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TOWARD AN ALTERNATIVE THEORY OF HUMANISTIC EDUCATION IN POLAND

Introduction

At least since the mid-'70s, education in Poland has exhibited a number of signs of a theoretical shift - change of paradigm. As usual in such moments in science, this proceeds with resistance from advocates of traditional thinking in education; and with institutional bariers and serious difficulties in implementing the alternative perceived by advocates of "renewal" who are still coming up against the crisis of social context in education. The purpose of this paper is to develop this thesis by pointing out those elements that are illustrative of its diagnostic portion and those that are a link, in the author's view, to the emerging alternative. It should be emphasized that—again, as usual in science[1] - the need to develop a new approach in theory is recognized only by some authors and this in a range and direction that can hardly be regarded as fully consistent. However, it is my belief that the necessarily incomplete and controversial concept signalled in the present text reflects partly, at least, the intellectual climate and theoretical formation that for several years now have been maturing and developing in the so-called "Toruń group" of sociology of education, coordinated

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[1] I am making a reference to "paradigmatic" image of science formulated by T. Kuhn (cf. his The Structure of Scientific revolutions, Chicago 1962) modified by assumption of simultaneous presence in science of various paradigms and their clashes.

by its founder, Z. Kwieciński[2]. Unable here to give a compre-
hensive overview of diversified motifs the group is working on,
I refer readers to its publications.

Sources of crisis in pedagogy in Poland

Let us first note that perhaps the most recent and specta-
cular manifestation of the shift referred to above - or just mere
acknowledgement of its necessity - where transformation of edu-
cational theory and practice was explicitly postulated - took pla-
ce at the latest in the symposium series at Jabłonna organi-
zed in November 1984[3] by Bogdan Suchodolski, who is usually
viewed as a "classic" of the established variant of humanistic
education theory. Sensitive to new theoretical contexts and awa-
re of years of intellectual movement - partly evoked by his ini-
tiatives[4] - inspired frequently by premises others than his own,
B. Suchodolski welcomed that need for change, which has beco-
me apparent perhaps not so much from the state of theory as
from the sense of its split from reality.

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[2] Professor Z. Kwieciński has been the head of Research
Station, Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development, Polish
Academy of Sciences in Toruń, and the author of "new intellec-
tual formation" in educational area for several years conducting
interdisciplinary national seminar intended to develop and inte-
grate "critical" current of studies on education in Poland and to
search for program alternatives in new theoretical contexts. Cf.
also his Konieczność - nadzieja - niepokój. Problemy oświaty
w latach 70-tych, Warszawa 1982. See also N. Copernicus Uni-
versity issues of research bulletins "Socjologia Wychowania"
especially Nos IV, V, VI.

[3] Conference of Committee for Research and Prognosis
"Polska 2000", Polish Academy of Sciences, on "Alternatywna
pedagogika humanistyczna" (Alternative humanistic pedagogy).

[4] Especially the series of conferences at Jabłonna, e.g.
in 1975 - Polish culture and the socialist system of values;
Model of educated Pole, Strategies of life; 1975 - Educating so -
ciety. Reality and perspectives; 1981 - Teacher and youth.

It should be remembered that this change matured at a time when the "educational crisis in Poland became apparent"[5], in spite of the institutional obstruction in the '70s to researches uncovering new contradictions in and threats to education. Apart from common sense experience identifying the institutional and program crisis in education, and despite attempts "to conceal the crisis behind solemn propaganda hard-selling the officially instituted reform"[6], which was dropped altogether anyway, a significant role in denuding the insufficiency of the traditional model of pedagogic autonomy and humanistic abstraction was played by sociological research both in general reflection and in fragmentary studies on the social system, especially in rural and youth sociology[7]. It is sufficient to examine the character and climate of discussion, which took place at B. Suchodolski's 1979 conference on reality and prospects of educating society under Polish circumstances, to find out that new contradictions within the power-system, institutions and social environment, (not confined only to education), were discerned at the end of the '70s by several scholars "with a sharp focus"[8]. The great social upheaval that came in August 1980 and continued for some months was only a manifestation and coronation of claims and postulates for change. With the perception of "alarming tension" between society as it existed and as was wished for as early as 1979, it was indicated that "total change of the education system and practice was indispensable"[9] B. Suchodolski had by then already noted "a radical transformation of language that took place in the description of and reaction

[5] Cf. R. Łukaszewicz, Czy kryzys zamiast reformy, AUNC, Socjologia wychowania IV, Toruń 1982, p. 120.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Cf. Z. Kwieciński, op. cit., or J. Balcerek, Dziesięcioletnia szkoła ogólnokształcąca a społeczno-gospodarczy rozwój kraju, typescript, SGPiS, Warszawa 1980.

