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PHILANTHROPY IN ANCIENT TIMES: SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS

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Abstract. The article presents the data of ancient times philanthropy that stemmed from community life and was a consequence of the social nature of man; in Rome, for the first time, social and educational activity was formalized, which resulted from moral and legal norms; in the Judaic religion, help to the needy was treated as one of the most important religious practices. The article discusses the most important forms of social aid in the Western antiquity. Charity, volunteering presented as important components of the social and educational activities of modern institutions. The author emphasizes the need for the formation and development of humanistic consciousness, spiritual and moral consciousness of citizens. Therefore, cooperation between educational institutions, families, non-governmental organizations, volunteer movements, charitable foundations for the expansion of active charitable activities, and the creation of a humanistic society is required.

Keywords: philanthropy, social and educational activity, antiquity, Rome, Greece, Judaism, charity, volunteering.

1. INTRODUCTION

Charitable activities in Europe have been taking place since antiquity. For the rich and the poor have always been living side by side. For various reasons, the first ones helped the latter. However, these activities were not properly formalized [11].

The first and the oldest form of help for people in need of support was care provided in large, multi-generational families. There was an unwritten law at the time to look after their relatives, especially when they were orphans, handicaps, at old age etc. [6]. Mutual neighbourhood help also existed to a certain extent. Rex Austin Skidmore says that "even in the time of cavemen, neighbourly help in personal and family problems took place on a daily basis. Almost certainly to the places where the wisest of them lived, led the paths trodden by people who wanted someone to hear them and help them" [10].

The problem of charity is extremely relevant in philosophical and socio-pedagogical science. Such well-known philosophers as Seneca, Hegel, P. Lafarg, J. Mill, A. Carnegie, G. Ford, V. Franklin and others, studied some aspects of charity work. The aforementioned scholars considered charity mostly in the context of its implementation, social influences. In the twentieth century, the so-called private

philanthropy, with representatives of R. Bach, T. Broadhead, K. McCarthy, B. Sivers, J. Soros and others, became widely distributed in the USA.

V. Andrushchenko, I. Bekh, H. Vasianovych, A. Gerasimchuk, V. Kremen, P. Saukh, and others studied the humanistic, spiritual and moral aspect of social and educational activity [13]. In the socio-pedagogical aspect these problems are reflected in the writings of modern researchers – G. Biesta, A. Bezpalko, A. Brozmanová Gregorová, O. Budnyk, T. Blyznyuk, X. Vainola, P. Mazur, N. Seiko, M. Stachoň, etc. [1; 2; 3; 4]. An example of high spirituality and philanthropy was the Polish-Jewish educator, children's author, and pedagogue Janusz Korczak. After spending many years working as director of an orphanage in Warsaw, he refused sanctuary repeatedly and stayed with his orphans when the entire population of the institution was sent from the Ghetto to the Treblinka extermination camp, during the Grossaktion Warsaw of 1942 [5]. The teacher devoted all his life to the children he loved very much. His humanism and kindness turned out to be concrete actions. He decided to be with his children to the end, even knowing that they are going to die.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In ancient Greece, the term “philanthropist” meant “loving humanity”. Myths and their heroes have formed patterns of knowledge and norms of behaviour for the ancients. Mount Olympus was the patron of all philanthropy. The archetype of the philanthropist was the Prometheus, who for the love of the people stole fire. Hercules has devoted his entire life to protecting people from misfortune. Hermes was depicted as a defender of peace and who saves the Greeks from destruction. Eros and Dionysus gave solace to all human problems in love and fun [12, p. 4].

Greek philanthropy was a consequence of the social nature of man and stemmed from community life. Aristotle explained this point in this way: “Nature gives beings of equal origin, especially people, the instinct of mutual love and that's why we praise philanthropists”. The help given to others was above all an expression of love for a human being [8].

The Greeks considered themselves worthy of “doing good”. Others, on the other hand, were mostly barbarians, over whom the ancient Greeks were supposed to exercise power. Charity for them had many meanings. Plato pointed to three of its types: the first one shows up at the welcome greetings, the second – when we are in a hurry to help, the third – when it likes to organize games and parties. In this approach, charity, apart from “doing good”, also included politeness and being sociable [12, p. 4].

