Poverty, Charity and Social Welfare in Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries

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Olga Fejtová,
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea to put this book together came about during the annual international conference dedicated to urban history called "For you always have the poor with you" – From Charity to the Social Politics Within Cities in the 18th–20th Century, jointly organised by the Prague City Archives, the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and by the Faculty of Humanities at Charles University, which was held in Prague in 2013. Stimulating and inspiring discussions as well as the high quality of submitted studies related to modern social policy of the 19th and 20th centuries led editors to the idea of making the most interesting papers from this conference available to a wider international audience.

The editors of the book would like to express heartfelt thanks not only to all authors, but at this point also to their collaborators, without whose unselfish efforts this book would never have been published – especially to Dr Klára Polasek for translations into English and to Steven Conway and Sharon King for revision of English texts; we are equally grateful to Dr Nina Lohmann for revision of the German texts.

Last but not least, without the extraordinary understanding and generous support of both the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the City of Prague (Prague City Archives), this book would never have been published.

Veronika Knotková

INTRODUCTION

OLGA FEJTOVÁ, MILAN HLAVAČKA,
VÁCLAVA HORČÁKOVÁ
AND VERONIKA KNOTKOVÁ

The issue of poverty is currently an important one. The renewed interest in this topic led the organisers of traditional scientific meetings dealing with the comparative history of cities (meetings which have been taking place in the Prague City Archives since the 1980s) to the idea to organise a conference which would focus on poverty and social care in Prague and in other cities throughout Central Europe from the Enlightenment reforms to the destruction of the system of municipal social care in the Czech Lands by the Nazis in the 1940s. The conference took place on October 8–9, 2013 under the title "'For you always have the poor with you' ...from charity to municipal social policy" in Clam-Gallas Palace in Prague. The organisers were the Prague City Archives, the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the Faculty of Humanities at Charles University in Prague.

The conference also marginally dealt with development in earlier periods, i.e. during the Early Modern era, where the roots of modern development of social welfare are to be found. Yet the basic question remained the same: what was symptomatic of the social problems of cities in the 19th and early 20th centuries in the Czech Lands? At the beginning, the Austrian state took over a considerable portion of the care for the poor from churches, private charitable organisations and cities. However, the state gradually began to return the provision of social care back to the competence of municipal administrations. Expanding and internally differentiated social care in Austria (unlike Prussia) had reached a level at which carrying out social care became unmanageable on the state level, financially as well as organisationally. Thus, municipalities, as evidenced by the excellent example of Prague, began to intensively cultivate this sphere of their duties. During the inter-war period, municipalities managed to polish the social care system to relative perfection despite the severe effects of the economic crisis. Yet it was the state again (specifically the

Nazi Reich and afterwards socialist Czechoslovakia) that took this agenda away from municipalities only to return it to them in the form of delegated powers.

Conference discussions mainly focused on contemporary reflection and argumentation against the background of key reforms as well as on internal and public debate associated with them. Furthermore, institutional forms, which came into existence to ensure steps towards dealing with repeatedly escalating social problems in cities, were also examined at the conference.

Topics concerning the transformation of the poor and social policy in the urban environment occurred as well, since municipalities in general began to change dramatically due to mass migration and rapid urbanisation from the 1860s. The organisational, financial and institutional base required for coping with social (and subsequently socio-medical) problems of the metropolitan population constituted another set of conference topics.

The related issues of the coexistence of state and municipal institutions as well as the constant renewing of the network of religious and/or various types of associational social institutions, i.e. ties between public and private care for the poor, completed the set of conference topics.

The topic of the evolution of the perception of poverty and its professional reflection was also included. The conference participants dealt with both the literary (journalistic) and fine art reflection on poverty as well as with the gradual reshaping of its image in the eyes of the urban public. Poverty (including its most drastic public manifestations, as well as the impact of the specific mental world of the "modern" precariat on the "cultivated, middle class" parts of the city) was an integral (functional) part of everyday city life. Thus the conference also included debate on the organisational and financial "management" of poverty including a debate on the diverse political instrumentalisation of social issues in its urban instantiation as poverty issues became a part of the permanent repertoire on the political scene (not just local).

To understand the development of the care for the poor and social policy in Prague, or in the Czech Lands generally – which aimed to remove, the practice of alms-giving in favour of general social insurance – it was necessary to compare the practice carried out by the city of Prague with other examples, both domestic and foreign (Cisleithanian and Transleithanian municipalities, as well as with a wider European horizon).

