

ARTICLES

Ferdinand Krch's Pedagogical Legacy for Modern Inclusive Pedagogy

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The primary objective of this study is to present the personality of Ferdinand Krch and the contribution of his pedagogical thinking to the contemporary, modern inclusive paradigm and pedagogy. With the help of qualitative research design and selected methods of historical research, not only historical facts, publications and archival materials will be presented, but also Krch's efforts and attempts to introduce new pedagogical ideas in education and training with elements of socio-cultural-educational attitude towards inclusion, ethical-humanistic dimension of education, filled with love, sincerity and beauty. It will also seek to highlight Krch's legacy and the ideas of our pedagogical predecessors, referred to as experimenters, who were an inspiration for modern pedagogy not only in our country but also worldwide.

Keywords: *Ferdinand Krch, House of Childhood, Milič House, Children's Music and Rhythm Institute, inclusion, special pedagogy, social pedagogy, modern pedagogy, transdisciplinary overlap, pedagogical experiment, childhood, education*

Introduction

In the current global context, it is imperative to respect the rights of individuals, particularly the rights of children, and ensure their equal access to education. However, this inclusive trend cannot be attributed solely to school education; it is also necessary to create a space for mutual coexistence, fostering social

harmony in the spirit of humanism and ethical transcendence of humanity. The practical implementation of inclusive pedagogy, values, and attitudes in the context of inclusive coexistence in society involves discovering and relying on historical examples of inclusive approaches in this direction. The historical discourse on inclusive education and coexistence is then a natural and continuous point on the path in the footsteps of our pedagogical predecessors who embraced the need for inclusion long before the Salamanca Conference (i.e. before 1994).

The view into the windows of the pedagogical future is sharper and more precise when we lean on the mossy tree of the pedagogical past. In an excursion into Czech pedagogical history, we encounter several inspiring pedagogical figures whose ideas and approaches are slowly fading into the dust of pedagogical oblivion. In today's globalised world, we may be too eager to look abroad for inspiration and overlook the treasures that our Czech pedagogical history holds and offers. The historical excursion will focus not only on local prominent pedagogical personalities but also on our pedagogical predecessors who were world-renowned pedagogical innovators and whose contribution was rightly recognised and appreciated within Europe at the time, as well as overseas.

The primary objective of this study is to present the personality of a unique educator who played a pivotal role in the development of several of today's pedagogical disciplines. The father and founder of modern music education, who, even before the First World War, promoted the need for music education for every child, including its influence on the development of the individual from early childhood. Creator of a progressive children's home whose concept could be the inspiration for a modern residential care facility for needy children. Promoter of an ethical, aesthetic, emotional and humanistic approach in education, in the socio-cultural-inclusive focus of education, so much required in special education, social and inclusive pedagogy. Ferdinand Krch (1881-1973) was an educator who not only inspired many of the professionals with whom he worked and collaborated, but also, most importantly, influenced many of the children and parents he encountered during his teaching and creative life, and through his pedagogical legacy.

The study is structured in the following sections: an introduction to the research design, supported by relevant methods; an argument for the selection of a figure in Czech pedagogical history, i.e. Ferdinand Krch, based also on an analysis of the report of Carleton Wolsey Washburne (1889-1968), submitted to the American Congress in 1923, concerning the information and conclusions of his tour of European progressive schools, incl. Krch's legacy and its contemporary context. The next part of the article will be devoted exclusively to the personality of Ferdinand Krch and his pedagogical thinking, especially in the field of his key pedagogical projects: *The Children's Music and Rhythm Institute*, and famous *The House of Childhood*, with emphasis (among others) on the holistic approach to music education and its influence on the child, which

belonged in the 20th century. In Czechoslovakia in the 1920s, they were among the most significant pedagogical experiments, which also attracted international attention for their originality (Washburne from Chicago, Wisser from The Hague, etc.). An overview of Krch's activities would not be complete without mentioning his work at *The Milič House*, where he was one of the most important collaborators of Přemysl Pitter (1895-1976). The final part of the study will analyse Krch's seminal work, *Education of the Heart: Conditions of Emotional Education, A Handbook for Educators*, identifying the essential ideas of the work and their relevance to the contemporary concept of the inclusive paradigm and education. The discussion and conclusion of the study offer several suggestions with the aim of providing inspiration and reflection for a more intensive enrichment of contemporary pedagogy with the supporting impulses from our educational history.

Research Design

This study is based on a qualitative research framework, at the core of which lies an analysis of the writing in *Education of the Heart: Conditions of Emotional Education, A Handbook for Educators* (hereafter referred to as *Education of the Heart*), the culminating pedagogical work of Ferdinand Krch. The text is conceived as a comprehensive synthesis of his pedagogical ideas, which took shape within the framework of specific educational and training projects in which Krch actively participated during the interwar period. The analysis of *Education of the Heart* is thus not simply an interpretation of a single text, but a means of understanding the overall ideological development of Ferdinand Krch within a broader socio-cultural, institutional and historical framework.

The chosen methodological approach combines the strategy of a historical-cultural case study.¹ with elements of qualitative content, thematic and discursive analysis.² The aim is to reveal the internal structure of Krch's pedagogical thought, its key values and emphases, and to reconstruct the historical circumstances in which his approach was developed, implemented and evaluated, even outside the Czechoslovak context of the time. Above all, the direct historical method is employed, which involves studying and presenting historical facts and contexts directly.

