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THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF CONVICTS ON THE BACKGROUND OF WORLD PENITENTIARY SYSTEM. THE ANALYTICAL AND SYNTHETIC OUTLINE OF THE ISSUE

ABSTRACT

The following text shortly outlines some basics terms and difficulties connected with social rehabilitation term of some people who had a staying in the prison; beginning from the short explanation of the term, through highlighting the characteristic of reintegration process, to main problems which a person has when comes back to the society and also some ways of solving them.

Keywords: social reintegration, primary and secondary socialization, adaptation, social fitting or misfitting, environment, contrsocialization, deprivation of needs, accommodation, assimilation, rehabilitation, social stigma, prisoners, post penalty help, probation

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Social reintegration – the one of the key terms of the rehabilitation pedagogy – means renew assimilation of a man for being self-reliant, leading active life, successful making and filling the social roles connected with the basic spheres and structures of human being. “The process of social reintegration has some inferences for those people who lost those privileges in case of some living circumstances” (Fidelus, 2012, p. 19). The whole rehabilitation process and all the connected work led to success crown of full adaptation a prisoner to the society (Ambrozik, 2008a, pp. 182–183).

The socialization of a person is a reflexive process of assimilation the knowledge, dispositions, norms and values provided by the society, being in force in cohabitation with others and having some skills (Olechnicki, Załęcki, 1997, pp. 475–500).

The process of socialization is characterized by two main stages. The first one is the primary socialization considered as a step of the most intensive cultural education – the language, basics formulas of behaviours referred to early infancy and childhood times in which the main social institution is the family. The second one is the rehabilitation as a stage of post childhood times in which the social institutions are school, peer groups, media, different organisations and work places. This person learns about some values, norms and beliefs which are known as cultural models (Fidelus, 2012, pp. 20, 21).

There is some analogy between the primary and secondary socialization. In both cases the early stage has rather passive, receptive character and depends on assimilation, canalisation and internationalisation of some roles given to a man by the society. It also depends on the imitation of desired behaviours coming from social group. This process may be defined as an adaptation or social integration. On the further stage of socialization, when a man assimilate his roles, he can adopt active attitude for them creatively transforms the way of filling them or conquering new norms and values depended to the new conditions and changes in the society. So that it is said that the process of socialization has a dynamic character.
and it requires from a man a creative and active attitude. Its first stage is the adaptation of a unit to social conditions (Ambrozik, 2008a, p. 183; Pierzchała, 2013a, pp. 14, 71, 143; Pierzchała, 2013b, pp. 475–500).

“On the character of adaptation depends gaining the most important values and giving a sense of own life.” (Fidelus, 2012, p. 26) ”Only the man conformed with the society can create a good portrait of himself, his owns aims and goals and what’s more, he can experience the happiness which is the gladness of own life.” (Pospiszyl, 1971, p. 7) “According to this theory and in the case of sentenced ones, the main condition of favourable social reintegration is the conscious participation which propitious for self–realization.” (Nuttin, 1968; Fidelus, 2012, p. 27)

People for those the socialization process was inefficient are usually called as social misfit.

The rehabilitation or the secondary process of socialization depends on changing personal experience. Firstly, on knowing its character and discovering of the reorganization methods then on skilled deletion, the reorganization of some parts of experience or even addition some new elements. (Konopczyński, 1996; Pierzchała, 2013a, p. 120)

“The goals of the secondary rehabilitation and socialization processes are equal. Although, in the process of rehabilitation, apart from activities leading to adapt the unit, it must be done some other activities, which should eliminate undesired behaviours, both in the social attempt but also in the individual one.” (Fidelus, 2012, p. 29)

According to Marek Konopczyński, “Socializing restlessing needs – deprivation of needs – causes of being forceful mechanisms, which disturb the work of regular ones and the behavioural sphere. The common used defence mechanisms are: compensation, rationalisation, identification, moving, projection and isolation. The rarely common is regress, in other words inadequate to the intellectual and emotional maturity in a way of man’s behaving”. (Konopczyński, 2010, pp. 80, 81) The deprivation of needs in the independent environment, after isolation like staying in a prison, can mean disturbances in the process of socialization. With those disturbances may be frustration which led to aggressive behaviours. (Frączek, Kofta, 1982; Frączek, Zumkley, 1993; Fidelus, 2012, p. 25) Abraham Maslow, in his publication (Maslow, 1990) considers different needs and makes hieratical
scheme. The lack realisation of even one or some needs devastates the equilibrium of whole hierarchy. (Konopczyński, 2010, pp. 81, 82).

