INTRODUCTION

The formation of new social stratification through the system of market institutions and institutions of social protection that played the role of social control were the strategies for the formation of a “rehabilitation society” by democratic elites in the 1990s. In this period, social work became a mass profession aimed primarily at the rehabilitation, adaptation, and integration of the non-productive strata of the population into the realities of the “new world”.

The process of de-Sovietization in the social protection system covered large masses of people, therefore, the technologies of social patronage served as the collective forms of management that allowed managing “the wide layers of the subproletariat” realizing the interests of the ruling elites in the formation of a community of Russians as the antithesis of the community of Soviet people.

However, as the Russian model of the social state took shape and a new community was formed, the centralized system of social protection became less and less effective.

We believe that at the beginning of the new century, Russia has been showing a shift from the technology of social patronage to the technology of individual social work based on the requests of clients. Both global and Russian practice demonstrates that the concepts of total social patronage with the ideologemes of social contract cease to be effective under the conditions of the global crisis and territorial economic crises.

Models of Russian state paternalism that involve reciprocal relations based on the principles of the “you help me, I help you” archetypal constructs are not efficient in a liberal economy and transitional society. This is demonstrated by the reforms in the social sphere and the permanent changes in social service standards that are constantly failing to keep up with the changing socio-economic realities of Russian society.

From our view, contradictions in the modernization of practice are associated with the continuous search for “innovative forms of social patronage” as the mechanisms for managing collective actors with the advancement of individualized models of support considering the needs of individual welfare being disregarded. Examples of this can be seen in the newly developed specialties such as “social psychologist” or “family work specialist” in which social accompaniment as a form of social patronage serves as the predominant professional intervention.

The currently present contradictions between the theory and practice of social work manifest in the need to develop and comprehend not only the collective forms of support but also the individual ones that allow meeting the individual needs of a person in various forms of their social welfare (TÖRRÖNEN, 2015).
We believe that, on the one hand, modern Russia is facing an increase in the trends of the crisis of state technologies of social patronage. On the other hand, professional structures shaping their interventions in the form of individual social work begin to emerge on the part of both religious and non-governmental organizations. In this regard, it is necessary to find a balance between these trends, so as not to destroy the established matrices of support and the emerging models of assistance based on clients’ requests.

METHODS

The postmodern challenges of the theory of social work cognition are shaped by resistance to expansion on the part of a number of the humanitarian sciences that showed especially “clear opposition” in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

The established spheres of knowledge such as psychology, history, philosophy, pedagogy, and several others having their own scientific traditions, schools, and research apparatus enriched their knowledge and expanded its boundaries through mastering a new sphere of cognition, namely social work. However, this expansion did not contribute to the formation of knowledge boundaries of Russian theory of social work although it should be noted that interdisciplinary discourses and descriptions of the areas of humanitarian knowledge have been of some assistance in shaping its conceptual apparatus. This was the vulnerability of the social work theory and this very aspect reflects certain current difficulties in determining its modern scientific status within Russian scientific traditions.

RESULTS

Problems of the relationship between social work and social pedagogy

Comprehension of social work in the disciplinary matrix of social pedagogy was the first peculiar challenge to Russian social work as an independent area of practice and knowledge.

V.G. Bocharova was one of the first to realize this approach in examining the paradigm of social pedagogy in the context of the problem of social work. The researcher somewhat opens the discussion about the relationship between social work and social pedagogy in the post-Marxist social and pedagogical knowledge. In her view, social pedagogy is the methodological basis of social work.

Expanding the object of the theory of social pedagogy viewed as “the holistic system of a person’s interactions within their closest social circle”, Bocharova (1995, p. 147) also included social work in the systemic relationships of this object believing that “this branch of science somewhat humanizes, “pedagogizes” social work as it considers an individual in the organic unity of the individual-psychic and social”. Absolutizing only one facet of social work, its practical orientation, the researcher concluded that “social pedagogy is an applied science for practical social work” (BOCHAROVA, 1995, p. 147).

This viewpoint has gained a large number of supporters in the academic community and currently, at the beginning of the new century, we can observe this debate being reflected in its “weakened form” in several concepts adopted in social pedagogy textbooks (IVANOV, 2010; MUDRIK, 2009).

This situation was possible due to the fact that at the beginning of the 1990s, the theory and practice of social work in Russia was going through the initial phase of its development. The initial phase of development of knowledge involves the phase of scientific search, thus, a system of scientific schools and practical technologies was absent in humanitarian knowledge and helping practice.

