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PHILOSOPHY OF PEDAGOGY

WHAT CAN ONE RECEIVE FROM PHILOSOPHY AND PEDAGOGY? (Reflections on the Courage of the Spirit and Eminence of the Soul)

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Abstract: *It is evident that the separate examination of the two concepts mentioned in the title offers one many approaches, thus scrutinising them together would widen further the possibilities. The scope of analysis must necessarily be narrowed; in the followings, I shall touch upon some bits and pieces of these two categories: one of the characteristics of philosophy and pedagogy, one of their decisive particularities in accordance with my own views. I think that both philosophy and pedagogy bear such a final content, positive inner “voice”, one could say “buzzword” that can be an orientation point in the whole of the pedagogical and educational work. (Furthermore, it can also be related to politics, science and everyday interactio). Critical reflexivity and the virtue of goodness shall be discussed.*

Key words: *education; philosophy; virtue; critical reflexivity; goodness.*

INTRODUCTION

Before examining the chosen topic, let me refer to the fact that there is a false conception concerning the existence of philosophy and pedagogy in educational work (from kindergarten through public education to tertiary education). A kind of stereotype evolved in practical pedagogy and one’s conception about it: in approaching certain topics, but maybe one could say: in the whole of the curriculum one cannot find the place and meaning of philosophy, as it is too abstract, unfollowable and incomprehensible, and however, pedagogy can easily be grasped, it is trapped in the world of ideologies and ideas. To put it differently, no matter how, but the two of them, philosophy and pedagogy are divorced from reality. In consequence, no particular aptitude for the reception of philosophical thoughts, pedagogical notions and virtues is formed in the everyday educational work. However, one should not identify oneself with such perspective and practice in any circumstances, one would ‘excise’ oneself from essential philosophical and pedagogical morals. For example, the particularities of philosophy I investigate: the critical skill, ability and pedagogy’s – the most important, in my opinion – ‘message’: namely the programme of the endeavour to be ‘good’. I hope that with this particular study I will contribute to the perception and more uniform acceptance of philosophy’s and pedagogy’s buzzwords.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Why Critical and Self-Critical Reflexivity is Important?

During the analysis of philosophical questions, referring to a sociologist-researcher might be a surprise to some of my readers. It is *Iván Szelényi*. In the book of the well-known author published in 2019 in Hungarian, one can read the following lines referring back to his own professional work: „What led me to sociology before was the critical reflexivity with the help of which one can reflect on the used data. (...) The researcher (...) uses critical reflexivity in order to determine what his data means and how he produced them“ (Szelényi 2019: 109–110).

What critical reflexivity means, I think, is the decisive question which should be scrutinised more closely. Firstly, I would like to highlight that I must express my deepest respect to *Iván Szelényi* who found the most important characteristic of the sociology as a social science: namely the consequent and cruel *critical attitude*. I cannot emphasize enough the significance of the healthy and substantiated critical skill-ability, thinking, because without it one could not move forward in terms of sciences. Furthermore, philosophy would be stuck in one place, and practical pedagogy would become factitious and mutilated. Last but not least, without such a force, intrinsic value, superior virtue, the political mechanism would manifest in a distorted form. In general, one can say that without criticism the evolution of the world is unimaginable. To put it differently, the systematic analysis of things, data and processes is the inherent nature of a human being. From that perspective, all political wills and endeavours which prefer mass servitude and subordination of people are incomprehensible and unacceptable. Furthermore, the pedagogical goal and practice which in an implicit manner do not aim at helping develop the autonomous thinking, critical worldview, but in contrast the educational impact (it is aching for me to write) is rather to push the pupil to a negative direction is really antipathic for me and I really despise it.

But let me turn back to *Szelényi's* above mentioned thought. How good it would be if the critical reflexivity made children, youngsters be affectionate towards philosophy and pedagogy. Today I can only be hopeful that a more determined and stronger emphasis of the critical propensity, aptitude and skill in the education of philosophy, pedagogy and practical pedagogy, even if it is slow process, will lead the public opinion and the general practice according to which philosophy is the stage of useless abstractions, pedagogy is a collection of nonsense and reality is depicted as a fairy tale in it to a more positive direction.