The abovementioned conference topics subsequently became the decisive criterion for the selection of papers included in this volume. From a total of 34 participants at the conference – the dealings are described in detail in a report by Martina Maříková and Martina Power, which was

published on the website of the Institute of Historical Sciences of the Humboldt University Berlin, H-Soz-Kult – twenty of them were asked to produce studies based on their conference papers, chronologically defined by period from the beginning of the 19th century to the 1940s. At the centre of their attention was Prague with the Austro-Hungarian, or rather the European, context of its development in the social sphere. The entirety of all papers presented at the conference in 2013 is being published in parallel in the journal Documenta Pragensia (no. 34/2015) in the form of separate studies in the original languages.

PART I:

TENDENCIES OF DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER ONE

"FOR YOU ALWAYS HAVE THE POOR WITH YOU…": FROM CHARITY TO MUNICIPAL SOCIAL POLICY

OLGA FEJTOVÁ AND MILAN HLAVAČKA

Abstract: Any urban organism has faced the problem of poverty throughout its existence. In the Middle Ages and early modern times, poverty policy in the European context oscillated between care, control and repression. In the early modern period we can trace the roots of modern European poverty policy, based on the belief that care for the poor is not just a matter of private and religious facilities, but one of the main tasks of the state. Old age, illness and unemployment were the three basic causes of poverty during the examined time period: the Austrian, and in particular Czech approach to poverty eradication at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries was determined by connection of the state with the church and municipal bodies of the care for the poor through the so-called "Poor Institutes", active in the area of open care for the poor. The system of institutional care then connected the areas of health care and poverty care. The original system, installed during the Enlightenment era, which centralised care for the poor mainly in the hands of the state, was transformed in the 19th century due to financial problems. Thus, the obligation to care for the poor was transferred onto the shoulders of municipalities where the given individual in need had his permanent residence. A new approach to solving both the traditional poor and newer workers' issues was tried at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, resulting in a merger of all these issues into a single "humanitarian" area. This new concept of social policy subsequently served as a basis for the reorganisation of social policy in Czechoslovakia, whereas the central problem of the system continued to be the issue of unemployment.

Poverty is a concept that has to be always regarded with a respect for the contemporary political, economic, social and psychological context.

The definition of poverty has always been dependent on the perception of contemporary subsistence minimum within a certain social group, which has always been a relative value, related specifically and exclusively to the socio-economic circumstances of that given social group.[1] Yet poverty cannot be reduced only to material poverty, it is also a social exclusion, accompanied by discrimination at the level of social opportunities.[2] The poor, the elderly, as well as sick or orphaned individuals have become recipients of systematic care.[3] Poverty and beggary have primarily been related to the urban environment.[4]

The problem of poverty has accompanied cities and their inner functioning throughout their development. The urban organism has always had to react to problems associated with the daily life of the lowest classes, to individuals on the outskirts of the city or to individuals entirely excluded. The church has played a dominant role in this area since the Middle Ages. In addition, there have also been various private initiatives, coupled with activities of individuals and local communities (e.g. guilds) – or their administrative institutions respectively – and the royal initiative cannot be forgotten either. In the long term – and in the context of the European situation – fighting poverty has evolved from non-systematic care provided by individual donations to collectively organised and managed care for the poor, resulting in systematic social care in the 19th century, adopting a form of targeted social policy, provided by the state or municipal institutions.[5]

In the Middle Ages and Early Modern era, the poverty policy ranged between care, control and repression. A widely shared view that poverty actually constituted "God likes it like that" status in the medieval European Christian society, and therefore there was no distinction between

[1] Poverty was a caused as well as accidental, both absolute and relative phenomenon of a group or individual character, subjective or objective, caused by natural and social conditions, individual destinies and their own actions, or a combination of those all phenomena. Cf. Bohumil Geist, *Sociologický slovník* [Dictionary of Sociology], 1st edition, s.v. "chudoba" [poverty], (Praha: Victoria Publishing, [1993]), p. 116.

[2] Bedřich Loevenstein, "'Každý svého štěstí strůjcem?' Chudoba: evropské percepce a praktiky" ['Every man is the architect of his own fortune.' Poverty: European perception and practice], *Dějiny a současnost* 34 (2012), no. 1: p. 24.

[3] Wolfgang von Hippel, *Armut, Unterschichten, Randgruppen in der Frühen Neuzeit* (München: Oldenbourg, 1995), p. 45.