The research is grounded in the epistemology of interpretivism, which emphasises the importance of historical and cultural context in understanding pedagogical phenomena. The historical case study allows us to examine not

¹Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: design and methods*. 6. vyd. Los Angeles: SAGE; Goodson, I. F. – Sikes, P. (2001). *Life history research in educational settings: Learning from lives*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

²Braun, V. – Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>.

only the ideological basis of Krch's conception but also the institutional framework in which his ideas were developed and applied, whether in the form of pedagogical initiatives, association activities, or the management of educational institutions. The identification of the context, pedagogical ideas and principles of Krch's conception and the analysis of the selected work is anchored in the following research questions:

Main research question:

What ideological and pedagogical principles emerge in the writing of *Education of the Heart*, and what are their implications for the modern inclusive paradigm, contemporary special and inclusive pedagogy and education?

Sub-research questions:

1. In what ways does *Education of the Heart* reflect Krch's previous pedagogical practice and experience?
2. What key values and concepts (e.g., aesthetics, freedom, spiritual education, ethical education, autonomous personality) are expressed in the text, and how do they relate to broader European reformist currents?
3. How can Krch's concept be interpreted in the light of contemporary approaches to education and the education of pupils with special educational needs?
4. How can the principles of *Education of the Heart* be linked to music education and its conception in *The House of Childhood* and Krch's writings?

Ethical Aspects and Reflection on the Historical Context

Although the research does not focus on human subjects and does not involve researcher-respondent relations, the methodological approach outlined above requires a high degree of historical, linguistic, and interpretive sensitivity due to the different meanings of terminological phenomena in historical and contemporary contexts. The pedagogical texts of Krch's active teaching career, especially his writing *The Education of the Heart*, reflect a specific historical, socio-cultural and ideological horizon in which concepts such as *morality*, *will*, *spiritual life* or *character education* are understood differently from contemporary scientific terminology. The study is also aware of changes in terminology and approaches to special and inclusive pedagogy. For example, terms such as *crippled children* or *orphanage*, which are common in contemporary texts, are cited here solely in their historical context, not as evaluative terms in their contemporary sense or meaning. The reform educator C. W. Washburne, in his report *Progressive Tendencies in European Education* (1923), also spoke highly of Krch's educational activities. His language, however, bears traces of cultural perception; for example, the labelling of children as *orphans* or comments about *the best artistic expression*

of an unselected group of children in Europe imply, from an outside perspective, a certain exoticization or superior view.

From the perspective of research ethics, we are aware of the necessity to be sensitive to conclusions, outcomes, and evaluations of contexts in the areas of historical terminology, variability and meaning of terms, institutional contexts of education, including the aforementioned perspective C. W. Washburne.

In *The Education of the Heart*, Krch expresses himself in the language of his time, mixing elements of Sokol humanism, religious ethics, pedagogical idealism and civic education. Expressions such as *education of the spirit*, *moral law*, *will to nobility*, or the *spiritual culture of the child* cannot be interpreted in isolation or mechanically transferred to today's pedagogical vocabulary and social context.

Although the article does not aim to evaluate the individual educational institutions in which Krch worked, it is clear that his pedagogical projects were related to children living in socially disadvantaged environments, often under institutional care. The interpretation of *Education of the Heart* is, therefore, necessarily burdened with an awareness of the unequal position of the child within the power structures of the time. The study aims to reflect not only on the author's ideological postulates, but also on the conditions in which they were implemented. It would be ethically problematic to highlight the ideals without stating the limits of their realisation. That is why we always take into account the institutional tension between the child's freedom and order, which may have been distorted in various ways in practice, when creating a text.

How we work with this source is therefore also ethically relevant: the quotations are given faithfully, but always interpreted as a contemporary product of an external view of Central European space. The research procedures deliberately avoid generalisations and stereotypes and focus on the explanatory value of the elements under investigation in relation to the reflection of Krch's work abroad.

Overall, the study approaches historical texts with full awareness of the fluidity of pedagogical concepts and cultural references. *The Education of the Heart* is interpreted as a contemporary document with timeless elements, while the possibility of different interpretative levels is consistently considered. Ethical reflection is not merely a formal adjunct to the research design, but an integral part of it.

Rationale of Research: the Krch's Trace in the Report of Progressive Tendencies in European Education

In implementing the direct historical method in the study of historical sources in the archives of the National Museum of Education, we have repeatedly encountered references in the manuscripts of Ferdinand Krch to laudatory references to Krch's activities in a document, the International Report

(see below) by Carleton Wolsey Washburne (1889-1968), who was one of the key American reformers and representatives of 20th century world pedagogy. Washburne's thinking was based on the progressive tradition and the pragmatic pedagogy of John Dewey (1859-1952), but was enriched by its practical application in public education. Washburne worked at the so-called Winnetka School (Winnetka Plan) in Winnetka, Illinois, where he applied the principles of individualised learning, free choice, and functional pedagogy, and was the creator of the Winnetka System. This system is inspired by, and based on, the Dalton Plan (Helen Parkhurst, 1881-1957) and seeks to address its shortcomings (for example: curricula, didactic guidance through workbooks, control testing etc.), especially in the areas of consistent individual attention to children, consideration of their needs and interests, their learning pace, and practical overlap of activities. Winnetka-Plan also uses individual study of basic skills and cooperative group learning in creative and social activities.³

In 1922-1923, Washburne undertook a tour of European countries, during which he visited more than two dozen schools in eight countries, including Czechoslovakia. Washburne summarised the results of this trip in a report entitled *Progressive Tendencies in European Education*, published as Bulletin No. 37 of the US Department of the Interior's Bureau of Education.⁴ This report was intended not only for the professional public but also served as an official briefing document for the US Congress. It aimed to offer an overview of innovative European educational approaches and to inspire American public education reform.