The philosophers had a great influence on the attitudes and behaviours of the ancient Greeks. They can be considered as creators and promoters of charity. The purpose of their activities was the idea of selfless service to humanity through the dissemination of knowledge. As a result, some authors consider them the first professional social activists. These authors prove that the philosophers wanted through their activities to contribute to the improvement of the conditions and standards of human life [6].

In ancient Greece, some solutions were introduced that allow us to speak and think about the existence of the first social welfare sources, for example: state care for the wounded in wars and families of those killed, giving money to the poor in theatres and maintaining state health care [6].

People of various social positions and professions performed charitable works. For example, the judges, thanks to their understanding and pity, have softened the harsh law. Demosthenes stated, “in the war you must be dangerous, and in the court be philanthropic”. Politicians, most of them were rich aristocrats, through the phenomenon of “liturgy”, that is, benefits for the public; they spent large sums of money on social activities for society. Their money improved the lives of poorer people [12].

The rulers by virtue of office were philanthropists, and they tried to win over people by being good to them. Philosophers, especially stoics and cynics, set Heracles as a role model. He was a hero who sacrificed his life to help people. Isocrates explained to Philip of Macedo: “I am not saying that you will be able to imitate the deeds of Heracles (because even some gods would not be able to do that), but the character, philanthropy and kindness which he showed to the Greeks, you could copy his actions”.

Similar words were addressed to his pupil Nikocles – King Salamis in Cyprus: “Who wants to reign should be a philanthropist and love his country and his people” [11].

The Agesilaus spartan king won cities not by violence, but by philanthropy. Xenophon for the “philanthropy of the soul” praised Cyrus the Elder, who won over everyone with love, gifts, and good advice and help. During the feasts, he gave his best friends the best dishes, and the absentees sent what he liked best. Among the rulers, the greatest fame of the philanthropist was Alexander the Great. In the consciousness of later generations, he was a philosopher of the deed, and many tribes he taught the principles of life. He became known as a “reconciliation” of all nations with true love. Thanks to his marriage, in a sense he joined Europe with Asia [8].

In ancient Rome, more formal manifestations of activities related to social activities appeared, which resulted from moral or legal norms. There was a transformation of Greek philanthropy into Latin *humanitas*. Cicero, who perceived people as one and only kind deserving of any favour, brought this understanding of the concept. In everyday life *humanitas* was to appear as politeness, modesty, and sensitivity towards others [12].

For the Roman Empire, we can already see the first legal acts regarding social assistance. Emperor Marcus Cocceius Nerva (30-98) introduced alimony, or state benefits for poor parents for children. This provided material support for boys under 18 and girls up to 14 years of age. Originally, the landowners paid them, and in the interests of rich people lay the maximum population growth treated as a cheap labour force. The next goal of the ruler was to increase the strength of the army. Only then, they can also see the need of charitable activities [12, p. 4].

In Rome, the most popular form of help was the *frumentation* – *Cura Annonae*, or the distribution of grain. Gaius Gracchus introduced the custom to sell to proletariat grain at prices lower than the cost of production. However, the tribune Publius Clodius Pulcher (in the times of Cicero) obtained the dedication of twentieth part of all state revenues for these surcharges. The Roman citizen received a voucher for which he was given five-grain portions from the state magazines a month. Several hundred thousand people received this form of assistance. To acquire these rights, one had to have citizenship and settlements in Rome. It was not necessary to be a poor or a pauper. Hence, many Roman citizens could buy a certain amount of grain every month [12].

People occasionally also got other gifts, for example wine, olives or salt. Opportunities for this type of gifts were joyful state events or ordinary state games. During the various holidays, the rich gave gifts to the slaves. High officials issued feasts for *populis romanis*. The Emperor Trajan summed up, saying that the people can be kept in order with the distribution of grain and public spectacles [12].

An important event was the Saturnalia Festival, which lasted for a week during the December period. The patron of the holiday was Saturn, the ruler of the earth, when humanity experienced a golden age. At that time, the carnival mood prevailed, and during the feasts, the happiness of the equality and community of the beginning of humanity was considered. All inequality and riots ceased during the holiday season, the activities of courts and the execution of judgments were suspended. During this time, games and performances were organized, during which money and gifts were scattered between the audience [8].