[8] Cf. Z. Kwieciński, O sprzecznościach i zagrożeniach społeczeństwa wychowującego, /in:/ Społeczeństwo wychowujące...., pp. 297-311.

[9] Cf. L Wojnar, Omówienie dyskusji, /in:/ Społeczeństwo wychowujące..., p. 29.

to reality"[10]. For the emerging alternative to humanistic peda-
gogy, especially important were the studies revealing and cri-
ticizing "humanistic reflection operating with the fiction of a coin-
cidence of the real world and the desired one"[11]. I also regard
as an important element of the new alternative the attempt to ela-
borate and implement an integrated and versatile research pro-
gram bordering on sociology and critical social philosophy by
Z. Kwieciński, where he indicates the need for pedagogy to take
note of "questions of a new generation"[12] and to adopt new the-
oretical context including – a novelty in educational theories on
the European scene – reinterpretation of education through ap-
plying various threads from philosophy, sociology and psycho-
logy integrated by Jürgen Habermas' concepts[13]. For the sake
of comparison, suffice it to say that such research has not so
far been undertaken, e.g. in Italy where, as compared with Po-
land, the influence of "critical theory" and especially J. Haber-
mas's variant is by far the greater[14].

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[10] Cf. B. Suchodolski, Zamknięcie konferencji /in:/ Społe-
czeństwo wychowujące, pp. 431–432.

[11] Cf. J. Strzelecki: Uwagi o stanie i statusie symboli na-
czelnych społeczeństwa wychowującego", /in:/ Społeczeństwo
wychowujące..., p.. 19–28; Projektowania: historia jako wcielenie
wartości, Odra 1982, No II, pp. 13–17; Socjalizm model liryczny,
Odra 1982, No 1–8, pp. 23–27; Propozycje języka lirycznego.
Model socjalizm, Teksty 1981, No 1, pp. 31–54.

[12] Cf. Z. Kwieciński, Edukacja demokratyczna i humanis-
tyczna jako ruch i dzieło społeczne. Pomiędzy sierpniem a grud-
niem, AUNC, Socjologia wychowania IV, Toruń 1982, pp. 121–148;
also by the same author: Edukacja jako podmiot, instrument i
przedmiot samoregulacji społecznej. Propozycja badań skoordy-
nowanych (typescript).

[13] Its consequence are works: A. M. Kaniowski, Socjali-
zacja jednostki a rozwój społeczny w teorii krytycznej J. Ha-
bermasa, and L. Witkowski, Edukacja przez pryzmat teorii spo-
łecznej J. Habermasa, AUNC, Socjologia Wychowania V, Toruń
1984, I elaborate further on the subject in the work: Edukacja
dla nowej formacji, AUNC, Socjologia Wychowania VI, Toruń
1986.

[14] One possible explanation could be that those interested
in Habermas do not read him from theory of education stand-
point and pedagogists and sociologists of education in Italy not
being acquainted with Habermas refer to "traditional" theoretical
contexts.

Finally, one of the reasons for the disorientation and inadequacy of a significant part of pedagogic writing in Poland in the '70s was that there were many attempts by various authors at sociological diagnosis of education's social context, "none of which succeeded in making the course from manuscript to publication"[15]. As one of the leading authors said, during that period "research (and especially publication of results) faced such incredible obstacles that they bordered on often being true tabos /.../ red lights flashing to all lanes of basic research dealing with educational failures of the educating society "[16]. The relation between that condition and the actual state of pedagogy may be described by saying that without sociology of education pedagogy is blind, because it becomes unable to perceive the reality toward which it addresses its activity and becomes instead an expression of "false awareness" incapable of serving the ideas and ideals that it abstractly regards as its own. This crisis of pedagogy was further aggravated by obstructing its critical diagnosis in confrontation of aims and tasks with possibilities and conditions for their achievement. This was also symptomatic of the crisis in the entire social macrostructure, which was dramatically manifested when the blockade was destroyed following the events of August 1980. This social upheval together with a number of important materials that were published subsequently in 1983 and later[17],revealed a paradoxical situation whereby the crisis of the theory of humanistic education could be overcome at the expense of this theory having been superceded by its alternative. That goal seems to be the order of the day in Poland. The question remains, however how to accomplish it?