The report occupies an important place in the history of comparative pedagogy as it documents the state of reform movements shortly after the First World War in the authentic context of Europe at the time. At the same time, it has lasting significance as a pedagogical, cultural, and historical document that reveals how American experts perceived European innovations, particularly the potential for progressive and experimental efforts they observed in Czechoslovakia of the time. Washburne explicitly identifies two Czechoslovak institutions, the František Bakule School in Prague and the House of Childhood in Horní Krnsko, as exceptional examples of pedagogical modernity that went beyond the standards and expectations of the time. In our paper, we will focus on Ferdinand Krch, the director of the aforementioned children's home. His children's home is praised in the text of the Washburne Report in a quite exceptional way. Washburne states that "... *apart from the orphanage*

³ Washburne, C. W. (1925). *Adjusting the school to the child: The Winnetka Plan*. Yonkers-on-Hudson: World Book Company; Washburne, C. W. (1974). The Individual System in Winnetka. *The Elementary School Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1086/462389>.

⁴ Washburne, C. W. (1923). *Progressive tendencies in European education* (Bulletin, 1923, No. 37). Washington: Government Printing Office. Dostupné z: <https://archive.org/details/progressivetende00wash>.

in Czechoslovakia, the best school we visited in all of Europe was the Bedales School".⁵

With this statement, he not only points to the quality of the Kern facility but, in effect, places it at the forefront of progressive education throughout Europe. The text of the inspection report is not the only reference to the children's home in Horní Krnsko. Washburne notes several details and states: *"The instructor neither criticises the children's work nor suggests the best technique. The children here produce the best works of art I have ever seen from an unselected group of children in Europe or America".⁶* According to Washburne, the success of the method lay in the fact that the children were surrounded by beauty and had free access to the artistic resources (pastels, paints, paper). At the same time, any copying or reproduction of designs was fundamentally excluded. Instead, they were encouraged to find their expression and, in a joint reflection, to evaluate their work according to aesthetic criteria they defined themselves. Not only was the process of creation important, but also the discussion of the results: *"The children hang their works on the wall and discuss together which they think are the best and why. Then they re-create, not by copying, but on the basis of their self-reflection".⁷* These references clearly show that the pedagogical experiment in the Horní Krnsko orphanage was one of the most important progressive pedagogical projects in Europe at the time (especially in the heyday years of 1922-1923), thanks to the efforts and reformist orientations of Ferdinand Krch (see text below), who emphasised the ethical, emotional and aesthetic aspects of education.⁸

Ferdinand Krch (1881–1973)

Ferdinand Krch was born into the family of a Prague governor. All indications were that Krch would continue the family tradition and become a prominent civil servant. However, Ferdinand Krch decided otherwise. Just before graduation, he left the study of law and began to devote himself to the teaching profession. Some sources claim that his father was against the young Ferdinand's teaching career, while other sources describe his father as supporting this decision. Surprisingly, Krch himself does not comment on this topic. Krch repeatedly refers to his pupils as his family, but does not mention much about his biological family. Already in 1911, we encounter Krch's pedagogical experiments in Meziříčko near Želetava, where children (from the Workers' Gymnastic Units) were taught, according to contemporary pedagogical terminology, to learn about life in nature in an exploratory manner

⁵ Ibid. pp. 8–9.

⁶ Ibid. pp. 8–9.

⁷ Ibid. p. 9.

⁸ Author's note: also with the help of teachers Ladislav Švarc, 1883-1974, and Ladislav Havranek, 1884-1961.

by observing, perceiving, and understanding its laws, including ecological sensitivity. Until 1919, he taught mainly in Prague's municipal schools and also worked in the *Educational Home at the Good Shepherd*, where he met children with, in today's terminology, special educational needs. Krch remained faithful to this target group for the rest of his teaching career. Thus it is possible to find elements of inclusive education in his pedagogical approaches, with an overlap with the social aspects of inclusion (to be discussed further in this study). Ferdinand Krch gave himself entirely to his teaching mission.⁹ His progressive pedagogical innovations, with a respectful approach to children and support for their individual needs and interests, mirror the ideals of pedocentrism, free education, the social context of education, and natural education in the pedagogical thinking of J.J. Rousseau, J.H. Pestalozzi, L.N. Tolstoy, and finally E. Key, as well as J.A. Comenius. Never married, he found his purpose in life in working with and for children.¹⁰

Children's Music and Rhythm Institute

During his studies at the *Czech Institute for the Education of Teachers for Practical Schools*, the young Ferdinand Krch met Josef Křička (1888-1969). Unlike Krch, Křička came from a musical background with several excellent instrumentalists. Křička himself was considered a child prodigy in his time, but he chose the teaching profession. He continued his musical education, studying composition with Vítězslav Novák, and also taking Max Battke's music course and Jacques-Dalcroze's rhythm and meloplasty course.¹¹ Krch's receptiveness, love and sensitivity to music, desire to bring children to music and his loving relationship with children were manifested by the founding of a music circle in 1912 together with the composer Křička, the teacher Wilt and the medical student B. Schuster.¹² With the foundation of the *Children's Music and Rhythm Institute* (1912-1914) in Černá Street in Prague, an interesting experiment based on the integration of the attributes of music and its holistic overlap began with reference to secondary sources. Křička and Krch offered their vision of music education to children completely free of charge. They financed the project from their resources. The lessons were voluntary, open to both boys and girls. They sought to provide music education for every child. Krch and Křička did not focus only on talented children, but explored the effect of music on children without special musical abilities. Krch and Křička were not

⁹ Spěváček, V. (1978). *Průkopníci českých pokusných škol*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.