In Roman tradition, an important institution was *clientele* – plebeian citizens. Under the protection of rich families and wealthier citizens were poor citizens. One of the basic duties of the plebeian citizens was the daily greeting of the sponsor, accompanying him in the processions and giving support during the elections. In return, the patricians invited them to feasts; they defended them in court or supported them with clothing, food, and money. The protection of the Roman state over the poor was strongly associated with politics, and specifically with the concern of the rulers to keep the people in a relative peace [8].

The concern for lower levels of society took various forms, which can be confirmed by the laws issued. Such rights include decrees restricting food, limiting the issuance of feasts and their pompousness, which were aimed at countering the waste of money at the expense of the poverty of their fellow citizens. It should also mention the legislation of Hadrian who abolished the basic problem in Lazio, namely the general indebtedness of citizens [8].

Many ancient religions emphasized the obligation to give alms. Judaism considered as one of the highest religious practices to help the needy. Alms, as a gesture of man's goodness towards his brother, it is first of all imitating God, who was the first to prove his goodness towards man [7]. From the beginning, the Jewish religion proclaims alms as a duty of love to brothers and the poor. In the Bible, we find codified forms of alms: the obligation to allocate a certain portion of the harvest for workers who collect grains or pick up wine grapes fallen to the ground (Leviticus 19, 9; 23, 22; Song of Songs 24, 20; Ruth 2), a three-year tithe for those who have no land – priests, foreigners, orphans, widows (Song of Songs 14, 28 n; por. Book of Tobit 1,8) [6].

According to the Bible, charity should not be mere philanthropy, but above all a religious gesture. Generosity for the poor was often associated with special liturgical celebrations. Alms was a normal component in the celebration of religious events (Song of Songs 16, 11. 14; Book of Tobit 2, 1). The above gesture gives the right to receive God's forgiveness of sins (Book of Daniel 4, 24; Sirach 3, 30). By sharing his goods with others, man collects treasure for himself (Sirach 29, 12). Old Tobias, with all his zeal, teaches his son: "Do not turn your face away from any poor man, and God's face will not turn away from you. If only you have enough, give your alms according to your abundance. You will have little – give less, but do not refuse to give alms even from a small amount of what you have... Give your bread to those who are hungry, and your clothes to those who lack clothing. Of whatever you own in plenty, devote a proportion to almsgiving; and when you give alms, do it ungrudgingly" (Book of Tobit 4, 7-11. 15) [7].

In the Old Testament, charity is more valued than fasting and sacrifice. The prophet Isaiah teaches: "They seek for me day after day, they long to know my ways, like a nation that has acted uprightly and not forsaken the law of its God. They ask me for laws that are upright; they long to be near God: 'Why have we fasted, if you do not see, why mortify ourselves if you never notice?' Look, you seek your own pleasure on your fastdays and you exploit all your workmen; look, the only purpose of your fasting is to quarrel and squabble and strike viciously with your fist. Fasting like yours today will never make your voice heard on high. Is that the sort of fast that pleases me, a day when a person inflicts pain on himself? Hanging your head like a reed, spreading out sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call fasting, a day acceptable to Yahweh? Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me: to break unjust fetters, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break all yokes? Is it not sharing your food with the hungry, and sheltering the homeless poor; if you see someone lacking clothes, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own kin? Then your light will blaze out like the dawn and your wound be quickly healed over. Saving justice will go ahead of you and Yahweh's glory come behind you. Then you will cry for help and Yahweh will answer; you will call and he will say, 'I am here.' If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist and malicious words, if you deprive yourself for the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, your light will rise in the darkness, and your darkest hour will be like noon" (Isaiah 58, 2-10).

God is the one who first of all wants mercy from man. The prophet Hosea teaches: „Let us know, let us strive to know Yahweh; that he will come is as certain as the dawn. He will come to us like a shower, like the rain of springtime to the earth. What am I to do with you, Ephraim? What am I to do with you, Judah? For your love is like morning mist, like the dew that quickly disappears. This is why I have hacked them to pieces by means of the prophets, why I have killed them with words from my mouth, why my sentence will blaze forth like the dawn- for faithful love is what pleases me, not sacrifice; knowledge of God, not burnt offerings" (Hosea 6, 3-6).

