



EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

Last issue's editorial was concerned with the role of nursing philosophy and addressed mainly to nurses. In this text, I would like to bring your attention to midwifery as its development and practice also stem from philosophy.

During its historical development, the profession of midwifery has undergone significant changes determined by its social status, competencies and place of activity. From the very beginning, births were exclusively associated with midwives. Soranus of Ephesus, an Alexandrian physician and author of important treatise "Gynaikaia" and two-volume textbook "On Midwifery and the Diseases of Women", described the qualities that midwives should possess, including literacy, ingenuity, good memory and knowledge of medicine. Midwifery was also addressed in works by Hippocrates and Aristotle. The first textbook of midwifery in the Czech lands was written in 1519. Midwives were granted access to universities where midwifery was taught since 1788. An important role was played by A. J. Jungmann's midwifery school in Prague training midwives since 1804. When comparing this historical development of the midwifery profession with that of nursing, it must be said that midwifery education was very well organized.

After World War II, midwives mostly worked in hospitals. In 1954, an active obstetric approach to childbirth became the generally accepted policy in the Czech Republic. In the mid-20th century, discussions on natural childbirths quickly spread to the general public in Western countries. In the Czech Republic, however, this concept appeared only in the mid-1990s. In association with the Czech health reform, changes in midwifery were more widely discussed, with some representatives of health professionals and the general public calling for its humanization, demedicalization and reevaluation of routine delivery procedures and practices.

At present, not only natural but also alternative approaches to childbirth are discussed. Midwives increasingly secure their autonomy, strive to regain their original competencies, wish to continue their education and work independently. On this long-term journey, they may benefit from high-quality education and targeted research activities. For further development of the specialty, more involvement of midwives in research and publishing would be desirable. I believe many colleagues will consider this and use the opportunity to publish their midwifery research outcomes in this journal.

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