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DECAHEDRON OF EDUCATION, CONCERNING THE NEED TO ASK "NEW GENERATION" QUESTIONS ABOUT EDUCATION

A concrete man, types of personalities prevailing in a society, or types of behaviour in a given culture at a given time, all may be regarded as results of educational processes. It turns out that it is very difficult then to make a clear distinction between the educational effect of organized efforts by professional educators and influences of non-professional and/or natural educators as well as uncontrolled and unmeasurable effects of genotype, local environment, economic and political system, culture, existing civilization and historical, national and global events. This multidimensionality of human development has often lead to more or less one-sided emphasis on influence by a particular fragment of processes, actions, events, factors or conditions upon what we refer to as personality, i.e. the result of education.

In the present work I propose a general approach to the processes that combined to shape a versatile, harmoniously and fully developed human being I will also try to distinguish possible ways of approaching these processes, in epistemological, axiological and ontological meanings of these "aspects".

I propose "education" as the broadest category of all the particular processes of development, upbringing and influence on personality transformation. Thus education is the totality of influences on an individual or group stimulating

development and utilization of their capabilities to make them maximally conscious and creative members of the social, national, cultural and global community, and to make them capable of forming a unique and stable identity, able to develop themselves through undertaking "tasks beyond personal interests", through preservation of continuity of their own egos in the accomplishment of "long-distance tasks". Education is the complex of actions guiding a man and his activity towards full actualization of his individual capabilities; it is also the total sum of influences and functions constituting and regulating man's personality and his behavior toward other people and the world.

Education in its broadest and integral meaning consists of many contributive processes. They can be referred to as "education for", "education to", "education in", "education through", "education of", adding to the word "education" a marker designating its object, purpose, means, institutions constituting their specific integrity and specialization. This is a common procedure, after all, multiplying various "educations" and their respective methods called "pedagogies" ("andragogy", "playground pedagogy", "military pedagogy", etc.).

Let us try to arrange educational processes with regard to the c o n t e n t r a n g e o f t h e o b j e c t of purposes, processes, and educational results beginning with global problems of the world as a whole and ending at the species dimension of man as an organism. Let us also apply the same etymological process that has produced the notion of education.

Education comprises ten constituent processes. In parentheses I list exemplary contents, objects of purposes, processes and results of education.

1. Globalization - e.g. the world and global problems: war, environmental threats, exhaustion of energy sources, political division of the world into the center and peripheries, mono- and poliocentricity of the global system;

2. Etatization-state, its sovereignty, system, democratic machinery, necessary dependencies, location in the world, allies and adversaries, strength and stability, "raison d'etat";

3. Nationalization-nation, its tradition, cultural peculiarity, the nature of bonds and differences;

4. Collectivization (secondary socialization-development into social class, party membership) - social class, class interests and bonds, peculiarity of ethos, solidarity with people of different statuses and situations, formation of opinions about the particular place and mission of one's class and its party;

5. Politization (bureaucracy, professionalization) - organizations and institutions, education for division of labor, rationality and discipline in an organized society and institutionalized world, formation of ideological beliefs about legitimacy of existing order, necessity and validity of existing distribution of statuses and functions, education for work and profession);

6. Socialization (primary socialization) - influence of primary groups: family, peers, local community, assimilation of existing norms;

7. Inculturation and personalization - cultural and social personality, the human being as a result of growing into culture and of autonomous choices of values, transmission of the philosophical and religious system;

8. Education (in a narrow sense), citizenship (making a conscious citizen of a simple man) and jurisprudence - citizen, implementation to accept and carry out the roles and activities of citizenship, formation of legal consciousness;

9. Training and humanization - human being, knowledge, beliefs, skills, habits, dignity values, interactive competences, principle of mutuality and empathy, formation of secondary needs;

10. Hominization - organism, formation of features of human species, health, hygiene and sexual education, the principle of avoiding punishment and maximizing gratification without harming other people; formation and channeling of primary needs.

All the processes together constitute what is broadly understood as education. We can speak of harmony in these processes when they do not contradict or cancel each other, when none of them is in excess in comparison with others and when none of the processes is suppressed. Such a state of educa-

tional processes may be imagined as a regular decahedron whereby each surface would be similar in size (symbolizing volume of influence upon personality) with the center, which would include personality shaped by these processes in the form of a "radiating nucleus" reflecting these influences so that together with its transformations those original "areas" of influence would be transformed, too. The result of such harmonized influences would be the individual, not only fully and versatily developed to his maximum capacity, but also a person actively and consciously transforming himself and the world from both short and long term perspectives. Thus the educated individual not only consciously maintains and improves his identity, but is also aware of the necessity to act to improve the world following the values and criteria he accepts.

