

Culture, Transculture and Education

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Abstract

Like everything else on this world, culture exists to meet people's needs. What needs does it meet, in fact?

There is food for the body, food for the mind, food for feelings. Few people know that, etymologically speaking, the attributes of good, beautiful and true had originally precise meanings. What's good meant what was good for the body, what is beautiful meant what satisfied feelings and what is true referred to ideas nurturing the mind. Like any food, these impressions nurturing our needs can be more or less qualitative. And here culture intervenes: what can we do to feed ourselves with high quality substances? How do we cultivate the quality of such substances?

Key words

culture, transculture, included third, education, transdisciplinarity

As any other thing on this world, culture exists to meet people's needs. But what sort of needs does it meet?

Human culture is intimately intertwined with human values.

What history proves is that values are always dynamic, always on the move and, thus, we go back to Plato's¹ words related to the dissimilarities between people and actions and the fact that ever none of the men's enjoys rest. Therefore, values should always be contextualized. To be able to permanently contextualize something implies a certain posture: to maintain a purpose – that of respect for such value, constant attention paid to the current situation and making the necessary effort, whether expressed in understanding or in action or in waivers or all together.

¹ Philippe Malaurie, *Antologia gândirii juridice*, Editura Humanitas, 1997, p. 29

A posture, however, requires cultivation and this is where culture interferes, not in the meaning of collective achievements and habits of a people, but in its figurative original meaning, namely to grow through education.

The link between culture and freedom, given the link between education and freedom is revealed by the words of the visionary Thomas Jefferson, who "foreseen the solution of individual freedoms' development and social support through education and liberation of institutions, unlike the later followers of acquiring equal justice by means of violence"²: "This last is the most certain and the most legitimate engine of government. Educate and inform the whole mass of people. Enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order, and they will preserve them. And it requires no very high degree of education to convince them of this. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty."

The visionary parent of the United States saw in education the source of man's virtue and happiness. As stated, he would have been right if education and knowledge had been inseparable, while the "unity of knowledge and education, postulated by the Enlightenment, had long been fractured"³.

The fracture between knowledge and education is one of the reasons why government may involute to a lower type, given that makes the objective, holistic information to behave as the subjective, poor-quality, partial information, respectively to behave as an ideology like any other, giving rise to an opposite, reverse ideology. In other words, any opinion of any quality and any background will bear an opposite opinion, given that education is separate from knowledge. We can therefore say without too much wrong, that the fluctuations in public history of mankind, whose course is not inevitable in this regard, are related to changes in knowledge. As noted by Andrei Marga, the expansion of knowledge makes people remove their organizations limiting their possibilities of expression and knowledge makes people more reluctant to accept binding organizations.

Only by learning, plus knowledge will be possible to avoid a situation giving rise to adverse opinions, the entire humanity reaching a level where available knowledge overlaps reality, and this through a trans-disciplinary education, that allows a vision beyond discipline, acquired knowledge, in order to reach knowledge, the totalizing vision of life. For, as Basarab Nicolescu noted, in the

² Andrei Marga, *Cotitura culturală- Consecințe filosofice ale tranziției*, Cluj University Press, 2004, pp. 603

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 600

case of the transdisciplinary knowledge type, we address the *in vivo* knowledge, which implies: the human being experiences a situation from which they learn; forces them to be creative, interrogative, reflexive; helps them finding answers for themselves. We believe that such knowledge generates a new culture, a trans-cultural one.

Modern moral recognizes individual freedom and cultivates the requirement of the rational agreement between personal good and the good of others or, as a lawyer would put it, the limits of individual freedom are where the exercise of your subjective good is not restricting the right of others to exercise their subjective rights.

In terms of transdisciplinary, the agreement between personal good and the good of others is not as much a rational agreement, but a strictly necessary contradiction. The antagonism is a friction between individual freedom, as possibility of the individual to express and satisfy their needs and equality, as opportunity for all other individuals to express and satisfy their needs. Using the trivalent logic of the included third, consecrated by Ștefan Lupășcu, this friction becomes more than just a simple friction, resulting into the victory of the most powerful force of the moment in a perpetual confrontation, by finding the hidden third element covering both states in a creative reconciliation. The hidden third could be called brotherhood, chanted by the French revolutionary movements, or could bear other names, but the fact is that "only the individual freedom gives results that do not include selfish indifference"⁴.

