

## Editorial

### *We are introducing the November issue 2019 – Inclusion as a challenge of the times*

Radim Šíp, Lenka Gulová

*"I could talk about the fact that the speed of a motorcade is determined by the speed of the slowest vehicle, such that the teachers cannot attend to the more talented children ... I am against inclusion."*

Miloš Zeman

*"I first recourse to original inclusion. We know its impacts. Disruption... The professional public and the more rational politicians protested against inclusion."*

Václav Klaus Jr.

*"Inclusion has not caused any damage, it is a big short-cut, non major shift of children from the special schools has occurred."*

Klára Laurenčíková

*"The teachers had horrible conditions for the education of children with training rather than health problems. The only change is the statement that we need special educationists, school psychologists, school prevention methodologists."*

Kateřina Valachová

Four actors, four different information versions. Each of them presents something different under the concept of inclusion. The first presents a motorcade that is too slow. The second presents disruption. The third presents a relatively small shift of children from the secondary to the main educational flow, and the fourth presents the remedy of the horrible conditions of the teachers. If the readers appreciated our choice between the camp of the objectors and the camp of the supporters of inclusion, we shall gladly favour the second camp. But the essence of the dispute is more complicated. The following quote is from an interview with Principal Ivana Melichárková, which is given below. Her school is working on the implementation of inclusion processes for seventeen years already. To the question as to what occurs to her when she hears the word inclusion, she replied:

Perhaps I feel a bit of sadness because the idea that I consider to be correct was damaged by the forced implementation "from above" at a moment when it was no longer necessary. Many positively oriented schools existed and it could have been done differently without the subsequent panic. I am personally convinced and I agree with the statement that I read somewhere: let's educate the children together where this is possible and educate the children where this is not possible in the special school system. And we should always remember what each individual child needs and where the child feels safe ([Melichárková, 2019, p. 139](#)).

From this answer, we get a slightly different picture than the one presented to us by the ladies and gentlemen above. No slow convoy, not disruption, no dramatic or undramatic shifts, no horrible situations. The processes that are covered by the concept of inclusion, which is already in progress for a longer period and are not tied directly to "Decree No 27/2016 Coll., on the education of children, pupils and students with special educational needs and gifted children". The Principal expresses sadness at the "enforcement of inclusion from above" - she is sad at the "panic", which the Decree caused.

On the other hand it is honest to say that such schools represented by the Principal were in a substantial minority at the time of adoption of the Decree. The Ministry of Education, Youth and

Sport and the Parliament of the Czech Republic by adoption of the Decree responded to the criticism from the small muddy pond of Czech basin and compared us to the foreign reality. The Czech school system was incapable of providing equal educational opportunities to all citizens and structurally excluded a significant number of the children from the main educational stream. Thus, even after almost 26 years after the revolution, the Czech schools were incapable of coming to terms with the basic condition of life in democratic society. They were incapable of accepting the difference between the children and properly working with it. On the contrary, they persistent in the practice homogenization of the pupils, which in principle has very deep roots. This fact conflicted with the obligations that the Czech Republic had accepted - regardless of whether they were accepted by the Czech Republic itself or as the successor of the previous state departments. The functioning of the larger number of the Czech schools violated Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (ratified in 1948), Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified in 1990) and Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified in 2006). If we wanted to remain part of European society, it was necessary to somehow respond to this. And the Decree was just such a response. Unfortunately it caused panic, a lot of misunderstanding and mainly a big administrative load.

But this does not concern only the legislative part of the matter. A far much more fundamental problem consists in the systemic division of society. If one of the major functions of the general institutions of a modern state, for instance, the schools, is to subtly discriminate and segregate individuals on the basis of (social, cultural, medical, religious) differences, then this systematically creates separate worlds that cannot mutually understand each other. The longer this process takes, the deeper the injuries it shall leave and the society shall continue to disintegrate at an increasingly higher rate. A division is created that in any more demanding situation - for instance, in the period of the, so-called, "migration crisis" - is deepening with characteristic ease and is tearing the entire society. The crises through the individual European states are going through have this common root.