At the same time, it should be noted that social work and social pedagogy completely converge in their modern theoretical discourses despite the different genesis of the development of their practical and theoretical paradigms. From the point of postmodern ideas, theoretical social knowledge is defined by explanatory theories and practical theories, approaches, and perspectives.

A perspective is a projection, a system of theoretical views allowing one to see the opportunities for interaction and/or problems at all levels. Various perspectives are distinguished in the theoretical discourses of social work, for instance, the ecological, feminist,
ecosystemic, etc. A perspective is a system of scientific description of human beings in various environmental dimensions (PAYNE, 2007).

According to British researcher D. Berridge (2011, p. 9), social pedagogy at the level of cognition is not a set of methods or practical theories “but a perspective that permeates all areas of practice in the social welfare of children in social work”.

This situation is typical not only for the British model of social work and social pedagogy; certain parallels can be drawn with Russian paradigms as well. Contemporary models of social work and social pedagogy are more promising than applied or explanatory theories which allows us to consider their role at the level of theoretical paradigm classifications. The peculiarity of these theoretical discourses is well illustrated by interdisciplinary approaches serving as a basis for the modern cognitive schemes of Russian researchers in social pedagogy and social work.

A common ground of these schemes is also found in the fact that authors are not limited in the selection of theories, synthesis of propositions, and absolutization of principles, thus, almost all of them differ in their choice of theoretical discourses. Moreover, the range of “disciplines” is quite wide as it stretches from pedagogical paradigms to social work, from religious studies to valeology, from ethnography to defectology.

The same systematization is characteristic of the Russian paradigm of social work.

However, Russian perspectives on social work and social pedagogy differ significantly from European perspectives. According to M. Payne (2007), the perspectives adopted in foreign approaches are divided into two categories: comprehensive and inclusive. Comprehensive perspectives cover all kinds of practices currently present in the historical paradigm of the time. The Russian discourse space of both social pedagogy and social work is primarily aimed at outlining the knowledge space in the context of other established theoretical paradigms whereas practice is not a separate subject of consideration. Thus, theories of practice, applied theories of social pedagogy and social work are not yet a priority in scientific research.

Social work and sociology

Over the past years, Russian sociology has been either expanding the perspectives of the theory of cognition and practice of social work or “providing” certain instruments for effective social service and client understanding (PAYNE, 2007; STANLEY; KELLY, 2010; CREE, 2010) similarly to what can be observed in foreign social work.

Therefore, we can conclude that the examined scientific knowledge has demonstrated a moderate expansion in the 25 years of development of Russian theory and practice of social work.

This “tolerance” can be explained by various factors including the fact that the subject field, boundaries, and theoretical schemes of sociology in Russia were changing its development vector at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. Unlike modern schools of social work, sociological schools in the Soviet Union functioned within the Marxist paradigm (IVANOV, 1988) and after the change of “social conditions”, at the turn of the century, the field of knowledge of these schools was defined within the new boundaries of post-Marxist sociology (TOSHCHENO, 1992; RUTKEVICH, 1991; BORNOEV; ELMLEV; ORLOV, 1991).

Social work also experienced an objective scientific need for the “instruments” of sociological research due to the new social and process realities. Understanding the social context “shaping” clients’ environmental problems required a scientific sociological explanation which determined the need for cognitive discourses of sociology in social work theory and practice in this period.

Thirdly, the points of the juxtaposition of sociology and social work are an objective process linked to the institutionalization of these fields of knowledge and practice which can be observed in Russian and foreign history. For example, in the Russian Empire, at the beginning of the 20th century, the St. Petersburg Psychoneurological Institute opened a department of...
sociology headed by E.V. de Roberti and a department of social care headed by S.K. Gogel (1913).

Social work and sociology were “closed down” in the 1920s and 1930s and once again revived in the Russian Federation in the 1990s almost at the same time. Sociology and social work in Britain, for example, developed simultaneously. Training of social workers first started in 1903 at the School of Sociology where the first programs for training professionals were designed based on sociological knowledge (SMITH, 1965; FIRSOV, 1994).

Social work and sociology complemented each other and influenced the formation of one another’s scientific knowledge complexes. For example, the discussion between M. Richmond and A. Flexner served as a sort of impetus for the emergence of the sociology of the profession (SHERR; JONES, 2014), and similar examples of the mutual influence of sociology and social work can be found in history in various countries of the world. As rightly noted by M. Sullivan (1987, p. 155), “sociological theory and sociological forms of imagination are invaluable weapons in the struggle for critical and reflective social work practice”.