The other term connected with social reintegration is contra-socialization, which is characterised by learning of models typical for deviant and criminal environment, different from which deem most of the society. It is an imitation of significant people which are a models of living, independently from the values. (Fidelus, 2012, p. 21)

The correct socialization of a man is strongly connected with the environment in which he is. Due to the definition of Marek Konopczyński, when we talk about the environment in pedagogy, we highlight his social character. The environment is “widely understood interaction cluster in which is a man, some influences he is under or he is as beginner, played roles and the social effects of such roles.” (Konopczyński, 2010, p. 71). Not every stimulus of environment interact in the same way. The permanence and the depth depend on many factors mostly economic, psychological and social nature.” (Gidens, 2006; Goodman, 2001; Konopczyński, 2010, p. 70)

The process of social integration is indirect for two contrast group elements: accommodation (in psychological meaning: fitting to the environment) and assimilation (adaptability of the environment to the man). The balance between the accommodation and assimilation can betroth the success in the social integration. (Fidelus, 2012, p. 27)

The person is considered as a rehabilitee one, if his behaviour is invariably consistent with the social requirements. The more a man undergo with a social integration, the more is rehabilitee. (Ambrozik, 2008a, pp. 182–183; Czapów, Jedlewski, 1971, p. 169)

“The probation is the general name of some institutions which exist for rehabilitation and the criminal prevention. They based mostly on a controlled freedom, custody for the delinquent of crime who is under the supervising of probation officer or another specialized organs, which are mentioned in the 38th article of executive penal code (associations, foundations, organisations and institutions that main goal is social integration of sentenced people). The appointed organ retrieve suitable control activities or education and rehabilitation ones, but also diagnostic and preventive. The controlled freedom – the probation in other words – is
a system of serving the sentence outside the prison. It is estimated that the probation is in a half cheaper than the absolute deprivation of liberty. The popularity of non-isolation penalties means that more sentenced stay in the current environment, in the family, workplace, so that he will not be out the society what guarantee him a bigger success in the rehabilitation penalty.” (Internetowy Słownik; Bałandynowicz, 2006)

The prison isolation entails some consequences like a stigmatisation (the process of social marking, which is also “sticking an etiquette” to a man who is recognised as a representative of some specific group of people and also describing to him some character traits that come from rather stereotype than from the knowledge of him), degradation, non-personalisation (mental disorders which are often connected with derealisation and the fear of changes in the way of thinking and seeing own identity) and preconisation (the state of assimilation for the penitentiary conditions, connected with fear of living out the prison). (Ciosek, 2003; Pierzchała, 2013a, p. 8)

“In order to make social reintegration of sentenced ones and their family more easier is to give them a proper help and stimulation for keeping and creating bonds from the beginning of having a penalty. According to Teodor Szymanowski, the most effective help is considered as filling some financial needs which come from reintegration process in the free conditions, organizational help, accommodation (in psychological meaning) moral help and guidance in the critical moments, finding a work, place for living, organising a school or medical cover.” (Szymanowski, 1989, pp. 39, 40; Pierzchała, 2013a, p. 303)


The main idea of social reintegration is changing social affiliation of a man, breaking up his last identifications, not desired by the society, leading the process of identification with new social groups and fulfilling given roles desired and essential by society. The whole process is like a corona-
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tion of rehabilitation actions taking by the society to a man. His success, in other words – successful reintegration in the society – is the main aim for which all the rehabilitation procedure is marked. So that, the success of the reintegration to social conditions is only one way to measure the effectiveness of rehabilitation process, its assumptions and used methods or tools. The level in which a man, after leaving a penitentiary, is able to force with everyday problems, replies on requirements from the society and plays given roles successfully – like citizen, worker or parent even – is a great determinant of successful rehabilitation. (Ambrozik, 2008a, pp. 182–183; Pierzchała, 2012b, pp. 113–119)