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[15] Cf. M. Kozakiewicz, Glosy do tematu "Sytuacja młodzieży w społeczeństwie wychowującym", /in:/ Społeczeństwo wychowujące, p. 389.

[16] Ibid., pp. 392-393.

[17] Such as materials from B. Suchodolski's conference Społeczeństwo wychowujące, or work by Z. Kwieciński, Konieczność - niepokój - nadzieja.

Some   methodological   directives

I am tempted to formulate a few theses (though for techni-
cal reasons without substantial elaboration) that lie or should
lie, in my opinion, at the foundation of a theoretical approach
envisaging "abolition" of the traditional paradigm in pedagogy.
It is not a coincidence that the critical sociological context co-
mes to the foreground of this version of the theory.

To begin with, it seems that the condition for cognitively
valuable and practically significant development of educational
theory and practice is to devise instruments for   c r i t i -
q u e   that go beyond declared abstract values, ideals and aims,
and oriented rather to actual functions carried out in contradi-
tion to intentions oftentimes wrapped up in humanistic phraseo-
logy, though these functions are nevertheless perceptible in com-
mon experience as an effect of the domination of non-educational
institutions and mechanisms in the "education melting pot". This
critique should be applicable in concrete historical terms to con-
ditions of the social educational foregound with reference to the
kind and nature of experiences, e.g. "historical turning points"
that constitute "common awareness" of the subjects of education,
that is, consecutive young generations whose socially conditioned
attitudes to education are not irrelevant to educational results.

Pedagogy is thus in need of a new theoretical language
- categories and notions permitting an exit from common sense
affirmation of its own intentions, helpless with regard to reality
due to absence of awareness of the problematic nature of its
own premises and axioms and the perplexity of the world it
wants to serve.   There is also the need for a new perspective
in theoretical analysis that will break through its anachronistic
(because of the importance and difficulty posed by the challenge
of present tasks) disciplinary division separating competent sphe-
res of pedagogists, sociologists, philosophers, and political scien-
tists. Such a perspective may be obtained with a radical "episte-
mological break"[18].theneed for which (as an element of cognitive

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[18]   G. Bachelard's known idea - cf. L. Witkowski, Eduka-
cja dla nowej formacji.

progress) is manifested by disability to harmonize all humanistically self-declaring approaches, and which points to the necessity of setting up within the educational sphere a new and institutionalized "intellectual formation". The essence of this formation is disapproval of "ideologically frozen relations of subordination"[19] by ways of education, and promotion and legitimization of the vision whereby "the point is to transform the world"[20].

Pedagogy also needs an adequate diagnosis of the reality in which it operates, and not only in the global dimension of the entire civilization's experience but, perhaps primarily, at the level of "definition of the situation" shared by educational subjects so that "false awareness" praising alleged social "welfare"[21] via official channels of socializing institutions would not collide with an approach questioning the legitimacy of such interpretatitve rules. This new approach to education must consist in building competence for identification and elimination of "the real evil" that has become an inalienable component of consciousness of many social circles, e.g. family as confronted with the school exercising real influence on the final result of various educational processes, which would eventually try to decree the here-and-now vision of the world, disrespecting consequences of such experiences. In particular, it is apparent that the problem of legitimacy of educational rules and practice may be properly articulated only outside the traditional context of pedagogy.

In sum, it seems that on the three planes: language, theory, and definition of reality (diagnosis of the reference context) we

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[19] I am using Habermas's own words, cf. his Communication and evolution of society, Boston 1979.

[20] Cf. K. Marx last thesis concerning Feuarbach.

[21] Allusion to Platonic vision of reality of world built harmoniously around the idea of the good, cf. Platon, The State Book VIII.

can reconstruct a problem field of alternative methodological premises yielding humanistic conceptions which are "different in everything"[22] that is important, which will misunderstand each other and even fight one another, discerning radically differing theoretical and practical consequences for individuals and the society as a whole and for its various institutions and groups.