Let us have a look at the question of the so-called correlation of philosophical culture and critical reflexivity. It is obvious that philosophy as „a conceptual culture“ is an inherent part of the sphere of culture, as the most general and profound definition, in my opinion, was articulated by *Spengler* about a century ago. *Spengler* emphasizes that „culture is such an organism which makes its incorporated peoples and estates become possessors of a universal idiom based on a common history. (...) The human being (...) talks about himself through culture, (...) and his knowledge and opinion are parts of his self-expression.“ (*Spengler* 1994: II. 54, I. 178) Culture is a universal and overall epoch, furthermore, the expression of the common idiom in which the human being's relation to the world and himself manifests. In the followings, he makes an important remark which leads one directly to the interpretation of philosophy: „Philosophy (...) regarding its deepest foundations is nothing else but defence against the inconceivable“ (*Spengler* 1994: I. 209). This last sentence poses actually the question of the existence of philosophy, let me discuss this point in detail.

I would like to raise the attention to an ancient dilemma: namely the problematic of the connection between philosophy and pedagogy. Instead of reviewing the abundant literature in connection with the topic, I shall react to two new studies. In his new book, *János Tózsér*, contemporary philosopher takes a craggy standpoint on practicing philosophy and it touches upon the second part of my topic, the sphere of pedagogy as a discipline. It is worth quoting it in a longer manner: „Philosophy is (...) a failed task, – he writes – because it did not solve any of the philosophical problems. (...) Nevertheless, philosophy is the best mentor of *critical reflexivity* (...) and helps us become such alert personages who consider assembling their epistemic affections through their self-reflexivity as a responsibility. (...) This is the *moral* dimension of practicing philosophy, but, at the same time, it gives a *pedagogic significance*. If somebody literally experiences from his childhood that in terms of certain questions he cannot exclusively rely on his epistemic affection, he will not become fanatic (or demagogue – S. K.) and will be a *better person* in general than without this competence. He will be able to do what not many people can: place himself in the cognitive perspective of others and understand their motivations.“ (*Tózsér* 2018: 13, 343)

I shall discuss the pedagogical reference (namely the morality and the ideal of a good man) in the second part of the above-mentioned extract. Let us scrutinise the thought concerning philosophy. I would react to some part of the statement anyhow: the first one is that philosophy is a failed task. The other is that philosophy is the main representative of critical thinking. I cannot agree with the former statement, however I accept the latter one, and at the same time I try to elaborate on it.

How can the statement that philosophy is a failed task be justified? According to Tózsér, with the fact that philosophers could not solve any important problem. Instead of the solution there is chaos (in heads), and the illusion that reality should be explored by philosophy in the same manner as science. Philosophy cannot be evaluated from the viewpoint of sciences (disciplines), because philosophy and science are different fields in spite of the fact that they can enrich each other. *Philosophy* – and many intellectuals do not understand or accept it – *is not identical with science*. One cannot apply the measurement of sciences to philosophy, as there are considerable differences between them. In order to refer to some characteristic alterations their scope of investigation, methodology, requirement, language, categorisation and method are different. Sciences (it does not matter if they are natural or social sciences) investigate a given part or concrete side of reality, but they penetrate profoundly into it. In contrast, philosophy attempts to grasp the whole of reality and articulate general viewpoints and consequences. The scientist unearths each element of reality and has to unfold laws which he has to prove in an exact, convincing manner (so that everybody accepts them even if they cannot understand it professionally). Contrarily, the philosopher ‘only’ offers thoughts, produces thought experiments and does not state uncontradictable and eternal justices, but he ‘only’ articulates and meditates on questions. He attempts to seize the same basic questions in a more exact and differentiated manner than the reader, other thinker or fellow human accepts or not. Therefore, many kinds of thoughts, perspectives and conceptions occur in philosophy, and whether one can identify oneself with which one of them depends on that particular person. *Philosophy’s abundance of thought, its ceaseless and stubborn desire to pose questions is not the expression of chaos, but the essence of philosophy, the manifestation of being different from sciences*. Hence, the task of philosophy in itself cannot be regarded as an activity doomed to failure. It is also related to the philosophical historical particularity on which philosophers themselves are divided: the all-time representative always praises the predecessor (or contemporary) or is against his ancestor. In a radical form: the former follows his master without any authentic thoughts, the latter tries to do the other down.