Such an ideal activating decahedron - model of harmonious influences of all constituent education processes is in fact susceptible to various equilibrium disturbances. They may be of two kinds: unilateral excess or unilateral deficit. We then face pathologies of education.

Let us mention how pathologies of excess threaten education in its constituent processes:

1) Excess of globalization leads to cosmopolitanism, globalism, inflation of world-scale dramas while obliterating difficult problems of one's state, nation, one's own personal identity, marginalization of local social and psychological problems.

2) Abuse of state control leads to etatism, formation of an irrational religious cult of the state, its institutions, chief bodies and persons. In its extreme form, it likens education to the training of animals and to the confinement of social life within total institutions, requiring uniform rhythm and experience. It imposes supercontrol over the lives of individuals and groups. Historical examples are indoctrination systems in totalitarian and fascist societies.

3) Excessive nationalization, viewing the nation as the supreme value leads to nationalism and nazism, and the development of a sense of superiority of one nation or race over others.

4) Pathology of excessive class education is manifested in extreme collectivism, in irrationally founded conviction about the right to domination, superiority and dictatorship of the class one originates from or whose interests (even if not realized by members of that class) are represented by the party one belongs to. It is a supraclass division and sectarian approach to party doctrine transformed into justification of minority rule in the interest of maintaining the status quo by mandarines-functionaries but also in the far-fetched interests of that class. Aptness to denounce defence of one's own state's interests and/or social group in favor of party (class) interests is also class or party education pathology.

5) Excessive education for institutions and organizations leads to the authoritarian personality syndrome that links the tendency to domination with that of submission. The result of such excess is a "split" personality: different functionings by the same individual within his roles in organizations and primary groups in family or neighborhood and total submission to organizational hierarchy rule.

6) Excessive emphasis on socialization forces operating in primary groups and actually limits social horizons to playground scale, to a local perspective in viewing world affairs and one's place in the world.

7) Exaggerated educational focus on grand ideas and general human values leads to idealistic detachment from reality, to exaggerated aestheticism, life in the cloudland of fascination with and nostalgia for the beauty of all or fragments of man's cultural heritage and to concentration on one's own extatic experiences, one's own inner life, regarded as richer and better than the evil world.

8) Pathology of excessive training into citizen roles and legal norms may produce an "externally controllable" personali-

ty jammed into preassigned roles, bourgeois "domestication" syndrome and perseverance of personality.

9) Exaggerated effort in humanization and instruction processes leads to academism, decorativeness, redundance and inapplicability of knowledge and skills, sense of eruditive superiority over others, cognitive conservatism, and the belief that all problems have already been formulated and resolved.

10) Focus on hominization brings about a self that is inward-looking, selfishness, naturism, or ecologism, an overall sense of responsibility and oversensitivity with regard to organism-environment relations and mediators of that relation.

Pathological d e f i c i t in each of the decahedron is components causes such disturbances as: 1) particularism; 2) anarchism and a sense of delegitimization of the state and political alienation; 3) cosmopolitism, uprooted national bonds, 4) social alienation, non-partyism, atomism; 5) alienation of labor and individualism; 6) asocialness and egocentrism; 7) anomie, disequilibrium or lack of a system of values and principles; 8) depravation and tendency to transgress legal norms; 9) functional and cultural illiteracy; 10) animalism, substituting primitive needs for values, underdevelopment, invalidism, organism inefficiency.

To educate a fully developed, versatile and active individual it seems necessary to remove an excess of one process and to reinforce another. We then can speak of "RE-education" and "DE-education" with respect to all its components. Thus we can also speak of "re-etatzation" of individuals with a state education deficit and "de-etatzation" of individuals excessively dependent on the state as an object of cult, equipped with the faith that the state makes most decisions and choices for him. It is worth noting that such semantic propositions imply alteration of existing meanings, especially with "socialization". Traditionally the notion of "resocialization" describes restoration of the individual's respect for the law and social norms. In our approach, following earlier postulates by S. Magala, this may denote various sections and particular constituent processes of education, including such concepts as "re-etatzation of society" and "resocialization of state".