After the experience from the period 2015 to 2016 when the first larger protests arose against inclusion (incidentally, it was also the period of the so-called. "refugee crisis"), the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport replaced the term *inclusion* with *joint education* on its website. And its not a bad choice. Education in its essence is joint, communal. Acquisition of knowledge is never an act of individual effort or the effort of an exclusive group. True education takes place on a universal field. Segregated education suppresses knowledge and creates separate worlds. The idea of joint education is thus not concerned primarily with the inclusion of slow children among the faster children, similarly it does not primarily concern the shifting of the children from the special (practical) schools to the mainstream schools. It concerns the creation of a one cultural and political community, which is capable of intelligently solving problems. Such a community lives with the conviction that it is open to be open to otherness. Of course, this is also accompanied by the fact that those who can be educated together are also educated together.

Inclusion is not an invention of the European Union, it is not the mantra of the "do-gooders" or "multiculturalists", it is not expression of the Jewish or Neo-Marxist conspiracy. It is an idea that arose as a reflection of the political fragility of modern societies that systematically segregate their citizens due the setting of their institutions, and thus divide society into camps, which cannot mutually understand each other. If we want to change this setting, then we must change our mental habits. *We are at the threshold of a completely new epoch of the development of modern society.*

### **Rationalism of early modernism and its collapse**

During the second half of the 18th century, two significant series of events emerged:

1. establishment of modern institutions,
2. national structure of modern society.

Both series created early modern, industrial society to only end its existence through two world wars.

The essential feature of both series was the fact that in the end they formed the political formations that by their internal logic suppressed the heterogeneity of their own population and led to ever increasing homogeneity. Tony Judt reflects this fact in the following passage in which he evaluates the development of Europe in the period just after World War Two:

At the conclusion of the First World War it was borders that were invented and adjusted, while people were on the whole left in place. After 1945 what happened was rather the opposite: with one major exception boundaries stayed broadly intact and people were moved instead... With certain exceptions, the outcome was a Europe of nation states more ethnically homogeneous than ever before (Judt, 2017, p. 27).

However, the tendency to homogenize the society was already encoded in both series of events. Modern institutions - the army, prison, hospital, factories and mainly schools with compulsory school attendance- are institutions, which penetrated into the farthest threads of society. These institutions gave the modern state its internal structure (cf. Foucault, 2000, pp. 199–315). Nationalism contributed to the uniting political and cultural vision (cf. Gellner, 2003). Both series of events gradually intersected, mingled with and reinforced each other (cf. Foucault, 2005). The modern institutions became institutions that were organised at national level and on the contrary nationalism prospered thanks to the modern institutions. And the school was the most fundamental of the institutions in which consolidation and mobilisation of masses and the national targets rubbed shoulders.

What the politicians of the individual states guided by war and post-war treaties created at the level of the horizontal shift of the population was done by the school in some other way at the level of detailed daily work, which managed to effectively dictate the future orientation of the society (cf. Šíp, 2019, pp. 309–402). The essence of modern institutions was to create unity by ensuring that the masses would be effectively subordinated to a set of norms to which all should adapt at no higher cost. This is a very effective homogenisation process to date. Anyone who is incapable of adapting for whatever reason must be pushed to the verge (cf. Foucault, 2000, pp. 254–272). To the special or practical schools, to the reformatories, to camps for people who are “avoiding work”, etc. Thanks to this ants’ effort put in by modern institutions during their everyday operations, both world wars were acceptable although they meant the economic suicide of Europe and its drop from the position of world leader. Thanks to this ants’ work, it was socially and politically acceptable to move thousands of people to and fro across Europe in such a manner that state departments were established that in previous history were never so homogeneous.