Nevertheless, no matter how it may be, philosophy cannot give final, incontestable answers, justices the acceptance of which would – so to say – be mandatory. The philosopher is not driven by exploring reality no matter what, but by knowing more and more profoundly one’s human nature and oneself. In connection with the interpretation of this task, I would like to refer to another contemporary thinker, Tamás Barcsi. He also reacts directly to the Tózsér’s point of view and – in my opinion rightfully – refuses his sceptic conception. One must differentiate between the process of the scientific and philosophic recognitions. Let us accept „*the endeavour to discover reality and explore oneself*. If one talks about discovery *in the latter sense*, then *philosophy can be considered as an epistemic venture*. However, in exploring reality philosophy cannot compete with modern sciences, as it does not have the necessary methods to do so, so philosophy should renounce the endeavour. (...) The aspiration to get to know oneself does not mean the articulation of the justices in connection with reality, but *posing the basic questions in terms of humanity again and again*, (...) knowing that we will only be able to come up with possible and temporary questions“ (Barcsi 2019: 2).

Undoubtedly, the task and aim of philosophy can of course be self-exploration, self-knowledge and their endless expansion. If one accepts this, one can admit that natural questions excite the philosopher as much as the scientist. In addition, thinking, new aspects, approaches, refutation, debates or simply dialogue only concerning human existence and oneself are not futile and especially not harmful, but they bring forward, enrich one’s recognition.

Thus, philosophy does not have some kind of „rest point“, compromisation. It might not only be because of the above-mentioned epistemological dilemma, but because of its ontological characteristic, too. Namely, if the philosopher poses a question on the whole of the world, its totality (because it is philosophy, too), one can soon get to – let us think of the witty remark of Spengler – the inconceivable, in other words, theoretically (from an epistemic perspective) unanswerable dilemma.

And now let me react to that point of the quoted extract of Tózsér’s text which is in relation to philosophy’s character that facilitates critical thinking. The author’s statement that namely philosophy is the

best mentor of thinking seizes such a remarkable moral as the aforementioned conception (from an epistemic standpoint philosophy is a failed task). However, I would not contest here, on the contrary, I agree with the raised problem. What is more, I would like to put the emphasis on it. One will see that the examination of the critical function serves as an exceptionally important moral for pedagogy as a discipline and practical pedagogy.

When one finds the critical function during the investigation of the task of philosophy, it does not mean that one is facing a unique situation, and that science itself (especially social sciences) does not manifest critical thinking. (See the quoted thought of Iván Szelényi). Nevertheless, one can say that philosophy uses it presumably in the strongest and most consequent way. The promotion of the critical stance and its realisation have always been present in the history of philosophy: from the Socratic tradition through the critical empiricism to the 20th century analytical philosophy and so on. This time let me highlight a concrete example concerning the discussed thought in order to demonstrate it. I voluntarily utilise an extract that has been disregarded by philosophers, not to mention the different representative of disciplines. It might be shocking for some of my readers that I refer to *Marx*. In the letter of young Marx to Ruge (September 1843), one can find an excerpt the significance of which surpasses the level of a simple correspondence. Marx thinks about the determination and task of philosophy and he firmly argues: the mission of philosophy is the construction of the future, but what it should do is „the ruthless criticism of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be“ (Marx-Engels 1957: 346). (I shall remark in parenthesis that these few lines can be considered to be the philosophical ‘ars poetica’ of Marx to which he always remained faithful in both his personality and oeuvre.) The assignment of philosophy from that perspective is an enormous challenge for philosophers. I am not really convinced that all the philosophers are capable of meeting such strict criteria. Let us distance ourselves from the author and any ideological standpoint, actuality and let us analyse the above-mentioned quotation in itself as a neutral analyst.

Obviously, one must scrutinise 2 ‘conditions’: what it means that on the one hand, the philosopher who voices a ruthless criticism is not afraid of a conflict with the given political power. On the other hand, he is not afraid of his own results either.

Who is not afraid of the power means that one is not afraid of taking part in a possible conflict. If one encounters the power, he must be prepared that in most of the cases that one might have the tables turned on oneself and different kinds of retortions come: being excluded from tendering process, hindering promotion, publication ban, false and discreditable attacks, humiliation, deprive of livelihood, losing work, persecution, imprisonment, and lastly liquidation. Not really an attractive perspective. Criticising, going against the power and not being afraid of conflicts seem good; it is regarded as a heroic deed. Many would choose this way – at first. Nevertheless, one can presume that if it actually happens, one will face a very serious situation: defending your point of view and being in a conflict require exceptional courage, honesty and fortitude.