Ontology of the society within the traditional theory of edu-
cation

We wish to emphasize, as crucial for our perspective, that the fundamental controversy within various "humanistically" declared educational concepts must naturally concern ontology of the society, presumed to be the basis for conctructing a co-herent system of goals and ideals in education. At that level the issue of the prefered and implemented model of individual and social behavior as well as of their institutional admissibility is resolved. This controversy must be expressed primarily in regard to the theoretical status of such categories as "change" and "conflict". There already exists a whole pedagogic tradition that promotes the model of perfection and incarnation of social ideals (ideal world) and refers to a reality full of harmony, with no room, except for an eliminable margin, for conflicts and contradictions. Affirmation of this model usually seems to coin-cide with assumption of its almost perfect attainment an a con-crete institutional setting. History, so far filled with struggle and justified rebellion, finds it ultimate satisfaction after the funda-mental breakthrough has taken (or is taking) place in which the new social order, while destroying the roots of the evil re-sponsible for earlier rebellion (and the need for ability to rebel),

[22] Cf. discussion on the subject included in the collection of papers from B. Suchodolski's conference, /in:/ Społeczeństwo wychowujące; cf. e. g. A. Siciński, Społeczeństwo istniejące a społeczeństwo pożądane, p.p. 11-17.

creates in turn a world dominated by essential welfare ("reality of the Good") wherein the mere possibility of enterning into conflict with reality would appear as a dissonance in a perfectly designed or constructed machine. Ability to rebel and aspiration to change appear as a deviation from desirable attutudes in a world where perfect order has been achieved[23]. Here the institutional form of social life finally guarantees the possibility to harmoniously solve problems and dilemmas of individuals and entire social groups: as a result, training in affirmation of and submission to the alledged harmony coincides with putting up institutional barriers and – especially important – psychological ones which make undesirable changes and behaviors simply impossible.

We are dealing here with a specific "lyrical" variant[24] of the image of social reality as a component of educational transmission in which – apart from reference to a bright future linearly attainable and apart from unequivocally just and permanently offered narration concerning the image of the past – we cope with the reality into which a new individual enters, where the foundation and substantial part of social structure has already been erected without the need for and chance of essential required correction, and where the present allegedly offers to that individual an opportunity to identify himself with institutionally distinguished and centrally harmonized "collectives" that become the main and permanently imposed form of integration with the world[25]. This world already constructed for the individual is by its nature good, requiring only from this individual

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[23] Cf. L. Witkowski, O edukację antyfundamentalistyczną, paper delivered at B. Suchodolski's, Conference at Jabłonna in 1981, in conference materials, Wrocław 1985.

[24] Cf. J. Strzelecki, Socjalizm model liryczny...

[25] A certain way of regarding "collectives" on socialist pedagogy grounds, which I termed "strong collectivism" of pedagogy is discussed by K. Sośnicki, Istota i cele wychowania Warszawa 1967, p.p. 224-225; cf. also L. Witkowski, Edukacja dla nowej formacji...

capability to participate in multiplying this through prearranged and preassigned "roles" and tasks within existing institutional frameworks, which include unquestionable doubt-resolving authorities and fundamental principles.

One need not have great insight to see that within such an ontological matrix it is possible to develop rich humanistic reflection of a definite shape and function wherein the idea of "devoted social service" is supported by fundamental laws and truths about a world that is the "best of those possible" or "the best we can afford". Let us note that this type of reflection applies also to a situation when affirmation of imposed reality is praised with the argument of its historical necessity and that it is the only world presently available. Educationally, this implies reconciliation with the world, though obviously when affirmation of the good world faces even small difficulty, additional educational tasks emerge consisting in highlighting all the positive aspects (rehearsed, replayed with designation of roles, with rewards or threat of penalties) in theory, the more so, the less the real environment makes it evident and unproblematic. Pedagogy thus oriented may undertake the effort to affirm humanistic ideals in persuasive undertakings and verification of memorized roles under conditions of control and standardization of behavior.