These ideas have been to a large extent affected by educational and social work. For example, "after 1989 in Slovakia there is a significant development in both spheres – in the sphere of social work and in volunteering. Social work starts to develop quantitatively and qualitatively, on all perceived levels, as a practical activity and profession, as a science, and as a field of study. At the same time, there is a development in volunteering and voluntary activities. The development of civil society brought with itself the development of the volunteering phenomenon. In some areas, such as humanitarian or charitable work, the space for full implementation had just opened up, but in the majority of civil and voluntary activities a new tradition emerged" [4, p. 104].

According to the authors, the following processes were particularly important for the formation of the reciprocal relationship between social and voluntary work:

- elimination of national paternalism from social policy and transferral of responsibilities to the citizens;
- transformation of the social security system and the system of social services;
- transformation of public administration;
- de-institutionalisation of social services;
- development of new types of social services and social work in the field [4, p. 104].

Today, philanthropy is also a form of social and educational activity, which manifests itself in love of neighbor, sacrifice, kindness to the whole world, assistance to the needy, which is directly reflected in the concrete actions of a person.

Humanism, charitable relations is often referred to as the focal point of social pedagogy. "...In the social pedagogical approach there are some concepts that keep returning and that therefore work as landmarks or bearings – concepts such as the individual, autonomy, democracy and relationship. This is both in relation to children and to the social pedagogical work with marginalised adults" [9, p. 13].

"The implementation of this activity takes place in the following areas: socio-educational prevention, diagnosis and collaboration with the student's family, social and educational activity with gifted students, social and educational activity with deviant students, work in terms of inclusive education and socio-cultural animation in schools" [1].

While teaching universal values, we should recognise such factors as the priority ones: focusing primarily on the study of our own historical experience for the development of high civic culture; combining the family and regional-national traditions, customs and rituals for filling the living space with the elements of spirituality; providing conditions for enriching the socio-cultural experience towards teaching progressive ideas of European nations and peoples to young students [2, p. 65].

3. CONCLUSIONS

Societal processes related to the modernisation of society change the attitudes of people in relation to volunteering, and they present new challenges for social and educational work. Over the past two decades, the area of social services has changed significantly. Responsibility for the provision of social services is shifting from government to private and non-profit sectors at the local level. Along with this shift, there is an effort to encourage volunteers to participate in fulfilling social needs [4, p. 110].

Charitable activity today should become the basis for the formation of a new axiology of humanity. For this purpose, it is necessary to develop the humanistic consciousness of society and to form spiritual and moral self-consciousness. Due to the abundance in various spheres of life, including education, social work, manifestation of man. Therefore, it is important to eliminate the psychology of consumption, selfishness, and to introduce spirituality, morality, starting with family education, school environment, etc. This requires the cooperation of educational institutions, families, non-governmental organizations, volunteer movements, and charitable foundations to promote active charitable activities, creation of a humanistic society.

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Афтика Лешек. Філантропія в стародавні часи: соціальний та освітній аспекти. *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, **6** (1) (2019), 149–154.

У статті обґрунтовано, що в давнину філантропія виходила з громадського життя і була наслідком соціальної природи людини. У стародавньому Римі вперше формалізовано соціальну та освітню діяльність, що впливає з морально-правових норм; в іудейській релігії допомога нужденним трактувалася як одна з найважливіших релігійних практик. У статті розглядаються найважливіші форми соціальної допомоги в західній античності. Благодійність і волонтерство представлено як важливі складові соціальної та освітньої діяльності сучасних інституцій. Автор наголошує на необхідності формування та розвитку гуманістичної свідомості та духовно-моральної самосвідомості громадян. Для цього необхідна співпраця освітніх закладів, сім'ї, громадських організацій, волонтерських рухів, благодійних фондів для поширення активної благодійної діяльності, створення гуманістичного суспільства.

Ключові слова: філантропія, соціальна та освітня діяльність, античність, Рим, Греція, іудаїзм, благодійність, волонтерство.