Social reintegration is not a phenomenon concerning only those who already left closed penitentiary. Although in such cases it may be really difficult. It affects many offenders, who were surrender to the rehabilitation process, those who have experienced isolation ways of rehabilitation but also those who have experienced the probation ways (Pierzchała, 2012a, pp. 61–81; Pierzchała, 2011b, pp. 5–26; Pierzchała, 2011a, pp. 21–31), at least those who were subjected to the system of rehabilitation for youngest. Everybody of them after finishing of penalty time, probation or staying in a halfway house must be able to force with everyday life using the knowledge and skills gained in the rehabilitation process. They also have to function successfully in the society from which they were deleted for some period of time (mostly visible and nagging in the case of losing the freedom) because of pathological character of the relations with society, what was finding in making a crime or crimes. Moreover, those people – in the process of rehabilitation– break up bonds with deviant subcultures, (Ciolk; Giddens, 2004, p. 235; Hołyst, 2007, p. 952; Pierzchała, Cekiera, 2009; Kubiak–Krzywicka, 2008, pp. 148–158; Konopczyński, 2008, pp. 69–88; Konopczyński, 2013, pp. 144–152) what give positives results for rehabilitation and is desired from the social point of view. In the internal feeling of those people it deeps the feeling of losing or lack a point of having. The process of reintegration help to rebuild or even build from the basics the bonds with other people, society and accept roles or ways of behaving rejected and not accepted so far. To do this, the person must learn totally new social roles, accept and internalize them, identify with them and take part in the social system of connection and structures. (Pierzchała, 2014a, pp. 49–58)
The goal becomes more difficult in the case of people who had a sentence in the closed penitentiary, especially those, who were staying there for a long time. In those cases success adaptation in the society involves not only overcoming attitudes and behaviours, which led them to do a crime, sentence and penalty, but also habits from the prison, institutions which rigor, obligatory character, contact with other deviant people has definitely bad influence on the character of a sentenced person. (Pierzchała, 2006–2007, pp. 37–55; Pierzchała, 2004–2005, pp. 20–30) This favours the conviction that the main aim of penitentiary system existence is sentencing some penalties to people, which must be the hardest and the more nagging but the whole process of rehabilitation is only a part of the penalty. Meanwhile, penal ways (Ambrozik, 2009, pp. 110–120) and rehabilitation in the same time of having penalty is only beginning part of the reintegration process, which takes a long time after leaving the penitentiary. The main goal of those activities should be giving an opportunity for a man to proper function in the society. In other words, from the early beginning it should be mentioned that the main aim is an adaptation for living (Kieszkowska, 2009, pp. 99–110) not in the prison, but outside. So that, the adaptation will be more difficult, the bigger part of rehabilitation process is taking place in separation from society and other forms of social living and difficulties have more pathological character. (Pierzchała, Cekiera, 2008; Pierzchała, Cekiera, 2009)

The negative influence on depravation1, which is a result of the penitentiary character (opened and closed type), accompanies the rehabilitation from the beginnings. Changes, which take in the jailed personalities, are rarely desired by penitentiary staff but often there are contrary ones. Negative changes may be as a cause to accommodation (in psychological meaning) for requirements of such institution (promoting i.e. conformism) or in spite to those requirements and as a cause of defence mechanisms in the jailed personality also supported by prison subculture.

The prison, which is meant as total institution, have an influence on every aspects of jailed life and it subordinates it totally. Of the immortality

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1 Depravation – the activity which cause demoralizing somebody, leading to corruption, moral collapse; Internetowy Słownik.
of their situation consists many factors, mostly limited opportunities of moving to the one strictly defined place or opportunity of having a contact and cooperate with other people apart from other inmates who are also socially derailment. The prisoners are also under continuous custody and all their staying is marked for compatibility with rules, rewarded with privileges or punished. Everything causes developing of specific mentality which main characteristic is **conformism** (Kuć, 2013), an activity which fulfil the expectations of prison and rehabilitation staff but not the authentic personal change and at least helplessness an demanding life attitude. It is difficult to imagine some more distant conditions from those which reign at large and rudiments differ from those which organise social living differ from rules in prison. It is not surprising that adaptation to them makes the integration of ex-jailed person more difficult. (Pierzchała, 2013a)