It is beyond doubt that within this briefly outlined and intentionally exaggerated approach one can place an immense portion of humanistic pedagogy, not only Polish, which, contradicting its own ideological declaration, continues the Platonic tradition, participating in promotion of knowledge about the world from the level of "false awareness". Moreover, such pedagogy makes an effort to build elaborate structures and educational procedures warranting efficiency in the ideal world, is to be apriorically acknowledged by education's subjects as their own – regardless of historically accumulating and often dramatically colliding with such a vision the experiences of consecutive generations of young people. These experiences do not upset the world of ideal humanistic imagination, so the latter is

free to chisel out and celebrate the present, pushing aside eve-
rything that would disrupt self-confidence of the educational
transmitters and guardians of its purity, displeased at resistance
by the "human material" they process. The human being, as the
absolute value, is to grow up to adapt himself to his world on
the basis of principles and rules and under the eye of authori-
ties that have dealt out the roles that are the best to effect his
self-accomplishment.

Elements of the theoretical al- ternative

In the works of not only the "Toruń group" of sociology
of education there emerges the outline of an approach to huma-
nistic ideals in the context of social theories and experiences,
that is "separated in everything" in regard to the "ideal type"
approach in the humanistic tradition. Primarily, here the "measure"
of society becomes its ability to generate by itself mechanisms
of transformation, eliminating bariers to the development of auto-
nomous individuals with their ability of reflective and discoursive
reference to the world they enter and wish to share in making,
with chance of influencing the rules of the game and its desig-
nated roles.

For the alternative, humanistically oriented pedagogy it is
much more important to regard education as a potential mecha-
nism to build for potential social change as well as to recognize
the sources degenerating this mechanism and to identify key di-
lemmas connected with value of legitimization, points of view
and ways to acknowledge the sense(s) offered to an individual.
The ability to cope with threats to civilization depends, under
this approach, upon a radical effort to create conditions for au-
thentically independent personalities capable of promoting new
types of social movements based on principles that respect and
develop this autonomy while participating in construction of a
"new level of learning"[26] within the social system permitting in-

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[26] Cf. L. W i t k o w s k i, Edukacja przez pryzmat teo-
rii społecznej.

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dividuals to turn against manipulation and expropriation from subjectivity within initiatives outside a rigid and hierarchically formalized institutional framework.

Owing to analyses of possible ego development stages[27], there appeared the possibility to evaluate an individual's advancement in construction of his "self" as well as its structural maturity in responding to the world and - particularly important - this has created a new evaluative criterion for social systems depending on what type of specific personal advancement is institutionally permitted[28]. One cannot forget that only a certain type of individual identity can oppose its disowning of the ability to perceive its own situation (actual as well as possible) in alternative terms to those offered or imposed - against manipulations and conseqent drilling in subordination to mass standards.

Moreover, barriers on the role level with their strict standarization (minimal margin of influence upon definition of the role) may prohibit autonomous and unrestricted (hence creative and effective) reference to the objectivized world of culture in resolving individual existential problems (e.g. meaning of life) as well as those of collective life. Under certain social circumstances (e.g. with a system "identity crisis"[29]) reaching by individuals to this objectivized world, above and beyond any attempt to impose a readymade and stable image of reality on the part of transmitters of the individual's symbolic world, becomes the condition for further personality development because at a certain stage, cultural ideals escaping control facilitate construction of alternative images of a desirable world.

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[27] Cf. an excellent reconstruction of developmental schemata of J. Piaget and L. Kohlberg /in:/ J. Habermas, op. cit.

[28] Cf. A. Jasińska-Kania, Rozwój człowieka a świat społeczny, Colloquia Communia 1983, No 4-5, pp. 27-28.

[29] Cf. notional reconstruction elements in the works by A. M. Kaniowski and L. Witkowski /in:/ AUNC, Socjologia Wychowania V, Toruń 1984.

Comparing them to the real world is not aimed at its systematic assimilation but serves to transform it even, if need be, against actually existing institutional barriers[30].

Theoretical constructions have now reached a status elimi-nating claims constitutive for symbolic "realism" relating the way of description of reality to alleged discovery of its proper me-aning imposed as a fixed premise of actions preceding all the individual subjectivity. These constructs have become cultural premises of possible "defining a situation" of this world. They serve to approach the reality and to give it a meaning at the level of interpretative rules constituting the foundation for inter-active links and processes: the way of understanding the world becomes thus the way of being-in-the-world, developing identity as well as the way of being of the world of social life for an individual[31]. Hence the concern for canonization of the world's image in traditional pedagogy's educational transmission yields on the ground of its alternative to development of individual com-petence to "play w i t h roles" permitting reflexive reference to the offered stock of meaning for its redefinition and critique creating new standards of desirable reality. Development of com-petence to autonomously satisfying the need for creation of one's own world, above prefabricated fixed conventions dressed up in a sophisticated ritual of educational transmission and dis-guised by claims to cultural pseudonaturality, becomes a new function of socialization. For this function transformation of what is real and strive to go beyond it may be achieved by initiation in effort to search for alternatives exceeding the boundaries of what is indispensable and functional for stability of the world as it was found and initiation in courage to launch conflict with advocates of this stability.