World War Two inconspicuously closed one epoch in that it led to its utmost consequences. This is clearly due to the fact that at the end of this war, the processes that directly counter the principles of homogenisation and normalization intensified. The collapse of the colonial order resulted in the great shift of the earlier colonized population to the countries of their earlier colonizers - for instance, Indians and Pakistani to the UK, Algerians and Moroccans to France. These migration waves in the sixties and seventies were accompanied by the phenomenon of cheap labour - for instance, the Turks to Germany. In the meantime, the Western European States responded to the end of the colonial era and the crisis of the nationalist arrangement of mutual integration, which inherently leads to the reduction of state sovereignty and to support of transnational values (cf. Snyder, 2019, pp. 74–79). This fact not only deepened the free movement of goods but also people and ideas. The ICT revolution intensified at the close of the 20th century, and is gradually deepening these processes to such an extent that completely new conditions for mutual existence are emerging. When the Communist Bloc collapsed 30 years ago, the citizens of the former Soviet satellites faced such big diversity that after certain enthusiasm, this variety started horrifying them. They had a decade in which to cope with things that took citizens of the western states half a century. The accompanying phenomenon of this horror and confusion is among other things their feverish inclination to the ideas of homogeneity. However, the degree to which the societies should be open if they want to cope with the reality of the modern day, also frightened the citizens of the Western countries. Many of them

also want to recourse to the order that was typical for the era of early modernism, whereas they gladly forget that it was also a period of unprecedented suffering and collapse of European greatness.

### **Schools at the crossroads: From integration to inclusion and back**

The “battle” for inclusion is taking place in this matrix of historical, political, sociological and psychological movements. The idea of inclusion emerged at the moment when it was clear that the integration processes were failing. However, this was not because of the different pupils themselves, but primarily due to the type of institution that the school is, the values that factually govern it, the functions that really form it. In the process of integration of an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs, we finally realised that the problem does not primarily consist in the otherness of different pupils but in the default settings of the school. School by nature was not established as a *humanity workshop*. The mission of the school was and in many cases still remains the normalization and homogenization of the pupils. The situation is even worse in that many actors are not even aware of this.

They quite often incorrectly contend that inclusion has replaced integration. This is inaccurate. The people who were responsible for integration gradually started realising that for them to successfully integrate, it is necessary to first build an inclusive environment - i.e. an environment, which is ready to work with otherness and considers it as a challenge to the further development and education. Integration and inclusion are two sides of the same coin. And it is this coin that we must use for payment if we want to free ourselves from the spell of the idea of homogeneity.

When we attentively read the interview with Principal Melichárková ([Melichárková, 2019](#)), we realise that inclusive education is being built already long-term. That it is first necessary to set the primary goal. And the goal is for the individual children to feel safe and nice in school and for them to accept the school world and the class as their own. It is only after this that they shall be capable of utilising the potential of joint education. For this reason, it is necessary for instance during the integration of an autistic pupil for the school to first place emphasis on his socialisation and his acceptance by the team, and it is only after this that the teachers can start being interested in the teaching process itself. The awareness that true education is communal leads the teachers to place the value of a cooperative environment above the value of transfer of knowledge for as long as it does not occur at some basic level. It is only after this that teaching itself starts making sense. The capability to cooperate with others is a sign of a “fine-tuned” environment, which provides the pupils with the highest degree of utilisation of the educational opportunities. In order to integrate an autistic pupil, it is necessary to work with the entire class. The entry of any pupil with special educational needs means the transformation of the entire class. In order for this transformation to be moderated in the direction, which is determined by the primary goal - i.e., for all the pupils to feel safe and nice in school and be capable of realising own cognitive potential - the teachers, school psychologist or guidance counsellor must communicate with the parents, pupils, and also mutually between themselves. Thanks to this, the irreplaceable role of the teaching assistants it is becoming increasingly clear. The teachers would not be able to cope with all these functions without their help. The integration of new roles in the school environment, however, does not mean that it is necessary to search for a communication platform, which will allow the representatives from all relevant professions to build a team, whose members can mutually rely on each other. Moreover, there is also the need to communicate with the families and other actors - for instance, non-profit organisations, which provide subsequent education, or schools, with which it is good to share their experience - leads to a situation where the school must overrun its boundaries, that barriers and walls must be broken. An inclusive school cannot be created only on the basis of legislation in the form of a Decree. Such a Decree can however be the beginning of the journey. But the beginning of a journey that can be very long. For the school that we chose as our vanishing line of our thinking, it took seventeen years and certainly not even this school is at the end of its journey to a perfect inclusive environment.