I think that the momentum of taking the conflict and voicing a ruthless criticism can easily be understood. It is a bit different concerning the other part of the Marxian sentence: „not being afraid of the results it arrives“. In connection with this, one can experience the incomprehension of the readers, or they do not take it into consideration. What is more, they might simply pass it over. What does this excerpt mean? In my own interpretation, a very important methodological principle is articulated again. When the researcher, who can be a philosopher or representative of any discipline, analyses a given thing or phenomenon, he proceeds from a concrete conception, hypothesis and conducts the research as long as possible. He does not stop at the point (the first result) which instantly justifies his theory. In other words, he does not choose the way of easy resistance, but by overcoming his vanity, he is ready and capable of taking the unearthed data, facts and partial results further. He finishes the analysis consequently in the end, in spite of the possibility that he might arrive at a point when he has to revise and modify the results he received before. Furthermore, in some cases it might happen that he needs a new starting point or foundations. Thus, „*not being afraid of the results it arrives*“ means – according to my interpretation – *that the researcher is ready and capable of evaluating the most important statement of his analysis in a critical, self-critical manner*, and if it is necessary, he can apply *self-correction*. This challenge does not have less significance than the former one (taking the conflict with the power), in the former case one has to face an external force, in the latter scenario one must ‘fight’ oneself, the vanity and comfort in oneself. Maybe I do not exaggerate if I say that not all researchers are capable of winning this battle.

Apart from its ruthless criticism against all that exists and in relation to it, philosophy has another special task. As I have emphasized above, philosophy is not a science, because these two forms of knowledge differ in several aspects. Now I refer to the fact that they necessarily depend on each other. Philosophy cannot separate itself from the development of disciplines, it should follow their results and it must reflect on them somehow. If it is incapable of doing so, it will become autotelic and will be trapped in phantasmagorias. It is important that philosophy follows disciplines, because it can mostly 'feed on' the new fundamental scientific results. The task of the philosopher – in terms of the ruthless criticism of all that exists – is pointing at the obsolete nature of the given segment of reality and questioning the worldviews based on disciplinary research. The philosopher is of course not a professional scientist, he is not able to solve disciplinary questions. However, his investigation is irreplaceable in terms of the interpretation, organisation and process of connecting the newly discovered knowledge to the current worldview. Hence, philosophy controls and revises the ingrained interpretation of the world, accustomed worldview. If it is necessary, it offers theoretical orientation points to the establishment of the new foundations.

If one regards the formation of the current scientific and technological development from the above-mentioned point of view, it will be hard to recognise the taking place of a worldwide boom: in the world of computers, robots, smart televisions and phones, all activities can be modelled and described as an algorithm. „Today – Harari writes – our knowledge grows in an incredibly rapid pace (...) which leads to even larger and faster changes. Consequently, we will be able to interpret the present and predict the future less and less. (...) The more data one has, the more one understands history; the faster it changes its direction, the faster one's knowledge becomes obsolete.“ (Harari 2017: 57–58)

It is not my task to discuss the historical view of Harari (especially not to evaluate it), but it is undoubtful for me that in such a situation the critical function of philosophy will strengthen in the near future. Without the critical attitude and ability towards the more dynamic alterations than those of in the preceding eras, one will 'sink into' the chaotic world of intransparent changes of which he will be unable to get out.

It is evident for me that unfortunately philosophy has not found the adequate, effective reaction to the challenges of our modern era yet. What I know is that there is a considerably growing social need for orientation and sense of security among giddy paced social, economic, scientific and technical changes. In addition, I am sure that without strengthening the critical aptitude and skill one cannot even have the chance to find one's real place and significance in today's and tomorrow's world. The philosophy can help one in this respect even if it cannot do so concerning other things.

The Mystery, Ars Poetica of Education

Let me turn to the pedagogical aspects. It is inevitable that the science and practice (practical pedagogy) of pedagogy face the new challenges of education. One must give an answer to the dilemma how education should adapt to the positive and negative effects of the digital society. The humans have tendency to realise and enjoy the beneficial impacts of the new technologies at first. He does not see or does not want to recognise the possible dangers. The latter one reacts to the negative consequences or the less he wants to treat them with cation, the bigger the losses will be. With the spread of mass mediums many effects harmful to one's personality arrive: for example, the pressure of tabloids causing 'dementia', dumping of false and discrediting pieces of information, fear mongering, temptation to commit crimes, poverty and frugality of communication, the search of false illusions and so on. The most effective method fighting against the negative processes is the formation and strengthening of the formerly detailed critical attitude. In my opinion, the *requirement of critical reflexivity* would not only be beneficial for philosophy (and for instance for sociology) but for pedagogy, too. Let me mention two examples here.