The better or worse perspectives in the process of reintegration depend on many factors both on the man coming back to live at large but also the society. The most important is the general level of man’s identification with deviant attitudes and behaviours. Totally different attitude for social reintegration will have a man who, as a result of rehabilitation, denied and rejected his deviant identify and also made and effort to create the new identity. Other ones, will have a man who feel domesticated in crime environment and he thinks about the future in this environment. Both men have to force with not only internal problems, but with social stigma which is usually fixed with negative attitude to rehabilitees due to his previous criminal activities and moreover in their convincing about unsuccessful rehabilitation or awareness of negative results of staying in the penentiary. (Ambrozik, 2008b, p. 184)

In the case of unsuccessful rehabilitation, when somebody is leaving the penitentiary, accept his deviant identity and feel to be bond with criminal society, the social stigma usually discourage to make any effort for gaining reintegration effects. For those, whose the rehabilitation gained bigger or smaller success, the social stigma is the biggest obstacle in reintegration, because their effort of gaining the social acceptance meet with the lack of understanding or trust from the closest. The help in overcoming is a key element in the post-penitentiary help. The process of negation deviant
identity and replacing it with the new, socially acceptable one is defined as social destigmatization. (Konopczyński, 2008) When the changes in identity and behaviours begin to be noticed by a society, the negative reaction is usually weaker what is good for reintegration process and encourage for making efforts to be accepted by the society.

Apart from social stigma, people who are leaving penitentiaries, must force with any other difficulties with finding a place in the society. The difficulties with finding a job are caused by not only the unwillingness or lack of trust of employers for workers with criminal experience but also on the difficulties on the work market or low level of ex-prisoners qualifications. The lack of honest job which allow to maintenance yourself may have catastrophic influence of social reintegration process. It may cause coming back to illegal ways of gaining livelihoods and it is also the main reason of alcoholism or drug addiction, otherwise some treats are always present in the criminals life. The serious obstacle for beginning a new life may be a family, both normal which rejects ex-prisoner due to his criminal experience or pathologic which do not let to break up bonds with deviant environment. The negative factor is also the case of staying in such environment. At least, the undesired effect may have some law enforcement control measures for those people who has left the penitentiary. Those means usually have stigmatic character. (Pierzchała, 2011c, pp. 422−427)

The reason to be worried about is insufficient level of the post penitentiary help in Poland. This help, both in the theory described by legislator, as in the practice, meant mainly to give cash benefits or repressive control by custody officer who govern if the ex-prisoner found a job, fulfils family needs, gives up every addiction or does not have a contact with deviant environment. The vital condition of successful reintegration is taking care and supporting given by local society.

Based on empirical resources, conductive and unfavourable factors of social reintegration, consist of two the most important ones. There are family situation and job status. It is obvious that making an effort is required in changing own personality, making a new definition of values and aims and changing attitudes and behaviours required, give the minimum feel of material and emotional safety. Unfortunately, as it was mentioned earlier, the ex-prisoners problems are usually really serious and difficult to solve.
That is why some institution should focus on them and cooperate with the family and work environment of ex-prisoner. In the case of family relationship there are needed sometimes the therapeutic activities, in which post penitentiary institution should make easier to get. In the case of work's sphere the key is a help with getting and developing competences but also looking for a job. It’s also important to not appreciate the influence of social stigma for the mentality of ex-prisoners. So that any help systems should involve also therapeutic help.