[30] For role of cultural premises see: S. Magala, Determi-nanty kulturowe rozwoju osobowości: preliminaria, typescript within Research Project 11.4, Toruń Group 1983.

[31] I am making a reference to hermeneutical perspective "I-in-the world" and the world as "the world-for" (M. Heidegger) and to opposition against the so called symbolic realism, cf. J. S. Bruner. Poza dostarczone informacje, Warszawa 1978, pp. 622-623.

Contrary to traditional approaches, pedagogy cannot persist in being blind to the fact that under some circumstances certain attitudes (of innovation, initiative, criticism and commitment) not only cease to be "socially actual", decline, shift to behavioral margin but even disappear from the field of potential attitudes; it is so when striving to change becomes institutionally undesirable and "unprofitable" from the point of view of individual biographies. A world full of humanistic catch words may lead to degeneration of the stock of roles it offers an individual. Educational, pedagogically sophisticated drilling in roles without capacity to abolish or criticize them makes the axiological context of such operations (formal affirmation of humanistic values) cease to be perceived as real and does not emerge as a reference system in individual's activity. At the extreme it comes to the situation where values, principles and norms vanish from the world of operation of individuals, social groups and institutions. One reaches instead the state of anomie[32] where not only the normative bid of institutional educational transmission is rejected by its subjects but the fiction of values in an individual's observable environment destroys his ability to follow any internalized axiological context in an individual's daily activity. This happens when a kind of "pragmatization" of attitudes occurs by way of the action effectivity criterion[33] — the drive toward change under conditions wherein educational subjects are aware of I factual blocade of possibilities to carry it out, ceases to be regarded as valuable attitude toward the world, and those individuals that preserve their axiological autonomy functioning and maintain the ability to articulate their disapproval of the world become deviates. This is also the case when dismantling of different forms of social integration accompanied by lack of sufficiently mature interactive competence

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[32] Within the Toruń Group reconstruction of the theory of anomie with its application was undertaken by A. Szafraniec in her doctoral dissertation (1985).

[33] Personality is pushed back to "preconventional" level, using Habermas's, terminology, cf. Edukacja przez pryzmat...

of potential subjects of innovative action leads to atomization
of individuals and to neutralization of their inclination for pres-
sure to change unaccepted situations: atomization becomes a
form of declassation. Notorious deprivation of an individual from
initiative results in absence of aptness to initiative. Education,
along with other planned efforts to bring up will not accomplish
its target, i.e. development of such ability (eliminated within con-
text of an individual's environment) without simultaneous theore-
tical recognition of that situation and without a practical stand
against it. If it is, however, acknowledged by addressees of edu-
cational transmission as an ally of such unacceptable situation,
orienting its efforts to sanction it in an affirmative narration and
ritual by putting up the disguise of humanistic declarations mas-
king its commonly perceived apologetic functions, "humanistic"
education may find itself in rejected position, paradoxically be-
cause of society's humanistic aspirations and in effect it will
lose the oportunity to play any positive role, to participate in
creation of social change potential. Its alternative becomes fea-
sible only as a "critical" theory, wherein theoretical intention to
promote humanism must be strictly interwoven in practical attitude
of negating "evil being" of the social world and participation in
its transformation[34].