Thus there emerges a network of notions capable of thoroughly describing components in education in the broad sense that may help to analyze conflicts or "collisions" (as termed by K. Sośnicki) of two or more processes constituting education, (including excess) deficit conflicts of etatization and socialization and inculturation, personalization and humanization. From the mere list of education components, their pathological excesses and deficits and efforts to remove them or make them up (as well as from the matrix of their possible collisions) there emerges a network of problems for research and practice. Many of them have been cognitively exhausted. They are over-researched problems and over-guarded research areas. At the same time, there are blank spots, needs to reconstruct basic theories from the very beginning and to apply them to the requirements of pedagogy and education. A side-effect of such problem network analysis may be the unveiling of educational processes concealed by language that is only applicable to narrow processes though universally abused. This is especially true for the range of theory, methods and teaching practices, training and instruction at school, and educational institutions whose language seems to have exhausted the entire theory and practice of education.

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Research programs and questions born out of analysis of components of educational process and their semantic range may constitute merely a set of basic, preliminary and elementary problems. These are "first generation" research problems. The term is used here in the sense of their fundamental nature and generic status.

We arrive at a more complex and difficult problem when we apply language so ordered to analysis of actual educational threats, or when we look at the first generation problem network through the scope of unsolved politological, axiological, sociolo-

gical, psychological and methodological problems, and when we confront the two resulting question matrixes. There will emerge a problem network, research and practical problems of the "second generation" of greater complexity and much more difficult to solve.

Here are but some examples of problem and methodological aspects and options that should be imposed on the postulated network of educational notions.

1) Phases (types) of undulations of social-political system (opening-outburst-closure-stagnation-opening). Dynamic equilibrium principles versus non-equilibrium social system condition with tendencies to arrhythmic perturbations and leaps of varying force and directions.

2) Types of social order undergoing transformations at various phases of the system's change. A method of establishing and emergence of developmental visions and purposes (positive-negative, authoritative - rank and file) Presence of mediating mechanisms.

3) Type and range of environmental influence (personal, local, neighborhood, mezzostucture, macrostructure, megastructure). Level of institutions and type of organization processes: organic - regulative - governing - political - strategic. Innovations, reforms and national plan in a subsystem versus changes within the system.

4) Variability of the social system versus temporal dimension of the individual's life (life cycles; orientation to the future, the present, the past). Autonomy versus individual sense of perspective.

5) Logic and levels of social and personal development. Interrelations, isomorphism of developments.

6) Types of competence (cognitive, communicative, emancipative). Types of influence (direct-indirect). Behavioral patterns (adaptative - innovative), cultural patterns.

7) Attitude to change and its implementation (conservatism - moderation - liberalism - radicalism).

8) Monism - methodological pluralism. Ability to apply various methodological approaches (e.g. neopositivism, neorationalism, methodological anarchism, interactionism, Marxism).

9) The principle of social organization (equality or freedom). These are only inordinate points of view from which educational problems may be considered. They call for comprehensive, holistic categories that would make it possible to describe these problems and to solve them. Specimens of such categories already function in social sciences, e.g. "quality of life", "strategy of life", "life goals", "orientation", "logic of development", "identity", "social personality", "central national category" (in a given problem area). We can also list several studies and books where they are applied or proposed for consideration, undertaking and resolution of problems in education, socialization and development.

It is perhaps worth noting that those efforts are accompanied by

1) search for alternative ways of asking educational questions and constructing answers.

2) going beyond conceptual limits within the existing paradigm and

3) emergence of a new intellectual formation.

In the latter issue the "new formation" - it is worth noting following L. Witkowski's distinction in consideration of new social-economic formation (in the sense used by Marxist classics), is a formation as a community of generational fates related to some important political events and as a community sharing some way of comprehending reality, marked with "radical epistemological cut" across university disciplines.

In our realm, the three ways to perceive this "new formation" are dramatically entangled and seem to be the Gordian knot of educational problems.

Overlaying of the network of educational notions and aspects of thoughts about social and psychic reality with a certain epistemological attitude creates problems - as has been proved already - resolvable through application of a critical theory.

It also facilitates formulation of hypotheses for use in diagnoses of a near perspective in our reality: the period of tensions and conflicts between processes shaping human personality.