[4] Andrea Iseli, *Gute Policey. Öffentliche Ordnung in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Ulmer, 2009), p. 45.

[5] Geist, *Sociologický slovník*, p. 409.

the worthy and unworthy poor, and care for the needy was actually a basic task of contemporary society, had its limitations.[6] On one hand, protecting the poor and weak represented both an important element of legitimising medieval reign and also a contemporary ideal way of life. Additionally, Christian alms was a ritual, a question of social prestige as well as a "heavenly" reward.[7] At the theological level, there has been a differentiation between "the poor with Peter", i.e. ecclesiastical persons who had voluntarily chosen poverty, and "the poor with Lazarus", i.e. secular people who found themselves in need.[8] On the other hand, the medieval Christian concept has also reflected the principle of "culpable" or "honour" poverty.[9] In relation to this phenomenon, there can be identified both a generally declared sympathy and an extreme aversion to healthy individuals who made their living by begging. There was a persistent theoretical debate in the medieval Christian intellectual environment, which attempted to address the question of who to support – all the "needy" or just those who were in their regrettable situation involuntarily.[10]

The Christian teaching perceived the poor primarily as an object of mercy and therefore primarily cared about the people who actually provided the support.[11] Almsgiving (support) was supposed to create a "mutuality between the donor and the recipient."[12] In the late Middle Ages and in early modern times, however, a tightened regimentation and control occurred. Christian mercy, based on the principles of Christian ethics, remained merely one of the motives for supporting the poor. A structural change in perception of the relationship between poverty and work, associated with the implementation of the ideas of humanism and the Reformation, began to play an important role at that time – contemporary society consistently began to distinguish poverty as a result of the inability

[6] Loevenstein, "Každý svého štěstí strůjcem?," pp. 24–25.
[7] Ibid., p. 25.
[8] Bronisław Geremek, *Slitování a šibenice* [Mercy and gallows] (Praha: Argo, 1999), p. 33.
[9] Ibid., pp. 26–27.
[10] Wolfram Fischer, *Armut in der Geschichte. Erscheinungsformen und Lösungsversuche der "Sozialen Frage" in Europa seit dem Mittelalter* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1982), p. 41; Geremek, *Slitování a šibenice*, p. 24; Lukas Clemens, "Armenfürsorge in den mittelalterlichen Städten Westeuropas," in *Armut. Perspektiven in Kunst und Gesellschaft*, eds. Herbert Uerlings et al., (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2011), p. 116; *Milosrdenství ve středověkých městech*, [Mercy in Medieval towns] (= Documenta Pragensia Supplementa 4), ed. Kateřina Jíšová (Praha: Scriptorium, 2013).
[11] Geremek, *Slitování a šibenice*, pp. 33–34.
[12] Loewenstein, "Každý svého štěstí strůjcem?," p. 25.

to work, lack of income from work, lack of job opportunities or the poverty caused by a lack of willingness to work.[13] This approach resulted in the gradual establishment of new types of facilities for the poor in cities. These facilities actually expanded the functionality of originally generously and fairly universally conceived spitals/hospitals (these medieval hospitals combined health care and care for the poor). In the 16th century, European cities also started to operate facilities whose purpose was to identify the poor who were able to work and who claimed various forms of support in order to compel them to work. The very first facility of this type was established in England in 1555 and spread to the continent about four decades later (Amsterdam).[14] These institutions spread through Western Europe from the second half of the 17th century. Their statutes declared that education of the poor but physically able to work was their priority, in full accordance with the principles of Christian morality. Such re-educated individuals could be re-integrated into municipal communities. These hybrid spital-prison institutions – although they could acquire the form of "houses of work", "correctional facilities" or "houses of forced labour" (house of correction) – often had a less clear-cut form, focused on the effort to isolate the poor.[15] In practice, these "hospitals" (in contemporary terminology) accepted the sick, the elderly and the physically and mentally disabled. Sooner or later, they outnumbered the employable inmates, who had been accepted for re-education. Thus the original educational purpose of these institutions was never fully met, mainly due to economic problems, hand in hand with a lack of cooperation with the surrounding municipal communities.[16]

The requirement for the internment and segregation of the poor who were able to work appeared in the European context before the Enlightenment era, and such requirement actually did not compromise the continuity of traditional Christian mercy.[17] Therefore, establishing these large spitals – or types of criminal detention facilities – cannot be considered exclusively

