both of these are expressions of the German tradition of social pedagogy [Hamalainen 2003: 70].

W. Lorenz [1999] demonstrates how social policy and education became linked under a cultural label in the 19th century – a natural process given that Germany did not exist in a legal and political sense, but was very well established in a cultural sense. After 1945, masses of German professionals were retrained according to North American social work models with the aim to promote individual-centred and culturally neutral professional practice: „the retraining programmes in social, group and community work were on value neutrality, individualism and client self-determination. The case work model [...] [was] regarded as exportable to every country of the world. This model espoused a liberal notion of formal equality and democracy in the public realm which relegated all questions of cultural differences to the sphere of the private" [Lorenz 1999: 36].

A central figure in this transformation process was K. Mollenhauer – a primary school teacher who eventually became professor for general pedagogy and social pedagogy at the university of Gottingen and who, in his work, elaborated on the humanist tradition of pedagogy. He had to steer a difficult course between the universal claims of pedagogy to represent the totality of processes of social integration that had proved their totalitarian leanings and the institutional, pragmatic reduction of social pedagogy to „everything that is education but not school or family" [Baumer 1929: 3]. He wanted to deinstitutionalize pedagogical thinking whilst keeping it committed to immediate practical tasks arising from people's attempts to cope with difficult life situations. This brought him to use the term „Lebenswelt" (lifeworld) in the tradition of phenomenological sociology [Mollenhauer 1972] as a reference to the coping abilities clients have avail-

able to varying degrees in contexts markedly different from the world which professionals occupy and whose values they often seek to impose.

This idea of a „bottom-up" approach became the focus of the most comprehensive and distinct formulation of the modern social pedagogy project through H.Thiersch. His key publication, Lebensweltorientierte Soziale Arbeit [Thiersch 1992] (in which the term Soziale Arbeit serves as the umbrella term for both social work (Sozialarbeit and social pedagogy), aims at rebuilding academic confidence in this discipline by focusing on its distinct methodology, namely the ability to professionally immerse itself in the complex hermeneutic processes which characterize the everyday life („Alltag") of people who are struggling to cope with and make sense of poverty, conflicts and injustice. Pedagogy-inspired intervention must not take its bearings from institutional objectives, but network with and build upon the countless moments of „expertise" with which people demonstrate their coping abilities in everyday informal and non-formal learning processes. Such interventions are not a flight from political action, but, on the contrary, identify political processes, issues of justice and equality, in life-world contexts in which they build social policy „from the bottom up". Social work could and should engage constructively with social policies on a broad front. Furthermore, these conceptual changes levelled the differences between social work and social pedagogy by committing both to a double task while remaining within their respective traditions [Lorenz 2008: 639].

Social pedagogy developed in parallel and through individual methods which were hardly coherent initially, but it evolved above all in the absence of a summarising and foundational theory which might have elevated the common features of this new educational trend into a form of practical awareness. Despite this, however, social pedagogy is confronted particularly acutely with the specific problems of industrial society, as is becoming increasingly apparent today; after all, it cannot but incorporate in its theory and actions the reality and nature of this society. Social pedagogy brings new clarity to education's status as a function of society, but the manner in which it does so still requires discussion. While the family and school could still insist on their status as the locus for reproduction of developed society and harmoniously defined tradition to which the younger generation was to be initiated through practice, social pedagogy has seen itself – and continues to see itself – as faced with this society's developmental process: in concrete terms, the harm which this society inflicts – or appears to be on the point of inflicting – on the person.

In 1960–70's the paradigm of scientific Social Pedagogics was modified. The leading theorists of German Social Pedagogics of those times develop their ideas in the course of anthropological approach and significantly criticize ideas of early representatives of Social Pedagogics. On this stage of development Social Pedagogics is under notable influence of sociological knowledge. After the Second World War the Nohlian line of professional social pedagogy found new modes of expression, which was influenced epistemologically by critical hermeneutics and the critical

theory. Among those specially worthy of mention are K. Mollenhauer and H. Thiersch who are key representatives of modern social pedagogy. They continued Nohl's programme of developing social pedagogy as an autonomous discipline emphasizing social criticism and social emancipation. Increasingly, the theory of social pedagogy drew away from philosophical anthropology and moved towards critical sociology. The statement of the problem on the new objectivity of Social Pedagogics, diversification of methods of social-pedagogic activity considerably enriched the theoretical and methodological knowledge of Social Pedagogics.

While there are numerous definitions and versions of contemporary critical theory and critical pedagogy [Kincheloe 2004], most of the related literature begins with a discussion of the roots of the theory of critical pedagogy. Historically, critical pedagogy was perceived to be one realization of the critical theory of the Frankfurt School [Kincheloe, Lather 1998; McLaren 2003]. The critical theoretical tradition developed by the Frankfurt School was greatly influenced by the work of K. Marx, and particularly his views about labor. The „Critical Theorists of the Frankfurt School", established in 1923, adopted a less unified social criticism, while still embracing some of Marx's views as they related to schools and education. In its beginnings, M. Horkheimer, T. Adorno, and perhaps most significantly, H. Marcuse, argued that the process of schooling withholds opportunities for students to formulate their own aims and goals, and essentially serves to de-skill students [Apple 1982; Kincheloe 2004].