Under these conditions, a truly modern governance can be only one to reconcile the antagonism between freedom and equality through a third component to release a society captive in the "anxiety wheel" (Jakob Böhme) and to guide it towards a real progress. Because, although because of subordination inherent in any type of Governance, resources cannot be distributed equally or meritocratic, and resource allocation remains, whatever said, a function of chance, both between countries and individuals, the use of resources is no longer randomly, but involves the possibility to choose, more or less consciously. The use of resources in society depends on values that circulate and are respected in society at that moment.

The dependence of the economic growth (measured in per capita product) on the development of individual liberties and emergence of freedoms in the institutional framework and intellectual views determine a direct causal relationship between

⁴ Ibidem, p. 613.

individual freedom and economic, technical, cultural development. Since individual freedom implies less restricted ways of expression, they lead to more intense, more diverse, more powerful events. In essence, freedom of expression comprises greater creative possibilities. Continuing the above reasoning, we can establish the relationship between state freedom and the economic, technical, cultural development of the entire planet, which means, in the end, that the development of the entire planet eventually comes to depend on the freedom of every distinct individual. In other words, the progress of the humankind is measured in terms of possibilities of expression of the individual taken as a separate unit and the type of governance able to create for the individual a higher freedom of expression.

Of course, that the democratic governance experiences the natural degeneration of each process inertia, as described by the Spiritual tradition. Modernity does not protect the world from crisis, as Hegel noted. Therefore, any sort of governance cannot evade the confrontation with crises of various natures. Some crises can lead to inferior types of governance, such as the totalitarian type, others can be overcome, others used to progress. We go back to the quality component of "quantum" leap made by switching from a different form of governance to another and which can cause a qualitative fall or a qualitative climb.

Only conscious interventions in key moments could prevent the manifestation of crises or even their use for progress, but for these interventions to exist there must be conscious and visionary entities to own knowledge, to have the consciousness of the entire process, the entire mechanism to identify the appropriate intervention. Otherwise, the intervention would again be ideological, i.e. partial, corresponding to the perspective of a faction or another, and would generate nothing more than friction. It would be a totalitarian intervention, resulting into decline, as history has demonstrated many times, to a lower form of governance in terms of opportunities for individual expression and consequently, lower in terms of economic, technical, cultural performance and history repetition.

Assuming that such entities exist, to have enough power to intervene, they must be recognized, to gain authority. The authority of an entity whose power comes from knowledge can only come from knowledge, which means that its authority depends on the general knowledge of humanity.

Thus, culture has to meet three functions:

The first is the need for people to have some degree of awareness of the situation. Things are as they are because they could not otherwise be and for them to change, something must be changed. It is also necessary to become conscious of the evil brought by the lack of values.

A second function refers to the formation of a type of attitude to this situation. The individuality and communion - to learn to live together with others, to tolerate others, their manifestations, to resist to the influences exerted upon us by outside and sometimes inside circumstances. The education of “to give up” is a significant part of cultivating such type of attitude.

And the third function relates to the finding a place in the world for each individual. This implies some connection of the inner universe with the one outside the human being, connection that deals, together with culture, religion and spirituality, as the name implies it (religo-religare = to reconnect). Culture, religion and spirituality have always been recognized as being invested with humanity values. Resources cannot be distributed equally or meritocratic, and if resource distribution remains, whatever said, a function of chance, both between countries and between individuals, the use of resources however, is not just chance, but implies the possibility of choice, more or less conscious. This inequality combined with the diversity of social needs that need to be met leads to a system in which all roles are necessary, even more than that, to a system which cannot work unless all social roles are manifested, strikingly reminding of the principle of the nature’s self-consistence, named by Geoffrey Chew as bootstrap.

This way one can decipher the full meaning of the words of Basarab Nicolescu: the only efficient political will is the will of poetry.

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