For proper understanding the idea of reintegration process is a term commonly used in environment like a “reinforcement” or in other word “empowerment”. The empowerment concept (Gawęcka, 2009, pp. 65–67) is based on assumption that in the personality of every man, regardless on the social derailment, are used – in a higher or lower level – some opportunities, physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual abilities. The deviant personalities are not exception. In their case, for the reason of bad influence of the environment, the special abilities have not got a chance to develop and they are in the germ, their deviant’s mentality and subjected to rehabilitation ex-deviants. The rehabilitation process would give them an opportunity for developing those internal abilities by giving suitable social conditions. The ex-prisoners is not passive at this moment otherwise the justice, penitentiary system, rehabilitation and post penitentiary help is active. Mentioned institutions have a servant and auxiliary role only. It is worth to add, both factors which make that the development of any man is not correct and shape the deviant personality but also every penitentiary institution, do not support the subjectivity feeling, but even destroyed it. The main aim of post penitentiary help should be the development and reinforcement of subject, responsibility for your own life and at least for the closest. Meanwhile the current system of post penitentiary help treats the ex-criminalists as object to control and the receiver of financial help. It causes to the disappearing of losing the empowerment idea, responsibility, supporting the passive attitude which lie the impersonal supervision system. (Ambrozik, 2008b, p. 184)

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2 The sense of self realising was appreciated especially by Abraham Maslow (1965, p. 64).
The most important chance for beginning the post penitentiary system of helping is the development of self-help groups which consist of ex-prisoners. Such groups, unfortunately only few ones, are based on work patterns used from tenth years by self-help groups like Alcoholics Anonymous group or Monar group established by Marek Kotański. Attendance for such groups is connected with many opportunities and chances for ex-prisoners proper social reintegration. Regular meetings in the same group of people who have similar experience and a willing to break up with known, pathological environment give them an opportunity to rebuild the new environment with no social stigma dangerousity, another rejections but with support and acceptance. The group based on each other help and supporting empowers also the feeling of self-identity and responsibility for others. (Pierzchała, 1996; Cekiera, 2008, pp. 179–180; Pierzchała, 2014b, pp. 86–98)

The improvement of socially readapted people and facilitation of the rehabilitation process requires some effort not only from the ex-prisoners or post – penitentiary system. The fact if the whole social reintegration process will be successful depends on the whole society. In this way the more significant is a role of changing the social attitude to ex-prisoners who claim coming back to normal life. Nowadays such attitude is rather negative, commonly the person leaving the penalty is threaten like somebody who need to be controlled and isolated. This attitude makes it more and more difficult or even makes it impossible to find a proper place in the society. What is more, it also force him back to deviant environment and behaviours which he wanted to break up. Changing of this attitude cannot became true on the next day but it is significant to make wide defined activities for understanding the causes and effects of social deviancy and even the rehabilitation and reintegration opportunities. (Pierzchała, 1994)

Currently along sociologists and social workers a phenomenon called “civil society” become more and more popular. It is based on the belief

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*The civil society* – probably the term was used by the Aristotle, later in the more modern form like a civil society was used by such philosophisers like Cicero, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Adam Smith (The theory of moral feelings), Jean Jacques Rousseau (The social agreement) or polish ones like Hugo Kołłątaj, Wincenty Skrzetuski, Hieronim Stroynowski (Załęski, 2012, pp. 14–15).
of social ability to self, spontaneous organizing actions in order to solve their problems and fulfil their needs. This enterprise made by the society would be also the answer for difficulties which are known for national institutions in the cases of reintegration of ex-prisoners. It is possible that the local society which know its reality, chances and problems may find more precise and elastic way rather than centralized, bureaucratic institutions which usually work according to narrow, strict and common for all country rules. Moreover, they are also far away from the local reality, they are a factor of political battles, in which taking care of the safety as a sharpening the penalties and rules for criminals is the good advertisement for the political party. Such social civil action may become true and appear more than once when the social attitude change its point of view for a deviation problem.

Every mentioned cases, chances and opportunities involves also adults criminals or even the youngest who are leaving the penitentiaries. It should not be ignored the specification of the second situation – the youngest criminals are the specific group and they require the special treatment. It not be seemed to be strongly justified saying about social reintegration because the primary adaptation is not finished yet.

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION

The people who are leaving – after the imprisonment – the penitentiaries are in a very difficult and complex situation, because they need to be able to force with many problems, which are caused by their staying in prison and experience but also in complicated family situation, necessity of gaining the social acceptance or assurance basic living conditions. Their attitude to past crime experience is also important because it was the main reason of imprisonment. In such case jailed ones should be properly prepared for such event mostly by prison staff.


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