The „Critical Theorists of the Frankfurt School" argued that schools encourage dependency and a hierarchical understanding of authority, and provide a distorted view of history and other „taken-for-granted truths" that in turn, undermine the kind of social consciousness needed to bring about change and social transformation [Eisner 2002; Breuing 2011: 4].

Critical pedagogy locates discursive practices in a broader set of interrelations, but it also analyzes and gives meaning to such relations by defining them within particular contexts constructed through the perations of power as articulated through the interaction among texts, teachers, and students. Questions of articulation and context need to be fore grounded as both a matter of ethics and politics. Ethically, critical pedagogy requires an ongoing indictment „of those forms of truth-seeking which imagined themselves to be eternally and placelessly valid" [Gilroy 2000: 69]. Simply put, educators need to cast a critical eye on those forms of knowledge and social relations that define themselves through a conceptual purity and political innocence that clouds not only how they come into being but also ignores that the alleged neutrality on which they stand is already grounded in ethico-political choices. T. Keenan [1997] rightly argues that ethics on the pedagogical front demands an openness to the other, a willingness to engage a „politics of possibility" through a continual critical engagement with texts, images, events, and other registers ofmeaningas they are transformed into public pedagogies (p. 2). One consequence of linking pedagogy to the specificity of place is that it foregrounds the need for educators to rethink the cultural and

political baggage they bring to each educational encounter; it also highlights the necessity of making educators ethically and politically accountable for the stories they produce, the claims they make upon public memory, and the images of the future they deem legitimate. Pedagogy is never innocentandif it is to be understood and problematized as a form of academic labor, educators must not only critically question and register their own subjective involvement in how and what they teach, they must also resist all calls to depoliticize pedagogy through appeals to either scientific objectivity or ideological dogmatism. Far from being disinterested or ideologically frozen, critical pedagogy is concerned about the articulation of knowledge to social effects and succeeds to the degree in which educators encourage critical reflection and moral and civic agency rather than simply mold it. Crucial to this position is the necessity for critical educators to be attentive to the ethical dimensions of their own practice [Giroux 2004: 37–38].

The leaders of the movement, including P. Freire, H. Giroux, and P. McLaren, insist that education is always political, and that educators and students should become „transformative intellectuals" [Giroux 1988], „cultural workers" [Freire 1998] capable of identifying and redressing the injustices, inequalities, and myths of an often oppressive world. For P. Freire [1995], critical pedagogy begins with recognizing that human beings, and learners, exist in a cultural context: People as beings „in a situation", find themselves rooted in temporal-spatial conditions which mark them and which they also mark. They will tend to reflect on their own „situationality" to the extent that they are challenged by it to act upon it. Human beings are because they are in a situation. And they will be more the more they not only critically reflect upon their existence but critically act upon it [Freire 1995: 90].

Conclusions. Social Critical Pedagogics – the branch that emerged in 1960s in pedagogical theory in Western European countries and the USA as a result of disappointment in the effectiveness of traditional pedagogical systems. As an integral conception the Social Critical Pedagogics developed mainly in German-speaking countries where the representatives suggested the model of democratic („critical", „voluntary", „humane") educational school with the main goal – „self-fulfillment" of personality. The concepts „emancipation", „freedom", „personal identity" is considered as pedagogical and political categories. The representatives of Social Critical Pedagogics considered the „permanent criticism" of the society and authoritarian institutions as the function of Pedagogics. The Pedagogics shall provide for theoretical analysis of the opportunities of different educational models as „reproduction of societies potential, changes in young generation" (K. Mollenhauer).

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Abstract

Some aspects of Social Critical Pedagogics that is represented in works of P. Freire, H. Giroux, K. Mollenhauer and others have been analyzed in the article.

Key words: social critical pedagogy, pedagogical categories, philosophical anthropology.

Аннотация

В статье проанализированы некоторые аспекты теории социальной критической педагогики, развивавшейся с 1960-х гг. в европейских странах, в частности социально-педагогические идеи А. Жиро, К. Молленхауэра, П. Фрейре и других представителей направления.

Ключевые слова: социальная критическая педагогика, педагогические категории, философская антропология.

Wybrane społeczne aspekty pedagogiki krytycznej

Streszczenie

W artykule przeanalizowano niektóre aspekty teorii pedagogiki krytycznej, która rozwija się od 1960 roku w krajach europejskich, w szczególności idei społecznych i pedagogicznych takich przedstawicieli jak: A. Giroux, K. Mollenhauer i P. Freire oraz innych.

Słowa kluczowe: pedagogika krytyczna, kategorie pedagogiczne, antropologia filozoficzna.