One who currently contends that inclusion failed does not understand its essence. He simplifies

historical events, does not understand the inherent interdependence between the appearance of the society and the appearance of the school. If the inclusive schools should emerge, it shall be necessary to also change the environment that forms and surrounds it. This is just like in the case of the Loreto Day School Sealdah, whose details are available to the readers in the part titled Indian inspiration. A truly inclusive school changes its broader surroundings, changes the people and their social and political horizons. In such a changed environment, the people who compare inclusion with the convoys or disruptions, are considered as funny eccentrics.

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## *Introduction to the issue “Inclusion as a challenge of the times”*

The November issue features a theme that resonates with Czech society, not only with experts in the field, but also with the general population. Inclusion has become a hot topic not only for professional educators, but also for lay people, politicians, journalists and even writers from tabloid publications. In some ways, concerns regarding inclusion might seem to exacerbate divisions in society, but the research studies and other contributions in this issue of our journal in fact prove quite the opposite. The processes associated with inclusion serve to enhance and strengthen the connection of all parties involved, and not just at the school level.

The research studies as well as the other texts published in this issue present inclusion as an opportunity for change, openness and support, all of which promote dignity and respect for all lives. The individual contributions address all the actors involved in school processes, particularly in regards to dealing with individuals or groups with various disabilities and their full inclusion in society. A common theme closely related to inclusion is that of values as part of education, but other issues concerning the life and climate of the school and, by extension, of the larger society are also explored.

Inclusion and its implementation has also been linked to a variety of public figures, their initiatives and courage to be different, to resist conformity and compromise in reaching the fulfillment of their visions. The work of these individuals appears in many of the articles published in this issue of Social Pedagogy, be it the world-renowned innovator in education Sister M. Cyril Mooney, the theologist Prof. Martin Jäggle, the extraordinary elementary school headmistress Mgr. Ivana Melichárková, or Prof. Yevhenii Klopota, who despite his visual impairment has achieved great scientific success and is engaged in various projects dealing with inclusion.

As is evident from most of the contributions, another important aspect that supports the development of inclusion is cooperation with international partners and thus inspiration from abroad. In this issue we offer several of instances of collaboration from completely different types of environment.

The first section of the issue - research studies - is comprised of several contributions that relate to inclusion and inclusive processes within a relatively wide range of topics and target groups. To ensure a certain degree of concision and continuity, we first devote space to studies on inclusion within the school environment. This is followed by two papers on inclusive processes in other environments in terms of working relationships: one text traces the openness of employees in particular workplaces to people with disabilities, while the other examines work within the environments of multidisciplinary teams and traces issues regarding the integration of social workers into such teams.

The first study, entitled **Inclusive education through the view of the principals of the regional network of schools and school facilities within the APIV B Project**, is the work of authors from the National Institute for Further Education. The text presents the theme of joint education from the point of view of the headmasters of a regional network of schools and other educational facilities within the project APIV B. A total of 355 headmasters and institutions participated in the questionnaire survey, with the overall results of the investigation indicating the importance of social interaction among all the actors involved in educational processes.

The next paper, a study by Dagmar Křišová, is called **Gender-sensitive education as a tool for building an inclusive school environment: Comparison of the situation in the Czech Republic, Austria, and Hungary**. The work opens up the question of gender-sensitive education in relation to inclusion. Gender-sensitive education and inclusion combines the common goals of educational fairness for all regardless of their gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, social class, religion or health-related “disability.” The author presents partial results from the international project Towards Gender Sensitive Education, which examines gender equality and the conceptualization of gender in official documents of school policy in the Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary using content-based

qualitative analysis. The examination of these legislative, strategic and curricular documents as well as relevant manuals reveals three different approaches to the thematization of gender equality and thus three different approaches to the concept of fair, inclusive gender-sensitive education.

The following work, entitled **Parents' experiences with inclusive education**, was researched and written by Naděždy Špatenkové, Jany Poláchová Vašátkové and Jindřiška Riesnerová of the Department of Sociology, Andragogy and Cultural Anthropology of the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University in Olomouc. The text focuses on the parents of children with specific educational needs in addressing the research question: "What experiences do parents have with the inclusive education of their children?" The qualitative research design aimed to understand how the parents of "different" children perceive their specific situation, as well as in relation to school education.