[13] Hippel, *Armut*, p. 4.
[14] Franz Dorn et al., "Zucht- und Arbeitshaus," in *Armut. Perspektiven in Kunst und Gesellschaft*, eds. Herbert Uerlings et al., (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2011), p. 68.
[15] Geremek, *Slitování a šibenice*, pp. 220–228.
[16] Iseli, *Gute Policey*, pp. 48–49. The year of 1656 represents the beginning of such policy in Europe – a decree confirming the establishing of a "General Spital" in Paris was issued. It was an administrative unit with a half-court character and a clear-cut repressive purpose – cf. Michel Foucault, *Dějiny šílenství v době osvícenství* [Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason], (Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 1994), pp. 7, 37–38.
[17] Geremek, *Slitování a šibenice*, pp. 150–180, 227.

as a product of the Enlightenment era.[18] The Enlightenment reality merely provided them with a universal character and made their massive expansion possible in connection with the development of charitable activities promoted and organised by the state. Besides, in the pre-Enlightenment era, there were partial attempts (conducted by the state administrative) to record the number of the poor, to fund their support and to distribute these financial means through an organised network of secular and religious institutions.[19] Similarly, we cannot fully agree with Michel Foucault, who argues that it was the Enlightenment era which created a "dividing line between work and idleness." [20]

Requirements for dividing the poor into two groups: employable beggars and vagrants living on alms, and the poor who were unable to provide sustenance for reasons of age or other serious conditions, had existed within the secular government throughout the entire early modern period. The Enlightenment époque only triggered the institutionalisation of tackling this problem in an urban environment.[21] A trend of centralisation and rationalisation is therefore associated with the advent of the early modern period of European history.[22] Behind the new, largely rational approach to poverty in the early modern times stood new ideas of mercantilism, which perceived poverty in people able to work as a failure of the sovereign or the state.[23]

Poverty was definitely not a marginal problem for urban settlements in the early modern period. Numbers of people reliant on alms undoubtedly differed, not only locally, depending on the size and nature of cities, but also depended on various critical moments that periodically affected early modern cities (wars, epidemics, fires, etc.). The latest research suggests that up to one third of all households may have been reliant on alms in the early modern cities and up to a half of all burgesses were not able to generate savings, i.e. they were constantly teetering on the brink of poverty.[24] Until the early modern period, care for the poor had been private and church business. In the 16th century, municipal or aristocratic

[18] Foucault, *Dějiny šílenství*, p. 40.
[19] Geremek, *Slitování a šibenice*, pp. 150–180.
[20] Foucault, *Dějiny šílenství*, p. 49.
[21] Ibid., p. 174. Forced labour was a "coercive measure" in such correctional institutions.
[22] Loewenstein, "Každý svého štěstí strůjcem?," p. 25.
[23] Sebastian Schmidt, "Armut und Arme in Stadt und Territorium der Frühen Neuzeit," in *Armut. Perspektiven in Kunst und Gesellschaft*, eds. Herbert Uerlings et al., (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2011) pp. 127–128.
[24] Ibid., p. 121.

institutions became increasingly involved in this sphere as well.[25] In early modern times, the poor policy gradually became a part of disciplinary measures enforced by the temporal power, which standardised public and moral life in Prague via police orders and regulations. The "poor police" featured, together with interventions in the field of religion, health, economy and construction, a basic means of regulating everyday life.[26] In this respect, the poor policy represented a part of measures called "gute Policey" – an instrument for achieving a "public good" – a desired order of early modern urban society.[27] The poor police measures mainly concerned traditional forms of dealing with poverty, i.e. institutional, closed hospital care, the practice of alms, etc. They were still based on the principles of Christian ethics along with regulating the occurrence of beggars.[28]

A decisive period that changed the perception of poverty and sought new ways to solve it was the 18th century. On one hand, this was the era when the development of early modern society was crowned, and on the other hand it was a period of anticipating the development of poverty based on new principles brought by the industrial period. In the 18th century, the urban poor policy was affected by the principles of communisation, rationalisation, bureaucratisation and last but not least by education.[29] Generally, cities tried to improve the organisation of care for the poor by concentrating its financial funding in the hands of the municipal administration, as well as by keeping lists of the poor, by provisions of job opportunities for the poor and especially by ensuring their education for work, or ultimately for a bourgeois morality.[30] During that period, however, new requirements started to be implemented in the ongoing system of care for the poor. These new elements actually hinted at – at least in some aspects – the concept of future modern poor care of the