The critical, self-critical attitude is not only a desirable but necessary step in education. „Hardly can one contest that – writes *Gábor Szécsi*, communication researcher - children who watch television and surf on the net reach information that should only be available to adults. Consequently, the borderlines between childhood and youth and between youth and adulthood are becoming more and more blurred. (...) Children who watch television channels and browse on the internet more consciously use the same communication mediums and access more and more information than adults. (...) All this inevitably led to the weakening of the authority of adults originating from the traditional social situation and role.“ (Szécsi 2013: 46–47) An important thought is being articulated here, childhood and the borderline between youth and adulthood are being relativized. A more visible change for me is the loss of authority of adults. In such a situation when the differences between vintages are becoming fluid, and when the authority of adults considerably decreases:

how education should develop (manage itself)? At all: Have pedagogy drawn the conclusions based on the above-mentioned (or similar) actualities?

In my opinion, it is necessary that pedagogy responds to the statements of the philosopher, *Miklós Almási* written in his new book. The author warns us: nowadays „the socialness of the individual has been shaken (...) the threads that led from the Other to the Self have been weakened. (...) In the digital age, the emotional culture is degrading irreversibly“ (Almási 2019: 22–23, 14). Undoubtedly, the emotional culture has become dull in the reign of the digital tools. It is enough to remind my readers that one has various problems with the respect of the other person and the excessive aggrandizement of the self. (It would be instructive to launch concretely such kinds of pieces of research concerning pedagogy.) Not denying the importance of the changes in the emotional culture, let me emphasize that there are issues with the mental culture, too. The huge challenge of the digital age, emphasized again, is that superficial knowledge and the rapid, facile and spectacular spread of stupid content test people, especially children. The remedy for the negative effects: the formation and promotion of the independent and critical thinking. And the questions automatically occur here: *what direction do the all-time education policy and every-day education lead to? Do they strengthen critical thinking and mind (reflex) or the other way around: do they weaken them?*

I think that it is necessary to look for ‘border points’ between philosophy and pedagogy (but I can also mention psychology and other disciplines) and examine them. Specifically, in a mutual manner: the philosopher and pedagogue can easily realise that there are certain questions and topics in relation to which two analysts who are working on different levels can experience that the obtained result and approach of the other ‘party’ can fruitfully contribute to his own work. There can be many common points between philosophy and pedagogy. I shall highlight two among them which are evident for me. One of them is the question of the possibility (and existence) of philosophy for children, and the other one is the virtue of *goodness*. (Concerning the latter, I shall elaborate on the remark of the philosopher, Tözsér.)

I cannot discuss the state of international and Hungarian philosophy for children, but it is obvious from the first moment that behind the desire to practice philosophy for children there is a rational ‘alliance’ and natural mutual coming together. Let us think of the witty realisation of *Gaarder* (the author of the famous work of art entitled *Sophie’s World*), that namely „the philosopher remains as sensitive as a child during his whole life“ (Gaarder 2012: 33). It is undoubtful that the similarity of sensitivity exists: for the children the environment and the world are eternal wonder and discovery while for philosopher they are eternal mysteries. The amazement of the world motivates both the philosopher and child. *Aristotle’s* remark is not a coincidence: „People (...) started to philosophise due to fascination.“ (Aristotle 2002: 41)

In the middle of amazement and curiosity, both of them, namely the child and philosopher stubbornly pose questions: the former ceaselessly poses ‘whys’ concerning the world and the latter one restlessly interrogates ‘the things themselves’. Presumably, *Martin Douglas*, an English-speaking philosopher for children is right when he claims that „children have the same motivation to think as philosophers“ (Douglas 2011: 92). *Györgyi Tamásy*, one of the representatives of Hungarian philosophy for children goes even further: „Children are the best philosophers: they are more courageous and motivated to recognise philosophical problems, their aptitude for philosophy is stronger.“ (Tamásy 2010: 92)