¹⁰ Vlasáková, E. (2017). *V tichu a skrytu: Fedor Krch, pedagog a člověk (1881–1973)*. Praha: Kalich.

¹¹ Siebr, R. (2005). *Josef Křička: novátor hudební výchovy: učitel, skladatel, člověk*. Praha: Sobotáles.

¹² Spěváček, V. (1978). *Průkopníci českých pokusných škol*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.

promoters of frequent performances. In their conception, music was performed not for external effect. We do not have much information available about the workings of the *Children's Music and Rhythm Institute*. For the most part, we are dependent on secondary sources. Krch himself rarely mentioned the period of the *Children's Music and Rhythm Institute*. However, these two years of joint work laid the foundation for the future conception of music education by Ferdinand Krch and Josef Kříčka. They did not understand music as something artificial and snobbish. Both teachers led children to the joy of music, to the pure experience of beauty, and built up the aesthetic sensitivity of children.¹³ They understood music as a holistic phenomenon. Although the Great War put an end to the experiment, Krch and Kříčka continued their collaboration and used the findings in their seminal work *The Child and Music*.¹⁴ In their modern conception of music education, one can see some elements of the so-called Dalcroze method,¹⁵ based on the perception and creation of rhythm through movement and natural rhythms of the body such as: breathing, pulse, walking etc. And the development of sensitivity and return to nature, although some of the practices of this method have been criticised by Krch and Kříčka.¹⁶

The Child and Music in a Holistic Concept

The *Child and Music*, with the subtitle *New Ways in Children's Music Education*, can be considered one of the key works for modern music education.¹⁷ Krch and Kříčka summarised two years of work with children in the *Children's Music and Rhythm Institute* in two volumes. The two volumes contain only 43 pages of text, written by Krch. The text section introduces the first volume, providing the reader with an overview of the authors' motivation for creating this work. It analyses the results of the pre-war experiment at the *Children's Music and Rhythm Institute* and articulates the authors' ideas about music education. Although he signs the text, Krch identifies Kříčka as the creator and soul of the collaborative work. Their statements are timeless and underscore, by structuring and integrating musical approaches, a holistic

¹³ Mazurek, J. (1995). O hudebně výchovném systému Josefa Kříčky a Ferdinanda Krcha. In: *Sborník prací Pedagogické fakulty Ostravské univerzity*, Ars, 2, pp. 59–62.

¹⁴ Daněk, A. (2016). *Rozvoj hudebních aktivit v Dětském domově Klánovice inspirovaný programem El Sistema*. Disertační práce. Ostrava: Ostravská univerzita.

¹⁵ Authors' note: Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865–1950), for further details see: Mazurek, J. (2016). *Metoda Jaques-Dalcrozova a česká hudební výchova (1911–1938)*. Ostrava: Ostravská univerzita. Hrnčířová, K. (2020) *Dech jako jednotící element projevu uměleckého souboru na základě Dalcrozeho metody*. Brno: MU, FF.

¹⁶ Author's note: inspiring for inclusive education and education with a methodological and psychotherapeutic overlap

¹⁷ Daněk, A. (2016). Dílo Ferdinanda Krcha jako inspirace pro současnost. In: *Janáčkiana 2016*. Ostrava: Ostravská univerzita.

and modern conception of not only music education, but also art and language education. The authors divided music education into natural (or family-based) and artificial (professional or school-based) categories. Artificial music education emphasises knowledge of notes, intonation and rhythm. Krch and Kříčka saw artificial music education as the education of music professionals. However, artificial music education is conditioned by natural music education. Natural music education refers to education acquired within the family. The child acquires musicality from singing parents, drawing it from the sounds of nature, from movement, from the whole of life. It is interesting to remember that Krch was born at a time when music was an integral part of life and a large proportion of the population was able to play a musical instrument.¹⁸

Kříčka and Krch did not see the goal of music education in musical virtuosity, but rather in the production of exceptional string players. In contrast to the traditional conception of music education at that time, they did not focus only on the improvement of technical musical skills.¹⁹ More than technical skills, they valued the ability to appreciate music, highlighting the interconnectedness of music with other arts. Above all, they emphasised the influence of music on the moral qualities of the individual. Krch and Kříčka highlighted the importance of folk songs. They emphasised the importance of natural movement and children's improvisation in the music education process. They rehearsed recitation groups, fairy tales and children's melodramas with the children.