[25] Ibid., p. 120.
[26] Cf. Olga Fejtová, *"Já pevně věřím a vyznávám…" Rekatolizace na Novém Městě pražském v době pobělohorské* ['I firmly believe and confess…' Counter-Reformation in Prague New Town during the post-White Mountain period] (Praha: Scriptorium, 2012), p. 82 – the anti-luxurious agenda occurred only in a limited way in Prague, when compared to foreign countries.
[27] For more on the "gute Policey" and on the poor police see Iseli, *Gute Policey*, pp. 8–31, 45–49.
[28] Cf. Robert Jütte, *Obrigkeitliche Armenfürsorge in deutschen Reichsstädten der frühen Neuzeit. Städtisches Armenwesen in Frankfurt am Main und Köln*, (Köln et al.: Böhlau, 1984), pp. 331–340.
[29] Hippel, *Armut*, p. 47.
[30] Ibid.; Fischer, *Armut in der Geschichte*, p. 41 – a need to force the poor to work was already being emphasised by the mercantilism at the end of the 17th century.

19th century, including principles of subsidiarity, individualisation, right of domicile and also discipline.[31] The official state policy interfered in the sphere of urban poverty, seeking to enforce the abovementioned principles.[32] Specifically, it was mainly an effort to concentrate funds dedicated to the care for the poor in the hands of the municipal administration. And it was also the municipality that was supposed to synchronise all activities of other entities engaged in the area of poor care (churches, charitable societies, guilds, etc.).

The roots of modern European poor policy clearly lie in the early modern period. It was then concluded that poor care is not merely a matter of private and church facilities, but also one of the basic tasks of the state. Nevertheless, solving the problem of poverty in early modern states – setting up a facility that could provide work for the poor as well as their education – proved to be of limited efficacy. The "coercive workhouse" was a place intended to offer integration into the civic society instead of punishment and banishment from the city to those capable of work but living on begging. Besides, the integration of their inmates into urban society was equally important. Yet the achievements of such types of corrective facilities had been poor and stigmatised people who found themselves in them. As early as in the 18th century, it was obvious that the coercive workhouses did not solve the problem of urban poverty.[33]

The fundamental triad of causes of poverty at the threshold of the 19th century were: old age, various illnesses and unemployment.[34] Estimates valid for the urban population of European capitals in this period indicate that about 20–30% of the entire urban population was constantly balancing at subsistence level. Individuals belonging to this set were constantly threatened by relegation to the social bottom and a possible subsequent sentence to live on various forms of support for the poor. On average, 10–20% of the urban population was dependent on various forms of support.[35] The abovementioned facts were the main reasons for starting to think about various ways to minimise the consequences of two basic life

[31] Ibid.

[32] In some parts of the Reich, the urban poor care was already under state (or monarchal) supervision at the beginning of the 17th century, e.g. in Berlin. Compare Wolfgang Radtke, *Armut in Berlin. Die sozialpolitischen Ansätze Christian von Rothers und der Königlichen Seehandlung im vormärzlichen Preußen* (Berlin: Akad.-Verl., 1993), p. 55.

[33] Schmidt, "Armut und Arme in Stadt und Territorium der Frühen Neuzeit," p. 128.

[34] Fischer, *Armut in der Geschichte*, pp. 82–83.

[35] Ibid.

handicaps – illness and old age. The output of such efforts was the birth of social insurance, which, however, in the first phase was earmarked merely a form of health or accident insurance.[36]

In the 19th century, the socio-economic reality changed rapidly as the industrialisation process expanded the traditional issues of poverty also regarding workers. Solving the issues of the poor and other social issues in the 19th century influenced the shaping of liberal constitutional states. The state theory (and the law system as well) subsequently changed the view of the relationship between the state and an individual. This development opened a substantial debate on to what extent the state should act as a central provider of poor care. Debates on who is really poor, and who is therefore entitled to receive support from public institutions were endless. Another widely debated topic was the responsibility of the society/state for the lowest strata of society and its responsibility for improving the situation of the poorest. Especially in the second half of the 19th century, the answers to this question ranged from liberal stances, through Christian ones, to new socialist views. In liberal theory, (which massively influenced political systems of European states in the first half of the 19th century), the "absolute definition of poverty" was heavily promoted. Poverty meant merely a lack of the necessary material means for physical survival (food, clothing, housing).[37] This strict approach resulted in deriving a definition of the poor which represented only persons who could not solely for reasons of old age, disease and/or juvenile age (in the case of orphans) provide for themselves. However, practical implementation of this definition was rather rare, e.g. in England. In the 1830s, the British Poor Law allowed financial support only to those who were willing to enter the coercive workhouses and work there under very difficult circumstances. In other countries, the category of persons who should be supported by the state or municipalities was not that radically and extremely determined. Nevertheless, the general tendency was to differentiate support given to the needy according to their current situation.[38]