The fourth study, **Attitudes towards people with disabilities in the work context in accordance with experience of people with disabilities**, shifts the focus to another environment. The author Lucie Procházková describes the degrees of openness of society to people with disabilities, especially in connection with the working environment. The methodological section of this work consists of quantitative research which employs a questionnaire survey among the Czech population. The results show the positive influence of personal experiences, with the findings also depicting differences with regard to the type of disability. This paper was not officially part of our current CFP, but owing to the cooperation between the editors and the author, we are happy this paper "overflowed" into this issue since this work fits perfectly with our theme of inclusion.

The final research article of this issue is entitled **Selected barriers to the inclusion of social workers in multidisciplinary teams focused on the relationship between social pedagogy and social work**. The study was contributed by a team of authors from the Research Institute of Labor and Social Affairs - Zdeňka Dohnalová, Mirka Nečasová and Robert Trbola. The researchers deal with selected barriers against the inclusion of social workers within multidisciplinary teams with a focus on the relationship between social pedagogy and social work. The relationship between these two disciplines is discussed at various professional levels within a wide scope of interests. Due to the breadth and depth of focus, this article is followed by a supplementary Professional Reflection on the Text, which is a type of commentary we have featured in previous issues in cases in which the editors felt that it would be appropriate. We believe that this reflection builds upon the ongoing dialogue between social pedagogy and social work in our journal which started in 2016 with issue 4(1). The text also outlines the justification provided by Radim Šíp regarding the study's inclusion in the November issue of the journal. This reflection elaborates on the changes that are brought about by post-disciplinary thinking along with the challenges this approach poses to both social work and social pedagogy.

The remainder of this month's issue consists of texts that do not fall precisely within the category of research studies. The most extensive of these sections is devoted to texts on Inspiration from abroad. As foreign authors contributed to this part, this part is bilingual and reader can choose the language according to his/her preference.

**Inspiration from India** is represented here by the philosophy and teaching of an exceptional individual in any context, Dr. M. Cyril Mooney. The first of these four texts on inspiration features a description of the situation and lofty position of Dr. Mooney within the Indian education system. This is followed by an introduction to Sister Mooney the nun, a woman who was able to implement "inclusion" into the deeply stratified Indian society in the form of *value-based education*. With her profound sympathy for the most vulnerable, especially children living in homelessness and poverty, Sister Mooney has been able to transform her vision into a concrete support system that has been put into practice across India and is gradually being spread to other countries. As is evident in the interview with Headmistress Iva Melichárková, who herself has contributed to this issue of the journal, Dr. Mooney's value-based education is gradually being implemented in Czech schools, particularly in those institutions striving toward the goal of inclusion. The first text is also a report on

a group of mostly volunteers who are tirelessly working toward that goal in the Czech environment. Next part of this “Indian inspiration” are two more texts that reflect the institutionalization of efforts to help the most needy children in the poorest rural areas. Both groups of these Czech volunteers are supported by Dr. Mooney and are greatly inspired by her approach to helping people, her creativity in problem solving, as well as the intensity of her continuous work for others.

The section **Inspiration from South Africa** brings interesting insights from the EduTech Africa 2019 conference held in early October in Johannesburg. Author Michal Černý reveals his findings from this important pan-African conference, which for the last few years has been gathering together in an attempt to connect the themes of education and technology in various ways. Of course it goes without saying that it is not possible to discuss a conference held on the African continent and especially in South Africa without taking into account the past social situation of segregation and apartheid, the ramifications of which are still felt today. But inclusion is presented here as an opportunity to connect various elements of society, with the central role played by schools, now free from bigotry and struggling to emerge as a catalyst for change.