Krch and Kříčka focused on the educational influence of music on the child's soul. Their concept of music education permeated the entire educational process. They referred to the ideals of Hostinsky, who argued that culture should be accessible to all social strata of society.²⁰ Krch and Kříčka were the forerunners of the ideas of Helfert, for whom musicality was a basic and given need for everyone.²¹ Krch and Kříčka criticised the excessive use of the Battke method in the education of the time. They saw an alternative in the use of folk songs. They also pointed out, for example, the neglect of songs in the minor key.²²

¹⁸ Laudová, H. (2000). *Prameny lidových tradic Čech: souhrn podnětů k dramaturgické a studijní práci folklorních souborů*. 2., upr. vyd. Praha: Informační a poradenské středisko pro místní kulturu. Author's note: The presented educational model or example is applicable to any area of upbringing, education, and life in general (if we wish to raise well-mannered children, we must first have well-mannered families).

¹⁹ Kříčka, J. – Krch, F. (1918). *Dítě a hudba: nové cesty v hudební výchově dětské*. 1. díl, *Hry, písně, tance*. Praha: Dědictví Komenského.

²⁰ Hostinský, O. (1941). *Umění a společnost*. Praha: Jan Laicher.

²¹ Helfert, V. (1930). *Základy hudební výchovy na nehudebních školách*. Praha: Státní nakladatelství v Praze.

²² Kříčka, J. – Krch, F. (1920). *Dítě a hudba: nové cesty v hudební výchově dětské*. 2. díl, *Dětské melodrama, hudba k pohádkám a obrázkům*. Praha: Dědictví Komenského. Author's note: Songs in a minor key support the development of musical hearing, memory, imagination, and thinking. When combined with a major key, they play a significant role in cultivating

Both teachers also implemented their ideas of holistic music education in the orphanage for legionary orphans, in the famous *House of Childhood* in Horní Krnsko near Mladá Boleslav. Here, Krch and Kříčka had the opportunity to realise their ideas about music education, and music education became an integral part of the educational process at the House of Childhood. Although Kříčka was forced to leave the *Children's Home* due to workload, he remained in contact with Krch and they continued to cooperate in the path started in the *Children's Music and Rhythm Institute*.²³

The House of Childhood

The *House of Childhood* in Horní Krnsko near Mladá Boleslav was founded by Ferdinand Krch in 1920, together with the artists Ladislav Švarc and Ladislav Havránek.²⁴ It was an institution for orphans of legionaries, established by the *Czech Legionary Community*. Today we could talk about a children's home (there were children 6 -10 years old, 11 - 14 years old, but also 2 -3 years old), which was intended to create a family-type environment.²⁵ The *House of Childhood* was conceived as a children's home with a two-class, mixed municipal school for 54 children (accommodating 14 additional children, as per the original plan of the experiment). Teachers had complete freedom, with no marking or testing (formative assessment was used, rather than the current terminology, which was suitable not only for children with special educational needs). However, the children were tested before leaving the Children's Home and their success rate in joining the mainstream educational process was high. Several personalities worked with the *House of Childhood*. Josef Kříčka, Felix Zrno, and the writer Jaroš Gamma, who even led the children to vegetarianism as an expression of respect for living creatures.²⁶ And the artists Havránek and Švarc implemented art components in the teaching.²⁷ The director of the institute, Krch, continued the path begun before the war with Kříčka by the intensive use of music in the educational process.

harmonic perception, which can benefit many children with emotional and social disabilities by aiding emotional regulation and self-awareness.

²³ Daněk, A. (2021). Ferdinand Krch – stále aktuální tvůrčí jiskra pro moderní pedagogiku. In: *Metodický portál: Články* [online]. Praha: RVP. Dostupné z: <https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/s/22703/ferdinand-krch---stale-aktualni-tvurci-jiskra-pro-moderni-pedagogiku.html>.

²⁴ The beginnings of the project date back to 1919, with the support of Alice Masaryková. For further details, see: In: Spěváček, V. (1978). *Průkopníci českých pokusných škol*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.

²⁵ Author's note: For example, the clan groups in Peter Petersen's Jena Plan.

²⁶ Gamma – Krch, F. (1923). *V „Domě dětství“: Drobné výklady dětem. Část 1. a 2. Osvobozené mládí*, sv. 1. a 2. Praha: Bedřich Kočí.

²⁷ Švarc, L. (1933). *Hlas z Domu dětství*. Mladá Boleslav: Učitelstvo okresu Mladoboleslavského.

In education at the *House of Childhood*, emphasis was placed on the unity of moral, emotional, aesthetic (including art, especially music, and work activities, particularly with Havranek) and physical education in a compatible environment for children and teachers, with a respectful and loving approach. The goal of the pedagogical activity was a morally strong individual. In the *House of Childhood*, Krch consistently promoted his so-called *education of the heart*. He argued that the main thing in education was to engage the heart so that it not only showed respect for all living things, but also took pleasure in being good.²⁸ The cornerstones of good education were the ability to love, to feel, to empathise, to think, and to serve something good.²⁹ He encouraged a sense of humor and joy in school, family and school cooperation, peer relationships and learning (students learning from each other, working together as in a large family). The integration of the curriculum, the so-called natural concentration of the curriculum, was supported.³⁰ Singing and musical activities were not only part of the classroom but also had a strong presence in extracurricular activities, and elements of dramatisation were encouraged. In his later work, Krch repeatedly referred to the results achieved by the children at the *House of Childhood* with the help of music education. This institute, a combination of school and orphanage, was for four years one of the most successful Czechoslovak pedagogical experiments. The results were also appreciated abroad.³¹