The social question became one of the major themes of social discourse in the Czech Lands in the 19th century as well, since it represented a fundamental aspect of the transformation of the estates-feudal agrarian society to a modern industrial society.[39] In the first half of

[36] Ibid., p. 85.
[37] Andreas Gestrich, "Armut im Liberalen Staat," in *Armut. Perspektiven in Kunst und Gesellschaft*, eds. Herbert Uerlings et al., (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2011), pp. 130–131.
[38] Ibid., p. 132.
[39] Werner Drobesch, "Die 'soziale Frage' in der Habsburgermonarchie im

the 19th century, initial responses to problems of arising industrial society – along with rather limited discussions on poor care issues and newly, social issues too – were mostly non-systematic solutions focused on particular issues. Contemporary debates and subsequent proposals oscillated between bureaucratic interventions – which were still ideologically anchored in guild-feudal estates establishment and took the form of "reform from above" – and considerations which led to social utopianism on the opposite side of the sphere.[40]

In the Habsburg monarchy, a model of "social state" by Lorenz von Stein became the defining idea of theoretical discussions dedicated to solving social issues. Basically, it was a concept of "conservative modernisation", which distanced itself from the positions of both liberalism and the emerging socialist concepts. Stein's proposals aimed at achieving social harmony between capital and labour, through social reforms under the auspices of the state.[41] This model sought the third way between capitalism and socialism and from the era of Taaffe's government it became part of the official state-bureaucratic discourse and influenced political reform steps of the state. The idea of social reforms also penetrated political concepts, forming political blocs and programmes of various national groupings.[42] When confronted with the need to solve poverty and other social issues – which greatly increased during the 19th century – the state power had to accept a series of compromising procedures that required state intervention, and thus ultimately strengthened the position of the state in this area.

At the very beginning of state reforms, the issues concerning both the poor and working class (social issues) were to be separated (first administratively and later also fiscally).[43] Traditional poverty was supposed

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zeitgenőssichen gesellschaftwissenschaftlichen Diskurs, *Moderní dějiny. Časopis pro dějiny 19. a 20. století* 20 (2012), no.1: p. 2.

[40] Ibid., pp. 2–4. On one hand, it was a concept by Matthias Koch, Albert Hummelauer, Johann Perthaler, and on the other hand it was a theory by Bernard Bolzano.

[41] Ibid., pp. 4–5.

[42] Ibid., pp. 5–6.

[43] Milan Hlavačka, "Chudinství a sociální politika: terminologické vyjasnění, historický přehled a koncepce řešení" [Care of the poor and social policy: terminology, historical survey, concepts of solution] in *Chudinství a chudoba jako sociálně historický fenomén: ambivalence dobových perspektiv, individuální a kolektivní strategie chudých a instrumentária řešení* [Care for the poor and poverty as a social and historic phenomenon], eds. Milan Hlavačka and Pavel Cibulka (Praha: Historický ústav, 2013), pp. 40–58; *Ottův slovník naučný* [Otto's encyclopaedia] (further referred to as OSN) vol. 12, 1st edition, s.v. "chudinství"

to be managed by municipal and private initiatives and the new "workers' poverty" was subject to state social regimentation.[44] Fundamentals of social legislation in the monarchy were formed in the 1880s, when the state significantly interfered into the relationship of employee and employer, both by setting up factory inspections and by the amendment to the Trade Act governing overall working conditions (working hours, child labour, etc.).[45] Protective (social) legislation was not left behind either and both health and accident insurance were embodied into the legal system. The overall level of social reforms in the last third of the 19th century put the entire Cisleithanian region in many ways ahead of Germany, its contemporary role model.[46] The level of state involvement in the field of social reforms entrenched in the Habsburg monarchy a general feeling (persisting till the outbreak of the First World War) that such state interventionism was a legitimate means of addressing social issues. A socially active state complemented the existing liberal law state, while discussions were held only on the form and intensity of interventions.[47] This situation largely copied general trends of European development, as the policy of social liberalism became commonly applied at the turn of 19th century.