On the basis of the latter quotations, one can draw an important pedagogical conclusion: one cannot consider such a manifestation of childhood existence, namely the constant desire to pose questions, the seemingly ceaseless flow of ‘whys’ as some kind of flaw, disturbing factor in terms of education at all. On the contrary, the parent, kindergarten teacher, pedagogue, priest or anybody who discusses the question of education must welcome this with limitless patience and empathy. The adult recognises and understands the rightfulness and significance of asking questions. If he is consequent and courageous enough, he will also be able to realise that it is not identical with the autonomous, critical reflection, but it is its first state, prerequisite. If the adult responds with patience and understanding to the dumping of questions (as philosophy for children says: ‘community of enquiry’) that are characteristic of childhood existence, one will have the possibility to include independent and critical thinking in the child’s personality development.

As one has seen, Tözsér’s quotation mentions the problem of *good*, but it is true that he does not examine it separately. Nevertheless, it can motivate somebody to conduct a systematic research on it. Apart from philosophy, ethics, psychology and pedagogy deal with the theme of good and bad, art also can serve as a considerably rich addition (especially the literature, films and theatre). If one looks at it from a moral viewpoint, interestingly, everyone feels what is morally good and bad even if one is not able to define it. An

inner drive, moral sensitivity occurs in one which is motivated by moral emotions. „The essence of moral emotions is that the individual in certain situations – writes *Gábor Szendi* in his new study – feels an inner constraint to act ‘rightfully’. (...) Moral emotions (...) ‘whisper’ to them what is right and what is wrong.“ (Szendi 2019: 95)

The manifestation of moral sensitivity of course is an important thing; however, it does not make a conceptual inquiry superfluous. Philosophers have been interested in the research of the problematic of the good for a long time. Such a philosophical experiment is very telling for me that puts the concept(s) and the examination of the importance of good (and bad) to the category of virtues. I shall only mention a few (for now three significant) philosophers in a short manner from the rich offer. It is important to quote the brave thought of Kant that namely the *good* as a virtue is actually „the power of men’s maxim that lies in the fulfilment of duty. (...) Goodness is a duty“ (Kant 1991: 509–510). I think it is a beautiful statement, but it is an exaggeration. The virtue of a good deed is a fascinating ability, but cannot be a requirement. (I shall touch upon this in connection with György Lukács.) Nevertheless, another Kantian quotation is worth mentioning which offers the correlation between the notions of education and goodness. He argues that „the requirement of the *universal betterment* of humanity (highlights from me – S.K.) is the freedom of education“ (Kant 2005: 636). In fact, there is a realisation is hidden behind this (with which I completely agree) according to which in terms of its essence, deepest content education is nothing else but the world of universal amelioration. In other words, *the real* (every bit motivating) *tutor is led by the ideal, virtue of the aspiration for goodness*. *Richard Pring*, contemporary philosopher, more exactly educational philosopher articulates it in the following way: the tutor is driven and excited by the noble goal: how can „a person become whole, (...), namely) how one can become a good or a better person“ (Pring 2004: 22).

What is mentioned here is that the connection between education and the virtue of goodness is not a “forced” procedure, formal, superficial operation and not the product of some kind of desultory idea either. On the contrary, education and goodness live in symbiosis. In addition, I dare to say: *education is the prime motivation for goodness*. And the other way around, *goodness is the inner world, the deepest level and highest ranked mission of education at the same time*.

If one gives such an exceptional importance to education, it is incomprehensible for me why the discipline of pedagogy mistreats the notion and virtue of goodness. Pedagogy investigates the topic of some virtues, for instance justice, veracity, respect and honesty. However, it remains indifferent to the education theoretical discussion of goodness. Nevertheless, what pedagogy can offer (not only to children but to everybody) is promoting the endeavour for goodness, and there is no more solemn and fascinating aim. In conclusion, this is what one receives or more exactly can receive from pedagogy.

The most brilliant description of the virtue of goodness – maybe now in a less surprising manner – is not articulated by a researcher of pedagogy, but a remarkable Hungarian writer, *Milán Füst*. In one of the essays written in his diary, he redacts the pedagogical content of goodness as an educational creed. (I add in parenthesis that unfortunately the latter-mentioned lines have been disregarded by literary historians, philosophers and pedagogy researchers.)