Something quite the opposite in terms of inclusion is presented in **Inspiration from America**. Markéta Sedláková presents her experience at several American universities, where inclusion is a natural part of both schools and society. Terms such as participation, collaborative project teaching, emotional skills, the axiological dimension, and self-responsibility have become common parlance in an environment in which a great deal of reflection is devoted to inclusion as a fundamental value towards educational progress, and in which restorative justice is valorized over punishment. Maximum support for the individual and his / her distinctive qualities creates fertile soil to nurture inclusion processes. If the South African situation calls for transformed social connections, then the American inspiration offers a concrete experience of how this can benefit society.

**Inspiration from Ukraine** consists of a text that briefly introduces us to the efforts of the Ukrainian education system to modernize and consistently promote inclusion along with the expert text by the well-known Ukrainian professor Yevhenii Klopota and his doctoral candidate Nataliie Voronska of Zaporizhzhya National University. In Ukraine, a major reform of primary and secondary education is being implemented under the name “New Ukrainian School.” Reforms are also entering higher education, which is seeking to move closer to European educational practice. International partners play a role here, and the Association for International Affairs in Prague, which has been closely cooperating with the Department of Social Education of the Faculty of Education MU, has been involved in these projects since 2011. The text presents several interdependent development projects affecting different levels of the Ukrainian education system with a significant emphasis on inclusion.

The vital role international partners play in understanding inclusion is explored in the **Inspiration from Austria**. Here this is represented by the partnership with Austrian colleagues, including the prominent Professor Martin Jäggle, former dean of the Faculty of Theology and currently Professor Emeritus at the University of Vienna. His contribution captures the development of the project of an Czech-Austrian team entitled *School where I am Human*. This project has been and remains today the origin for many other initiatives on both sides of the shared national border of the two countries. The joint project emphasizes concepts inseparable from inclusion such as creating a culture of recognition, human dignity, values, diversity, school spirituality along with new roles and professions at schools and many other enhancements. A large part of this Austrian inspiration takes the form of insights from the esteemed Martin Jäggle, both in fragments from a long interview with this luminary and in a subsequent video documentary that was created this year in Vienna and Brno.

Another **interview** which we are proud to present in the November issue is a discussion solely with Iva Melichárková, herself a remarkable headmistress of a remarkable school in Brno. Headmistress Melichárková is a figure within the Czech environment who, quite courageously and often “against the tide,” strives to transform her school in line with what constitutes inclusion, including advances inspired by Sister Mooney's teachings.

The editorial team has included three **reviews** in this month's issue. The first appraisal is of a publication entitled *Equality in education: Fairness and inclusion* (The Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2014). Edited and containing contributions by Hongzhi Zhang, Philip Wing Keung Chan and Christopher Boyle, this anthology deals with the issues involved from the perspective of individual authors, while trying to draw attention to the current situation in schools. The review was written by Lucie Pazourková of the Faculty of Education at Palacký University in Olomouc.

The second review is of a book by Sue Briggs called *Inclusion and how to do it: Meeting SEN in secondary classrooms*. This is a remarkable book that presents an overview of the implementation of inclusive processes toward the greater and more successful integration of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) into schools. The methodological clarity of this publication could aid Czech teachers in coping with inclusion issues to support students with such needs in their own classrooms. The publication was assessed by Lucie Hrbáčová of the Faculty of Education at Palacký University in Olomouc.

The final review evaluates a recent Czech monograph by Radim Šíp entitled *Why education and educators fail: Cognitive landscapes and nationalism* (*Proč školství a jeho aktéři selhávají: Kognitivní krajiny a nacionalismus*). This is an extensive scientific work that reviewer Martin Strouhal of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague describes work on inclusion which has the goal of reaching not only academics but also the general public.

Our journal also includes a section called **Laudatio**, which features a text in which author Stanislav Strelec honors doc. PhDr. Miloslav Jůzl, Ph.D. on his 70th birthday. Likewise, the editors also heartily join in with the congratulations.

The current issue concludes with two texts by Jolana Hroncová falling under the headings **Social pedagogy in Slovakia** and **Looking back at the past**. The first contribution provides informative insights into a discipline which touches us all, while the second deals with socio-educational aspects in the work of J. A. Comenius.

Finally, we would like to thank all the members of the Editorial Board as well as the authors and reviewers for their cooperation in the creation of this issue.

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