The strategy of solving issues concerning the poor in European countries in the 19th century was not directed merely by government policies – private activities still played an important role (stemming from the middle class environment based on Christian traditions). In many countries, such private activities aimed at assisting the poor were more or less integrated into the system of public services. Such integration was typical for regions where the poor care remained rooted in its conservative-paternalistic traditions.[48] It primarily concerned the reality of the monarchy during the first half of the 19th century, when patriarchalism (*Herr-im-Haus-Prinzip*) was a prevailing organisational style, even though it more matched the

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[care of the poor], (Praha: J. Otto, 1897), p. 431.

[44] Nevertheless, this premise did not exclude private activities in the field of the establishing of workers' societies, mainly for educational purposes. Cf. Gunilla Budde, *Blütezeit des Bürgertums. Bürgerlichkeit im 19. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges. 2009), pp. 100–101.

[45] Michael Borovička et al., *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české* vol. 12a [History of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown], (Praha: Paseka, 2012), pp. 450–453.

[46] Cf. a review by Josef Harna, "Jan Janák, Příčiny vzniku předlitavské sociální správy, Brno 1970" [Jan Janák, Origins of Cislethanian social administration], Časopis Matice moravské 90 (1971): pp. 369–370.

[47] Drobesch, "Die 'soziale Frage' in der Habsburgermonarchie," pp. 8–9.

[48] Gestrich, *Armut im Liberalen Staat*, p. 132.

tradition of estates-feudal agrarian society than the modern, industrial one.[49]

The Austrian, or more specifically Czech, approach towards poverty eradication was characterised by both formal and informal interconnections of state activities with the church and municipal ones through so-called "poverty institutes." These "institutes" were built on a voluntary basis, but state bureaucracy as well as the monarch and his court administration considered the creation of a dense network of such institutions as an expression of loyalty of both the wealthier population and religious circles to the state policy. The influence of the Catholic Church on the practical implementation of poor policy lasted until the liberal era, when it was replaced by local administrations, i.e. the institute of "home village." The poverty institutes channelled their activities into so-called "open care for the poor" and worked under the supervision of the state apparatus, or under the supervision of state and ecclesiastical officials. The second sphere of the newly-organised poor care in the monarchy became institutional care, which interconnected health and poor care. In keeping with the Josephine reforms, the guarantor of the entire system of poor care was the state. In the case of poverty institutes, the state provided the capital and then controlled their activities. Centralised, institutional medical-poor care (poorhouses, spitals, etc.) was directly responsible to government administration. Only the Jewish population was excluded from this newly created system.[50]

Financial problems of poor care in the post-Josephine era actually freed up a space for new reform proposals around the late 1820s. Yet the majority of them only concerned bureaucratic measures and efforts to obtain additional funds from municipalities, although they were supposed to be – if they operated the "poverty institutes" in accordance with royal directives from the Josephine period – free of any additional financial contributions.[51] However, bigger problems beset the provincial institutional poor care institutes, as they provided care for poor people for free. The share of municipal finances was rising during the first half of the 19th

[49] Budde, *Blütezeit des Bürgertums*, p. 99. Entrepreneurs often played the role of "pater familias" in their businesses.
[50] Hlavačka, "Chudinství a sociální politika," pp. 54–57.
[51] Petr Svobodný and Ludmila Hlaváčková, *Pražské špitály a nemocnice* [Prague spitals and hospitals] (Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 1999), pp. 38–39, Olga Fejtová, "Organizace chudinské péče v letech 1781–1922" [Care of the poor within 1781–1922] , in *Osm století pražské samosprávy* [Eight centuries of Prague's self-government], eds. Václav Ledvinka et al. (Praha: Scriptorium, 2000), pp. 135–136.

century and gradually became a fundamental source of financial security in the field of poor care. A logical consequence of this development was re-transferring of the obligation to care for the poor back onto the community – or onto the home village – which culminated in the release of a new imperial municipal law. Subsequently, a Domicile Act (1862, 1863) was released.[52] Even though this step theoretically presented a unifying solution for the entire Empire, it was actually never quite achieved, since individual units of the Habsburg Empire implemented the domicile law to differing extents. While in some provincial units of the monarchy the care provided by parishes was formally abolished (concurrently with the issuance of the Domicile Act), the network of open care systems provided by single parishes in the Czech Lands was merely reorganised. Yet from the early 1860s, the actual administration of care for the poor did not have a direct connection with the church. This statutory norm, i.e. the Domicile Act, brought a significant financial burden, especially for smaller communities. This was caused by the fact that individuals in social need – who had spent their productive age in industrialised urban centres – were transported back to their home village after having become "unproductive" due to age, illness or disability.