At the height of its fame, the staff complained that the frequent visits, excursions and foreign delegations left them no time for normal operations.³² It was mainly due to disagreements between the founder, the *Czech Legionary Community* and due to disagreements between teachers that the *House of Childhood* ceased operations in 1924.³³

After the closure of the *House of Childhood*, Krch continued his pedagogical activities. He joined Přemysl Pitter and worked at the *Milíč House* in Žižkov, Prague, which Krch ran after Pitter departed for emigration until its nationalisation. *Milíč House* can be described as a facility for after-school education, offering a range of interest groups that utilise work activities

²⁸ Matouš, M. (ed.) (2011). *Hovory: sborník Nadačního fondu Přemysla Pittera a Olgy Fierzové: památce Ferdinanda Krcha (1881–1973)*. Sv. 15–16, 2009–2010. Praha: Dingir.

²⁹ Krch, F. (n.d.). *O dětech*. Rukopis.

³⁰ In contrast to the concept of consolidation, for an explanation of various approaches to curriculum integration, we refer, for example, to the following publications: Šafránková, D. (2019). *Pedagogika*. Praha: Grada Publishing; Podroužek, L. (2002). *Integrovaná výuka na základní škole*. Plzeň: Nakl. Fraus.

³¹ Washburne, C. W. (1923). *Progressive tendencies in European education*. Washington: Government Printing Office. Dostupné z: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED540616.pdf>.

³² Švarc, L. (1933). *Hlas z Domu dětství*. Mladá Boleslav: Učitelstvo okresu Mladoboleslavského; Krch, F. (n.d.). *Dům dětství. Výchovný ústav pokusný v Krnsku 1920–1924*. Rukopis.

³³ Vomáčka, J. (2001). Dům dětství – inspirující příklad tvořivého pojetí učitelství. *Pedagogika*, 51(3), pp. 379–383.

(workshops, gardening) and elements of a healthy lifestyle (exercise, sports, nutrition, healthcare, vegetarianism, etc.), as well as meaningful use of free time with a moral educational overlay. It is one of the unique pedagogical initiatives in the Czech Republic and worldwide for children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.³⁴ The founder, Přemysl Pitter, is rightly called *Czech Winton* because he managed to rescue many children from internment and concentration camps and provided them with an environment full of love and support, including recovery programmes, the so-called *Action Castle*. The activities of the *Milič House* were forcibly terminated in 1949, and the house was still used as a weekly youth centre until 1953.³⁵

The Work of Ferdinand Krch

Ferdinand Krch was a respected teacher in his time, who was very active in publishing.³⁶ An unfortunately unpublished work is a manuscript titled *House of Childhood: Experimental Educational Institute in Krnsko, 1920–1924* by Krch. He created the work over the course of 8 years. It has five parts, and in the 1,200 pages of the manuscript, Krch summarised not only his work in Horní Krnsko but also his entire pedagogical life. The manuscript is stored in the archives of the *Jan Amos Komenský National Pedagogical Museum*. There are other manuscripts, including textbooks, reading books, and number books, in Ferdinand Krch's collection. Let us mention, in particular, the music education textbook *Skřivánek*, subtitled *Introduction to the World of Tones*. *Skřivánek* was initially planned as the third volume of *Child and Music*. This four-volume textbook is very modern, for example, each month has a different thematic focus. Krch stressed the importance of patience in teaching music education, both on the part of the teacher and the pupil. Another manuscript housed in the National Pedagogical Museum is the work titled *On Children*. Of interest in this work is the section of journal articles, where we find Krch's articles *From the Auxiliary School* and *On Desolate Children*. Here, Krch describes his experiences with psychosocially vulnerable and disturbed children early in his teaching career. Krch has provided us with a fascinating glimpse into the early days of institutional education for impoverished children. Krch saw a poor family environment as the primary cause of the children's poor situation. In particular, he pointed to the devastating effect of alcohol on the upbringing of children.

³⁴ Authors' note: For more detailed information, see <https://pitter.npmk.gov.cz/milicuv-dum>.

³⁵ Author's note: Since 1976, the building has housed a kindergarten, and in 2001 it was granted the honorary title "Miličův dům Kindergarten."

³⁶ Rýdl, K. (1998). Učitelské osobnosti. Ferdinand Krch a rozvoj estetického vnímání světa. *Rodina a škola*, 45(2), p. 20.

Throughout Krch's work, the strong moral charge of Krch's pedagogical approach is evident. This can also be seen in a study titled *Education of the Heart: Conditions of Emotional Education, A Handbook for Educators*. Krch also collaborated with several journals. From 1919, he directed the youth magazine *Golden Gate*. Later, he edited the Czechoslovak Red Cross children's magazines *Lípa* and *Radost*, as well as the publications in the Lípa Library. Krch was the author or co-author of many children's books, plays and songbooks. Together with Ladislav Havránek and the painter Antonín Pospíšil, he worked on reading books, counting sheets and teaching aids. Several of them were published abroad. The most famous publications include *Three Hundred Funny Things by Kašpárek* (1932), *A Collection of Cheerful Exercises and Puns for Children* (1948), *The Five-List: Counting Fairy Tales, Rhymes, Games and Pictures in the field of the First Five* (1948, together with Havránek), *Running Fox to Tábor* (1960) and *Rhymes of Our Kačky* (1969). Ferdinand Krch wanted to show society the need to give children enough time and love in both family and institutional settings, with an emphasis on their interests and needs, in a respectful environment of kind empathy and understanding. In his time, he was recognised for his work at home and abroad.