„They preach in school with no effect, - writes Füst- there is none either when the priest, your mother or father tells you to be good, (...) you decide in your childhood that you will be good, clean and unselfish for nothing... Life comes – and you have forgotten now, - you cheat, steal, live for pleasures. (...) You are tricky, pusillanimous. (...) But the education that I have got from my mother, the idealism ignorant of life that I received while being breastfed... But life is – unfortunately – not like this. (...) And do you believe your mother did not know life? She knew, – but still (...) she wanted to share the better of herself (...), faith risen up from her because her child can be – must be free and clean. (...) And when you are going to have a child: – you (...) will be careful (...) to reveal the horrible, ... and you will point at life the way just like Moses did with the promised land to the hopeful.“ (Füst 1976: 178–179)

Let me add a short commentary to this. Firstly, the writer names the three major ‘sources’ of education: the parent, priest and tutor. They are those who primarily deal with the question of education as a profession. The child receives the virtue and ideal of goodness during breastfeeding with the mother’s milk. But the mother (and the other two) does not know reality? It is full of fallibility, sin and evilness. Of course, she knows, feels and experiences all the bad things that occur in the world (among adults). She provides the child with the idealism of goodness hoping that at least her child will be a good and nice person. And how interesting: when the child grows up, he will also have a child and will educate him on goodness. What does Milán Füst

imply? That *one's desire and endeavour for goodness cannot be eradicated from the history of humanity*. For the whole of pedagogy (including all participants in education, researchers, practising pedagogues and co-workers) one can articulate an important and hopeful moral in a latent manner: pedagogy can be attacked and criticised (many times rightfully), for example it is divorced from reality, regards the world naively and is limited by politics and ideology. Nevertheless, one thing cannot be contested: pedagogy makes a stand for the noble idea, virtue of goodness, which manifests the eternal and natural need of mankind that the world can be made a better place.

In accordance with my own conception, goodness means the honourable world of education and a kind of mystery of it. Bad, of course, exists along with good which I cannot discuss here. At most, I shall highlight an implication with the help of *György Lukács*. The young Lukács articulates a thought concerning the peculiar relationship between good and bad which touches upon educational philosophy. „If goodness occurs in us, then paradise shall have become reality. (...) Goodness is leaving ethics, (...) as ethics is universal and obligatory, (...) goodness is miracle and mercy, (...) ‘obsession’. In the soul of those who are good, all psychological contents, every cause and consequence cease to exist.“ (Lukacs 1957: 540 – 541, 543) To put it differently, being good is neither universal nor obligatory (as Kant professes), one can ‘only’ endeavour to be it. But nobody can underestimate this programme, simply because good people are living among us. Luckily.

CONCLUSION

It is undeniable that I could only discuss one aspect of the cultures of pedagogy and philosophy. I do not want to question the importance of several related topics. I believe that it was worth putting the emphasis on the autonomous and critical thinking and on the problematic of goodness. I also put faith in philosophy, as I reckon that it can do much for the development of critical thinking, and pedagogy can also be fruitful in terms of the understanding and formation of goodness. *The critical skill, ability presupposes the goodness of the soul and braveness of the heart*. Neither of them exists independently and automatically. I assume that one must understand and learn a lot about both of these buzzwords, as many misconceptions, misbeliefs and (please God, forgive me) educational failure should be overcome to reach this goal. Although if one realises it, it will recompensate one for everything.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

Almási, Miklós (2019). *Ami belül van [What is Inside]*, Budapest: Fekete Sas Kiadó, p. 14, pp. 22–23. I want to raise the attention to one more important remark that also concerns pedagogy: the end of childhood means that reality and dreams cannot merge into one another.

Aristotle (2002). *Metafizika [Metaphysics]*. Szeged, Lectum kiadó, p. 41. Translated by **József Halasi-Nagy**. I must remark that Aristotle writes on the enchantment of astonishment and complements it with the importance of scruple which, in my opinion, is the predecessor of critical thinking.

Barcsi, Tamás (2019). *Filozófia, önmegismerés, terápia [Philosophy, Self-Knowledge, Therapy]*, Kézirat (manuscript), p. 2. Barcsi agrees with and refers to one of Mihály Vajda's studies: *Magyar Tudomány*, 2012, 231 (173).

Douglas, Martin (2011). Matthew Lipman, Philosopher and Educator, Dies at 87. *The New York Times*, January 14. The author writes an obituary apropos of the death of the founding father of philosophy for children. Lipman was one of those few thinkers who unified the philosophical and pedagogical ‘veins’ in his oeuvre. I wish we had more of this kind of researchers!