**DISCUSSION**

**Approaches to the theory of social work**

We can identify several groups of studies that were in one form or another aimed at the formation of approaches to the theory of social work. All of these approaches considered client problems at one of the problem levels adopted in foreign sociological knowledge, namely the micro, meso, macro, or mega-levels, while their discourses of reflection were closely related to the actual practice of social work which is also characteristic of all Russian studies.

The first group of sociological studies focused on the micro-level of comprehending social work theory and practice. Of greatest interest in this direction, in our opinion, are the approaches realized by Altai researchers S.I. Grigoriev and L.G. Gusliakova (2003, 2004, 2011) who attempted to develop a Russian theory of social work based on the approaches of the vitalist model of sociology.

The second group of researchers, O.I. Borodkina and V.A. Samoilova, focused on the group models of practice that are currently most widely represented in the ecological-systemic approach common in Western sociology. The authors described a resource approach to the problems of theory and practice of Russian social work. Thus, the questions of “the content of resources, their systematization, and evaluation” in work with clients require adequate contemporary responses to the challenges of the developing Russian practice (BORODKINA; SAMOILOVA, 2013, p. 45).

The third group of studies represented by the works of I.A. Grigoreva, V.N. Kelasev, and I.L. Perova (2012) assesses the development of social work theory at the macro-level in the context of approaches to social welfare. According to researchers, this approach claims a methodological understanding of social work as a multi-level theory in which society, groups, and the person are considered through the concepts of social welfare (GRIGOREVA; KELASEV; PEROVA, 2012). Thus, to give a preliminary summary of sociological discourses focused on the subject field of social work, we believe that Russian sociology has been “interacting” with the context of Western traditions and evolving approaches.

Psychological discourses in the theory of social work cognition formed based on the concepts of psychosocial practice. The Russian model of psychosocial practice is an eclectic approach to different population groups that formed at the beginning of the 1990s as an alternative to “laboratory psychology”. The psychological “toolkit” of psychosocial work was a Russian version of social work with a case. However, its practical and methodological foundation did not at all overlap with the classical diagnostic models described by American researchers F. Hollis and M. Woods (1981) who gave the name to this method of social work.

The expansion of psychology as a field of knowledge and practice that embraced all areas of activity in post-Soviet society led to the domination of the psychological paradigm of helping clients in various spheres of their lives. This circumstance led to social work technologies in social care institutions becoming more and more simplified and limited to organizational work,
patronage, and socio-cultural recreation among the older generation, children, and adolescents.

Meanwhile, the absolutization of psychosocial phenomena allowed promoting comprehension in social work on a case that has not yet been properly covered by the Russian theory of cognition. Thus, the postmodern stage of development of the theory of social work has outlined the main directions for its further development associated with multilevel approaches to its theory and practice.

**Social work and the enlarged group of specialties**

At the beginning of the 21st century, the enlarged group of specialties is posing new challenges for Russian theory, practice, and education in the sphere of social work. The new reform of the educational system implemented at the beginning of the 21st century and associated with changes in scientific specialties determines the place of social work in the system of social sciences. At the present, by decree of officials of the Ministry of Education and Science, social work is merged into an enlarged group of specialties such as sociology and organization of work with youth which “defines its place” both in the system of professions and in the system of education.

Priority in this group of specialties is given to sociological knowledge that is currently represented at all levels of education: Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctorate. Sociological sciences are recognized by the Russian academic community as a legitimate system of knowledge and are represented in the system of scientific specialties of the Higher Attestation Commission under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation. The inclusion of social work in the group of social sciences is likely and reasonable for education functionaries, however, it fundamentally contradicts the global trends of development of social work as a profession, a field of knowledge, and an area of education.

Firstly, the global professional community conceptualizes social work as a helping profession and not a profession within the enlarged group of social science professions. Social work is considered among other helping professions such as psychiatry, applied psychology, counseling, and medical care. This approach has almost a century-long tradition in Western civilization and has been examined and described in basic textbooks for helping professions (OKUN, 2002).

In the global system of social work education, national schools are guided by global educational standards that outline the key goals, curriculum strategies, areas of practice, and requirements for professional teaching staff (FIRSOV; NAMESTNIKOVA; STUDENOVA, 2016). All provisions of global educational standards reflect the specificity and autonomy of the social work profession.

In the domestic educational process creating the system of training of social workers from the standpoint of social science discourses, probably, the formation of competencies, the definition of fundamental concepts, and the choice of basic interventions and role positions will be carried out according to other development trajectories. This will complicate further disconnection of social work theory and technology from the paradigm of social patronage and social security that are predominant today, as well as isolate social work “from the pillar road” of its development for many years.