Education of the Heart: Conditions of Emotional Education, A Handbook for Educators

As we mentioned earlier in the text, the vast majority of Ferdinand Krch's works have not been published in print. An exception is the work *Education of the Heart: Conditions of Emotional Education, a handbook for educators*. The work was published in the proceedings of the *Přemysl Pitter and Olga Fierzová Foundation*.³⁷ The critical review was undertaken by Miroslav Matouš (1921-2021), a renowned expert on the personality of Přemysl Pitter and his work. Matouš describes Krch's work, *The Education of the Heart*, as a significant achievement of Krch's. In the proceedings of the *Přemysl Pitter and Olga Fierzová Foundation*, in the so-called Talks, he allows us to become acquainted with the work that Krch understood as the essence of his pedagogical endeavours.

Education of the Heart focuses on several key attributes in education that are essential for the development and transformation of the child into a morally, ethically, and spiritually mature person. Here we find elements (in current terminology) of pro-parenting education, education for responsible partnership, marriage, parenting. The emphasis in education was on the development of emotional education from birth to the end of life as a necessary part of life in that (according to Krch) age of technology and rejection of spiritual

³⁷ Matouš, M. (ed.) (2011). *Hovory: sborník Nadačního fondu Přemysla Pittera a Olgy Fierzové: památce Ferdinanda Krcha (1881–1973)*. Sv. 15–16, 2009–2010. Praha: Dingir.

elements. This pedagogical legacy remains highly relevant today, as humanity advances technologically while falling behind in terms of civilisation (AI, virtual worlds, loss of ethical values, etc.).

Krch successfully defined education into several differentiated parts, which he characterised in detail. In the introduction, he discusses the education of young people before entering marriage. He points out the importance of taking a *Course in education for marriage and parenthood*. As the title suggests, both engaged couples should attend it diligently and inculcate principles, lessons for living together and raising children. Another reference is also to reflect on the inappropriate and premature institutional upbringing of the child in the nursery (separation from the mother) and what the disadvantages of this are for the young child. He encourages both parents to reflect, "...that love for the child must grow out of respect for his soul and responsibility for the child's intellectual, emotional and moral development. The child at first understands only expressions of love such as a smile (which he returns), open arms (the child also extends his hands), a hug, a caress, a kind address, a tender word (the child's fondness for human speech)".³⁸ Institutional care, or children's homes, or children's boarding schools, are instead perceived as institutions where children living permanently do not receive love from their parents, deprivation, separation anxiety, children have problems in vocabulary development, emotional adjustment and also with positive parental patterns in the family. The irreplaceability of the mother's role and role in the child's upbringing, a secure and safe bond with the parent is crucial and thus accompanies the young person throughout life. The upbringing of the heart is, in many ways, timeless in its historical legacy and remains relevant in the contemporary 21st century. The loving comfort of the family from which a child should emerge is changing today, both parents are often at work till late afternoon, not having enough time to devote themselves entirely to their offspring, inconsistent parenting or overly democratic liberal upbringing and consumerist lifestyle, absence of quality of life values along with overuse of social networking and living in the virtual world enter into the upbringing of a child. Krch states that: "*The home opens the senses and educates the heart, laying the foundations for the moral attitudes of the future man. A happy, loving home is the place where the foundations are laid for a total understanding of life and its values*".³⁹ A child's personality develops and takes shape during the preschool years, when attitudes and fundamental attributes of their personality are formed. The upbringing of both parents should be an indispensable component, even though each parent brings all his or her skills and knowledge to bear on education. We should not forget that the father's role in upbringing is important, and it is the father who teaches the child to play and learn, thus becoming a *hero* and role model for them. Again, a timeless

³⁸ Krch in Matouš, M. (2011), p. 9.

³⁹ Ibid, p. 10.

expression of the necessity of both parents, father and mother, raising a child, when in today's world many children grow up without this support in life. The mother's upbringing tends to focus on the emotional component and is most important for preschool children; the mother instills the principles of morality, good manners, obedience and diligence, including the development of speech.

Equally interesting, beneficial and timeless is the subchapter that deals with the employment of children as they grow older. At present, we tend to see parents rather *sparing* the child from small chores and focusing only on school results and performance, scheduling the children according to their school activities, often without shared time and activities. The child should also have meaningful activities and parents should not do them for the children. Again, this is a valuable idea given how contemporary parents often approach children and their free time. By doing so, children will learn skills that they can use further in sports, for example, becoming more resilient, more agile and more capable in synchronicity of movement. The fact that a child sees his or her parent creating chores or working in the garden is a role model for the child. Today's world places high demands on performance and time. However, little emphasis is placed on the work skills that shape a young person, often lacking a connection to positive role models in the family or wider environment, or a lack of respect for others' work. Nothing educates a child like seeing their mother and father work. Modern times offer various opportunities, such as speeding up household chores, doing the occasional mending, or minor repairs. Manual work has often remained a hobby. Leisure time, on the other hand, is rare and we tend to spend it in other ways than housework.