For effectiveness of educational influence, the contents of
declared assumptions and ideal intentions are not so important
as its objectively recognizable axiological attitude within a fra-
mework of practically performed function, the very approach being
the basis for evaluation and definition of reality. It is not unim-
portant whether it is an image of the world of crisis or harmony
– in the situation when that already at the common experience
level is perceived as not embodying ethical duty and order. Hu-
manistic pedagogy of the world of crisis is only possible as put-
ting forward courage-promoting effort to cope with the crisis by

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[34] Cf. elements of reconstruction of "critical" paradigm for
sociology of education in the work by L. Witkowski, Edukacja
dla nowej...

eliminating the reality that is the source for its emergence[35].
The manner of interpretating the unaccepted world itself being
refused by subjects of educational operation leads to the iden-
tity crisis in the social system where valid interpretative rules
lose their power to integrate individuals within the system and
fail to motivate for work within its scheme. Moreover, if an au-
thority can be defined by the ability to produce acceptable rea-
sons[36], educational transmission proceeds under the state of
rejection of pedagogical institutions' authority, which in turn leads
to elimination of transmission contents by recipients regardless
of contents character, and, at best to the interplay of appearan-
ces and most often to countercultural response, demonstrative
identification with unexperienced values, indifference or drastic
destabilization of personality incapable of orienting its behavior
along any hierarchy of values and a way to perceive the sen-
se. The alternative humanistic pedagogy at the starting point
for its aspirations must possess basic knowledge about the "so-
cial condition" - because even the most refined techniques to
treat a wrongly identified malady in a wrongly indicated patient
by a very involved doctor may put out the remnants of smoul-
dering life that otherwise could have yielded magnificient fruits.
Humanistic intention in such case turns into its own antithesis.

    Among the elements that gradually arrange themselves in-
to radically different approaches to the humanistic mission of edu-
cation, there are also those resulting from "rehabilitation" of con-
flict and error in contemporary sociology and philosophy. The
question what type of ethos, orienting an ability to enter a con-
flict and solve it, is assumed in educational transmission and
the problem linked with the status of knowledge, cognitive sub-
stantiation and degree of required acceptation, especially con-
cerning normative contents, all this points to another key pla-
ce in which approach of traditional humanistic pedagogy diver-
ges from the approach of those who renounce conformity to that
tradition. Natural character of conflict of values and aspirations,
interests and reasons neither harmonizable nor hierarchizable

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[35] Cf. Ibid. – about the problem of reacting to "the world
in crisis".

[36] Cf. C. J. Friedrich, Tradition and authority, London 1972.

in a legitimate way once and for all as well as natural charac-
ter of revision of consecutive images of the world in the pro-
cess of its cognition (naturality of error and questionability of
truth) undermining claims to exclusive and definite cognitive-
-evaluating judgements - these are only some theoretical points
of reference which imply the need to develop personalities "open"
to conflict and error within themselves and outside as well as
a change of status of institutions hitherto appropriating avan-
guard character though not socially acknowledged. Otherwise,
there still remains, of course, the alternative of educational ac-
tions based on "uthopian" ethos[37] where the avanguard myth is
valid as an embodiment of good and truth with legitimacy taken
for granted for ever. Let us note here that this "right" to nega-
tion, as a condition for going beyond the status quo, bears the
postulate of "education for nonpeace"[38].

   At the foundation of a new paradigm of studies on educa-
tion there emerges the question of place of education as a sub-
system in social complex,and the one concerning mechanisms and
relations facilitating or blocking the function of active stimulation
to social transformation[39]. It is agreed there that works on hu-
manistic education strategy must start from analysis of global
requirements of the socialist system and their presence in ideo-
logy validating existing social order. In the new approach legity-
macy of social order is determined not by submission, loyalty,
resignation of disagreement and conflict, act of faith and obedien-
ce or quoting in aprioric reason supported by uthopian execution
of "historical salvation mission", but, on the contrary, it is to be

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[37] Cf. A. M. Kaniowski, Edukacja i socjalizacja a sposób
uprawomacniania ładu społecznego, report within Research Pro-
ject Group I, see: my review of this work in Research Project
11-4 materials.

[38] The postulate and principle of "construction of anxiety
and disapproval of the existing world" as elements of "education
for non-peace" indispensable contemporarily is formulated and
elaborated by Z. Kwieciński: cf. the same author's O krytyczną
teorię oświaty i edukację radykalnie humanistyczną, paper deli-
vered at the seminar at Jabłonna in 1985 (in press).