The probability of this outcome is quite high in the current state of Russian education similar to the scenario faced by the Canadian model of social work in the 1920s and 1930s (MOFFATT, 2001).

Secondly, the international community recognizes social work as an independent profession that has a special mission in society and the system of world economic relations, as stated in the new definition of social work provided by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 2014 (EASSW, n.d.).

The presented definition emphasizes social work as a profession for the first time. Moreover, social work is defined not as an “occupation”, i.e. an activity typical of mass professions, but as a “profession” – a prestigious title profession awarded in the Anglo-Saxon tradition only to high-
status activities. However, a mere decade ago in the UK social work belonged to the second, interim class of occupation placed between the professions of “mental and physical work” (TREVITHICK, 2005, p. 41).

Thirdly, social work presents an academic discipline based on its own theories, specialized knowledge, and unique subject-specific language structures. Doctoral programs in social work are present in virtually every country in the Western world, and studies conducted in them that analyze various social work phenomena and processes are published in 33 of the world’s scientific journals. At the same time, in defining social work as an academic discipline, IFAD emphasizes the existence of independent theories and specific knowledge that cannot be viewed as part of any scientific field which is also characteristic of Russian humanitarian knowledge.

Despite the challenges and “threats” that sociology may pose to the transformation of the social work paradigm, we should note the likely positive perspectives that it may bring, which include:

- a sociological system of scientific reflection on the processes and institutions of social practice,
- the expansion of evidence-based approaches to the problems of human-environment interaction,
- the introduction of new sociological research methods into the practice of social work with various population groups, and several other perspectives that require special reflection and consideration along the vector of the relationship between social work and sociology.

Thus, for example, in Russian social work, sociological theories can give an impetus to several practical areas of social work that require special scientific reflection:

- the daily activity of social services,
- the quality of provided services, the effect of social work practice on the socio-political climate in the given region of the country, etc.

**CONCLUSION**

Comprehension of the theory of social work from the point of sociological knowledge has been undertaken since the early 1990s, perhaps not as broadly and “oppositely” as was the case with social pedagogy, but consistently. The main difference is that the sociological approach to social work theory was implemented in the logic of the established Western scientific traditions which significantly distinguished its scientific discourses from the post-Marxist discourses of Russian pedagogy.

The prospects for further research are found in the study of sociological processes of “social dependency” that, as demonstrated by the historical practice of social work in all world countries, is the inverse of the humanistic system of assistance to the individual in social states.

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Social work in Russia in the context of paradigm changes
Trabalho social na Rússia no contexto de mudanças de paradigma
Trabajo social en Rusia en el contexto de cambios de paradigma

Resumo
O artigo determina as principais tendências no desenvolvimento da teoria e da prática do trabalho social e do sistema educacional nas condições da Rússia moderna. As características específicas da transição da prática do patrocínio social para o trabalho individual são reveladas, identificam-se as áreas problemáticas do trabalho social russo no contexto de desenvolvimento da profissão, da teoria e do modelo multinível de educação. O artigo analisa abordagens sobre os problemas que estão tomando forma dentro do paradigma do trabalho social e parecem ser características da nova etapa de sua institucionalização. Os autores focam nas principais contradições dentro do modelo russo de trabalho social associado à crise do modelo de patrocínio social, aos desafios pós-modernistas da teoria da cognição e às novas tendências do sistema educacional.

Keywords: Social education. Social patronage. Sociology. Individual social work. Social work theory.

Palavras-chave: Educação social. Patrocínio social. Sociologia. Trabalho social individual. Teoria do trabalho social.

Rezumen
El artículo determina las principales tendencias en el desarrollo de la teoría y la práctica del trabajo social y el sistema educativo en las condiciones de la Rusia moderna. Se revelan las características específicas de la transición de la práctica del mecenazgo social al trabajo individual, se identifican las áreas problemáticas en el trabajo social ruso en el contexto de un mayor desarrollo de la profesión, la teoría y el modelo multinivel de educación. El artículo examina los enfoques de los problemas que están tomando forma dentro del paradigma del trabajo social y que parecen ser características de la nueva etapa de su institucionalización. Los autores se centran en las principales contradicciones dentro del modelo ruso de trabajo social asociadas con la crisis del modelo de mecenazgo social, los desafíos posmodernos de la teoría de la cognición y las nuevas tendencias en el sistema educativo.

Keywords: Social education. Social patronage. Sociology. Individual social work. Social work theory.

Palabras-claves: Educación social. Mecenazgo social. Sociología. Trabajo social individual. Teoría del trabajo social.