

Abstract

The care for the poor, or poor care, has meant an important help for the needy ones at the times of hardship. As per the laws, it was their home village that was supposed to have taken care of them, which has brought several problems. The main law for the poor care was the December 1868 Bill aimed specifically at the poor care. It was this act that had transferred the care for the poor from the state to the individual villages' and towns' hands.

This Diploma Thesis is aimed at the Prague's poor care and its development within the time period of 1864 till 1929. It was during this period of time that the traditional poor care was transforming into the social work. As such, it was then understood to be not only the results-providing care, but rather the tool for preventive measures. Its competencies have since then included the new questions raised. Its providers did no longer wish to only hand out the social payments, but to also educate and increase the life conditions of the cared for persons. In 1929, the Prague Social Institution – so called Masaryk's Houses – was brought to action, and had fulfilled all of these parameters.

Throughout the followed period it was the Main Directorate that had been in the lead of the Prague's poor care. The Directorate having the responsibility to assure the everyday function of the whole institution. The main and basic tools for helping the poor have been the so called open and the institutional (or closed) care. The open care was characteristic mainly by the distribution of financial and material support to the poor. The financial support being organized by the Provincial Directorates. Fathers of the poor have been in a direct contact with the poor people and kept finding out about their needs and circumstances.

The opposite side was the institutional care, where the clients had to adhere to a certain order and had very limited freedom. Such institutions have been aimed at the persons in need of additional care, such as too old or too sick people. There have been two institutions in Prague: The St. Bartholomew's Poor House and the Na Karlově Sick House.

After the Greater Prague town has been established, the poor care has downgraded significantly due to the insufficient institutions and lack of monetary funds within the adjoined suburbs. All these problems have then been solved by the overhaul of the poor care. From that moment on it was no longer called poor care, but a social care.