Other areas of Krch's concept of education include discipline, praise and rewards. Krch describes that we learn by making mistakes, especially children. *"Let us, then, make up for children's misdeeds so that it is not punishment, but only the removal of wrongdoing, correction, i.e., gain, growth. Punishment (especially in anger, which sometimes degenerates into vindictiveness and cruelty) is the educator's helplessness and inability to find positive compensation, is aggravation on both sides".*⁴⁰ True pedagogical mastery lies in calmly explaining and justifying everything to the child. For us, the legacy of Kruch lies in his unwavering search for the good and in righting the wrongs of a child who has done wrong. It is important to encourage children to work with error, to help them find, understand, address and correct the mistake or transgression, initially in cooperation (parent-child). This should dispense with physical trinkets and lovingly appeal for an explanation of what the child has committed, and what the ways to solve it are. Corporal punishment undermines human dignity and can erode sincere love between adults. Again, this idea is timeless: we should strive to educate with love and patience at all times and in all circumstances.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 32.

According to Krch, we should also not forget praise and rewards in education, which are among the core elements of education. Praise helps to reinforce the child's behaviour positively and should be a motivation for the child. It should be formulated specifically for an activity that has been successful, which can further encourage the child's self-esteem. Children should learn from their successes, as well as from their mistakes. Praise is followed by rewards that work in education. Rewards in education should not only be financial, but also moral and value-based. It is essential to make the child feel good about his/her work (e.g. school work) and this should be the reward itself. Again, a very positive idea that can be used as an intrinsic motivator in education. Krch's legacy of educational endeavour is a kind of bridge between love and respect for the child in education. These are certain kinds of empathic ways that lead to the mystery of education, revealing what we do and how, rather than what we say. Krch's education is a specific intellectual, moral, and spiritual journey, standing on a solid foundation of emotional education that supports and respects each child (an element of inclusion).

Conclusion and Discussion

The primary research focus of the study was to interpret the ideological and pedagogical principles embedded in Krch's writing, *Education of the Heart*, and to examine their relevance to the modern inclusive paradigm, contemporary special and inclusive pedagogy, and education. Sub-questions then included a reflection on his pedagogical practice and experience, including key values and concepts of emotional and musical education. Krch's conception, viewed through the prism of contemporary approaches to the education and upbringing of pupils with special educational needs, was also an integral part.

Krch sees the highest goal of education in the principle of love as the highest meaning of life. With *Education of the Heart*, Krch was able to balance the love and respect of the educator for the child and the child for the educator. Based on a lifelong process of cooperation between emotional education combined with reason and intellectual education with sensitivity, he sought a way to understand and support each child (inclusive overlap). On these foundations, moral values (education) are then developed, leading together with the previous ones to the fulfilment of the spiritual essence of education. Again, there is an overlap with the contemporary notion of the inclusive paradigm, which emphasises the educational, socio-cultural overlap of living with and helping those in need. Education of the heart can become a safe journey of the educator to the child's soul through friendship and mutual trust, understanding and closeness (both in the family and the institution). The nurturing role model is a mirror for the child and his soul; words are useless if actions are lacking. No less important is the role of pro-parental education and its support in emotional education. It is essential to create a loving, safe, and happy home

for the child and to help the child empathise with objects, plants, animals, and other people, including co-responsibility and compassion for the sick, elderly, and disabled (inclusive overlap).

Krch's reference to the transdisciplinarity of education and upbringing is also inspiring, and is evident in the methodological and interpersonal approaches in the House of Childhood and the writings analysed. The emphasis is on the connection between emotional education and nature, music, physical, and artistic education, which provides a specific basis for aesthetic education, also seen as an outcome of the moral and labour components of education (including emotional education).

The inclusive orientation of Krch's pedagogical ideas is evident in his observation of the need for love among orphans, which tends to be greater and more intense (e.g., among the visually impaired, the hearing-impaired, etc.).⁴¹

The principles and methodological foundations of music education, as well as their implementation in the House of Childhood and the ideas presented in *The Child and Music*, would withstand scrutiny in a confrontation with the most modern approaches to contemporary music education. The holistic concept of Krch's music education consisting in the integration of singing, listening to music, playing an instrument and rhythmic (children's movement to music), consisting in the development of musical skills, the child's experience and perception of music is one of the basic educational elements in the child's development (together with emotional education). Ferdinand Krch was already fulfilling today's inclusive ideas a century ago. He was significantly ahead of his time and managed to holistically combine the educational process, music education and the field of personal and moral development. Through music, Krch aims at much higher standards than just precise intonation and rhythm. Music is meant to be a tool towards our better selves in relation to others. It is intended to help us develop into morally strong individuals. Krch's music education is a powerful, inclusive, socialising, and educational tool, without which the needs of students and their social coexistence with each other cannot be met.

This study is dedicated to the centenary of the closing of the Children's Home. Our goal is to remain faithful to the ideas of Ferdinand Krch and to strive to understand their historical legacy for present and future education, inclusion, and society. We believe that more intensive research, perhaps by digitising available Krch publications, will open up space for further research and the development of pedagogical thinking. Krch believed that no good idea can be lost; it just has to wait patiently for someone to come along who, through his understanding and love, will stir it to new life and further refine and develop it according to the needs of the times. Let us be inspired by his ideas, learn from

⁴¹ For further details see: Krch, F. (n.d.). *Dům dětství. Výchovný ústav pokusný v Krnsku 1920–1924*. Rukopis, p. 82.

Krch's deeply human approach, and strive to embody his kindness, love, respect, and understanding for children in the minor and major keys of inclusive education, with a heart.

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