[39] This is further elaborated by A. M. Kaniowski, following
Habermas, cf. Edukacja i socjalizacja...

found intersubjectively verified acceptation (in undistorted so-
cial communication free from deformations and blockades) of
the very form of substantiation of this order referred
to the most autonomous types of ego identity of so-
ciety members. What is especially important, at present,
the foundations of legitimacy of social order must simultaneously
satisfy the demand for sense and under conditions of social
crisis the grasp of sense cannot be restored on the basic of
the uthopian legitimacy structure that presumes embodiment of
the future ideal in existing institutions, not only those that com-
pose the structure of power. Claims to legitimacy of social order
always make the appeal to a certain normatively assumed social
identity and the traditional system legitimization cannot be core-
lated with high stages of ego identity[40] – humanistic education
practice must assume autonomous competence to verify values
and substantiations presented for acceptation, or else, it partici-
pates in establishing institutional clamp on ego development
above the stage of authorities, fixed norms and roles. The mini-
mal condition for accomplishing objectives of humanistic educa-
tion is to surpass "role identity" since only then individuals be-
come able to operate autonomously with contents defining their
situation, and to put forth requests for substantiation with criti-
cal verification of any claims of validity dismissing some of them
from being the basis for one's own social roleplays which beco-
me subject to redifinition. Then, there follows disapproval of tra-
ditional socialization model based on the struggle pattern, dycho-
tomic vision of the world seen from positions embodying good
without room for compromise based on conflict-mediating mecha-
nisms; the model appealing to positivistic vision of science yiel-
ding "strong justifications", accepting the assumption that the
"history's maturity threshhold" has been exceeded in presently

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[40] Ibid., cf. also: L. Witkowski, Edukacja przez pryzmat...

constructed social reality[41] and a number of other premises, e.g. the axiom of "strong collectivism"[42].

In the new approach of humanistic education there appears a particularly clear preoccupation concerning promotion of a type of individual interaction competence; without this competence there can be no effective intersubjective partnership-oriented cooperation in constitution of the social world. The same preoccupation is linked with the emancipatory competence for which it is fundamental to strive to go beyond existing and super-imposed world so that its rules do not fetter individual capacity to aspire for autonomous and reflexive definition of one's own responsibility for oneself and the world. By the way, under such an approach individual reflexivity becomes a more essential direction of educational curriculum, than (proverbial and losing its raison d'être in new theoretical context) personal versatility.

Let us also emphasize that in that perspective the question about the relation betwen education and prevailing (or merely institutionally approvable) forms of social integration and types of activity becomes very important. It is especially the institutional barriers concerning acceptable or desirable relations and behaviors (interactions) that determine the function of education in a given social system[43]. Let us also point to a strict relation between possibility of educational share in development of social system's potential to carry out a rational change and predominant institutional principle organizing that system. For humanistically oriented pedagogy it is not meaningless to watch what way of social life organization - and in effect what type of subordination of educational subsystem to social entity - ser-

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[41] Cf. L. Witkowski, Edukacja dla nowej formacji. Próba teorii edukacji w Polsce - tezy, typescript at the seminar of Research Project 11,4, group I, Błażejewko 1983.

[42] Ibid., see also: Edukacja dla nowej formacji, AUNC, Socjologia Wychowania VI, Toruń 1986.

[43] Cf. A. M. Kaniowski, Edukacja i socjalizacja...

ves to promote "degrading function" of education[44]. Unfortuna-
tely, these last remarks hint at a problem area which – though
deserving intensive critical overview – is outside the scope and
volume of the present work.

Let us finally state that even though some problems and
categories birefly dealt with here, have already been discussed
in other works by the same author[45], there is no doubt that
many of them rather open an interesting and difficult research
area than close it, and they rather simply direct attention to im-
portance of posing new questions within the theory of education
that formulate ready answers. Maturation of new intellectual
formation in the area of pedagogy, especially where it borders
with sociology of education is the process that – as it happens
in science – is taking place under pressure of contradictions
perceived in clash with reality, with theory that has given rise
to movement to change, and with a multitude of disorderly intel-
lectual inspirations that are to create a new way to respond to
that reality and overcome its crisis. All this causes an umber
of difficulties and insurmountable barriers whose elimination will
be possible only in the course of further research.

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[44] Cf. Z. Kwieciński, Edukacja demokratyczna i humanis-
tyczna..., pp. 122-123 for degradation of social "roles stock"
by institutional education context see also L. Witkowski, Problem
adaptacji materializmu historycznego dla socjologii wychowania,
typescript.

[45] Cf. especially L. Witkowski, Edukacja dla nowej forma-
cji, AUNC, Socjologia Wychowania VI, Toruń 1986.