Füst, Milán (1976). *Napló I. [Diary. Vol. I]*, Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, pp. 178–179. The author also mentions that pedagogy can learn a lot from literary works of art. He highlights the artwork of Gogol (Dead Souls). Such an endeavour of Füst is convincing for me.

Gaarder, Jostein (2012). *Sofie világa [Sophie's World]*, Budapest: Noran Libro, p. 33. The author articulates several remarkable thoughts in an exoteric manner.

Harari, Yuval Noah (2017). *Homo Deus. A holnap rövid története. [Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow]*, Budapest: Animus, pp. 77–78. The author raises one's attention to several contradictions. For instance, the more information one receives, the less one's knowledge is worth. From his other volume *Sapiens*, 2018, Budapest: Anibus: „raising a child is practically an unpleasant thing. The majority of it consists of changing the baby, doing the dishes and handling hysterics that nobody loves to do. However, the majority of parents state that the primary source of happiness is the child“, p. 347.

Kant, Immanuel (1991). *A gyakorlati ész kritikája. [Critique of Pure Reason]*, Budapest, Gondolat, pp. 509–510.

Kant, Immanuel (2005). *Antropológiai írások. [Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View]*, Budapest, Osiris-Gond-Cura Alapítvány, p. 636. It is worth mentioning that Lev Tolstoy proceeds from Kantian thoughts when he further emphasizes that in the case of education one must reach better circumstances than they were before. See **Tolstoy: Mindennapokra [Wise Thoughts for Every Day]**, vol. I, Budapest: Gutenberg Könyvkiadó Vállalat (no date of publication). Here is a writer again the thoughts of whom can be used in pedagogy.

Lukács, Georg (1957). *A lelki szegénységről [On Poverty of Soul]*. – In: *Ifjúkori művek [Works of Youth]*, Budapest, Magvető Kiadó, pp. 540–541, p. 543. It is an interesting fact that a South Korean educational philosopher pointed out the idea of Lukács in an English-language journal. **Kwak, Duk-Joo (2008):** Practising Philosophy, the Practice of Education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 42, No 3–4, p. 667. I have also raised the attention to the concerned work of Lukács and the study of the South Korean education philosopher. See: **Karikó, Sándor (2019).** The Old and New Challenges of Education for Children. In: *Education and Training* (ed.: **Krisztina Kovács – Alice Fáy Dombi**), Szeged: Szegedi Egyetemi Kiadó Juhász Gyula Felsőoktatási Kiadó, p. 297, p. 307.

Marx-Engels Művei I. k. [Marx and Engels Collected Works], 1957, Budapest, Kossuth Kiadó. p. 246. Ferenc Tőkei (he was an Hungarian philosopher) referred to the quoted text several times in his own work. Presumably, that is why he calls Marx's philosophical oeuvre "critical philosophy".

Pring, Richard (2004). *Philosophy of Education*. London, New York. Continuum, p. 22. The book of the author is becoming one of the classics of educational philosophy.

Spengler, Oswald (1994). *A Nyugat alkonya. [The Decline of the West]*, Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó. Vol. I. p. 178, p. 209; Vol. II. p. 54. It is regrettable that pedagogy researchers and educational theorists disregarded the grandiose work of Spengler which could serve as a fruitful basis in terms of their own research.

Szelényi, Iván (2019). *Tanulmányok az illiberális posztkommunista kapitalizmusról [Studies on the Illiberal Post-Communist Capitalism]*. Budapest, Corvina. Reading the book of the sociologist would also be useful for philosophers. See, for example: p. 219.

Szécsi, Gábor (2013). *Nyelv, média, közösség. [Language, Media, Community]*, Budapest, Gondolat. The author refers to the book of Postman, N. Entitled *The Disappearance of Childhood*. Vintage Books, New York, 1994, pp. 89–90.

Tamássy, Györgyi (2010). *Verekedés helyett beszélgetés. [Talking instead of Fighting]* *Többlét*, II. évf. 2. sz. (editor: **Peter Egyed**). The author is one of the pioneers of philosophy for children.

Tózsér, János (2018). *Az igazság pillanatai. [Moments of Justice]*, Budapest, Kalligram. According to him, philosophy is dead, as it could not keep the pace with the newest discoveries of science, p. 15.

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