The system of home villages remained the basis of the organisation of poor care in Cisleithania. In the context of solving issues concerning the poor abroad, mainly in neighbouring German states, it was one of the basic models of poor care. The second model was the Prussian one, based on the current residence of the person in need, so ultimately the state was responsible for the care of the poor. Thus local communities were not functioning as a starting point for ensuring the care for the poor, but they actually functioned as its providers.[53]

The organising principle based on the home jurisdiction was confirmed by the Czech edition of the Act of Relief of the Poor in 1868. Its wording already reflected the extraordinary financial demands that burdened the municipal budgets, and returned at least a part of this agenda – especially

[52] Imperial Act no. 18/1862, article V (March 5, 1862); Act on Right of Domicile no. 105/1863, part IV, obligation of municipalities to provide for the poor – articles 22–31 (December 12, 1863).

[53] *OSN* vol. 12, 1st edition, s.v. "chudinství" [care of the poor], pp. 434–435; Martin Krauß, *Armenwesen und Gesundheitsfürsorge in Mannheim vor der Industrialisierung 1750–1850/60* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1993), pp. 146–150; Christoph Sachße and Florian Tennstedt, *Geschichte der Armenfürsorge in Deutschland* vol. 1, (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1998), second edition, pp. 195–205; Susanne F. Eser, *Verwaltet und verwahrt – Armenpolitik und Arme in Augsburg: Vom Ende der reichsstädtischen Zeit bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1996).

when coupled with medical care – back to the state or provincial administration respectively.[54] Yet the debates about financial demands of the care of the poor agenda in the municipal budgets concerned especially smaller towns and villages. A closer look at the situation, for example in Prague, reveals a gradual increase in municipal spending on individuals in need, though it was a matter of only a few percent.[55]

After the transfer of the agenda onto the municipalities, the increasing financial demands on managing the issues of the poor in the Czech Lands became an important impetus for further modernisation measures in this area. Efforts to achieve a greater efficiency led the municipal administration in a number of towns to implementing the so-called "Elberfeld system." This mechanism reorganised the sector of open care for the poor and its main advantage was that the active care for the poor was carried out without the participation and/or support of the church. The Elberfeld system also counted on volunteer activity and was based on principles of directness, individualisation and decentralisation of care. It was applied especially in border areas of the Czech Lands (Trutnov, Liberec, Karlovy Vary, Varnsdorf, Bílina, etc.).[56] Soon it became apparent that this system, though based on rigorous control activities, did not bring the expected substantial savings.[57]

The second trend which influenced modernisation of the care for the poor at the turn of the century was a change in the perception of care for the poor, which was also reflected at a terminological-semantic level. The terms "poverty" or "the state of being poor" were then replaced by "care for human well-being," or humanistic care (*Wohlfahrtspflege*). Obviously, this was not only a matter of terminology. It was a general change in the overall approach to the poor and to social issues globally. In other words, it meant an attempt to unify all the procedures in this area. Poverty should

[54] *OSN* vol. 12, 1st edition, s.v. "chudinství" [care of the poor], p. 436.

[55] The budget of the city of Prague included expenses for the poor (both open care and institutional as well). In the 1870s it was 5%–6%, in the 1890s it was ca. 8% and in 1900–1910 it reached 10%. Cf. *Finanční předchozí rozvrh obecních důchodův a zvláštních fondův královského hlavního města Prahy na rok 1879* [Financial previous budget of municipal incomes and particular funds of the royal capital of Prague for the year 1879] (Praha: V. Nagl, 1878), pp. 62–63; *Předchozí rozpočet král. hlavního města Prahy na rok 1896* [Previous budget of the royal capital of Prague for the year 1896] (Praha: E. Beaufort, 1895), pp. 178–180; *Obecní rozpočty král. hlav. města Prahy 1905* [Municipal budgets of the royal capital of Prague 1905] (Praha: E. Beaufort, 1904), pp. 278–279 (section XI., Předchozí rozpočet [Previous Budget]).

[56] *OSN* vol. 12, 1st edition, s.v. "chudinství" [care of the poor], p. 436.

[57] Hlavačka, "Chudinství a sociální politika," p. 57.