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PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION IN UKRAINE: PROFILING AND CRITICAL SELF-REFLECTION

Over the past decades the philosophy of education has becoming in Ukraine a status of the philosophical discipline, which successful competes with the most recognized thematic fields of practical philosophy, such as social and political ones. Its establishment is accompanied with its profiling and critical self-reflection in Ukrainian social and cultural contexts.

This process was started else in the Soviet-time, in the later 80-th, namely as an introduction to European philosophy of education¹. But they had been staying only on the periphery of the main stream of orthodox Marxist oriented philosophy, which had reducing the philosophy of education to the theory of the communist educations with its dogmatic principles canonized by the communist ideology. Its stereotypes, as would be shown later, are still influential in drawing the profile of the philosophy of education in Ukraine, but not so evident as it is in Russia.

The dialogue of different approaches and positions, that persuades to clear the disciplinary identity of philosophy of education, was started only after the independency of Ukraine and is continuing. The first invitation to discuss these problems was done in the early 90-th². It is deals not only with the possibilities to have different optics on the subject of philosophy of education, but else is regarded its functional potential and probably application of them. The Ukrainian national context of developing and profiling of philosophy of education depends on different cultural and ideological discourses. That is typical for transitive societies to which belongs

Ukraine. The complicated context where philosophy of education is existing in the post-soviet spaces can be described as a variety of different theoretical propositions pre-modern, modern and postmodern stamps, connected with understanding of social and educational ideals.

One of them is return to pre-modern philosophical and educational traditions. Their coming back stands under the sign of Hrygory Skovoroda (1722-1794), named the Ukrainian Socrates through his dialogical style of philosophical teaching based on Christian ethics. In the context of post-secularity his ethics with orthodox features can be regarded as a new orientation for educational theory and practice because the religion especially in the Eastern Ukraine has lost its leader position in the world-view's questions. At once it must also be mentioned, that the Platonic traditions was wide-spread in the pre-modern philosophy in Ukraine, it's reconstructions are always connected with the risk to fall down into mystic or esoteric practices. Making the cordocentrism (philosophy of heart) to the brand of the Ukrainian philosophical thought gives latent some advantage for irrational approaches to education and setting of its goals which can be far away from reality, awaking a false hope by opening an utopian perspectives for children's developments. The inspirations of the Waldorff's pedagogics that was been in Ukraine in the early 90-th and the blind spot on its shortage of social validity can be an example of consequences of this trend. On the other side, philosophy of heard

1. М.Култаева, *Философско-педагогические тенденции в современном идеализме*, изд-во "Вища школа", Харьков 1988.

2. М.Култаева, *Проблема дисциплинарной идентификации современной западной философии воспитания. Философские перипетии*, "Вестник Харьковского государственного университета", N. 380, ХГУ, Харьков 1993, с. 100-107.

is the best vaccination against the instrumental application of the reason.

The paradox of Skovoroda's philosophy unveils in demands of freedom and desire to bring it into reality but with conserving it as the essential value and might be shown in its educational implications, especially in conception of native work, which is regarded both as an internal substitution and external condition for spiritual revival. The Skovoroda's idea of the native work as a possible professional orientation is connected here with the assertion of the "inequality equality" as a principle both of social life and educational practice. Very important, especially for Ukrainian mentality and the present situation, is the critic of narcissism in all its appearances, including its educational implications. That is a significant contribution to the necessary requirement for overcoming of substandard complex which has its roots in Ukrainian historical memory, although some senses of this idea are inspired by Rousseau and Pestalozzi and are innovative only in the Ukrainian contexts as an introducing the philosophical attitudes of Enlightenment to the pre-modern thinking pattern and recognized models of repressive educational practices. Pedagogical freedom and free forms of philosophizing was initiated by Skovoroda in Ukraine. The tradition started by him might be regarded also as a potential postmodern problem-line which is able to clear the complementary connection between self-centrism and social engagement as the orientations of educational practices. But these intuitions are still seldom enquired by Ukrainian society and educational philosophers, because thinking of most of them is still moving in the frame of political romantic using terms³.

The same also can be said about reception of the Kantian tradition in Ukrainian philosophy of education which in its emphasizing of freedom is near to Skovoroda's views but without the Kantian subjectivity. There caption of this philosophical tradition in Ukraine is characterized by variety combinations of different transformations of Kant's basic conceptualizations of the relationship between anthropology,

pedagogics and philosophy of right. So the principle of the child-centered philosophy of education and pedagogics that was very popular in Europe in the years before and after the Second world war should be translated into Ukrainian reality the experience of its revival. This principle activates the existential meanings in pedagogical relations which are structured as a symmetrical communication between two or more subjects which have unequal anthropological status through relationship between generations but are equal from standpoint of moral and right.

To strengthen the argumentations of existential anthropological approach to education was commonly used the history of Ukrainian pedagogics in a new interpretations. The theoretical views and practical experience gained by such world-known pedagogues as H. Vashchenko, V. Suhkomlynsky and A. Makarenko were reconstructed and represented as paradigmatic and politically confronting positions in the last decades. The criterion of comparison is choosing not only the political position of them, but also attitude to opposition "individualism-collectivism". Else in the soviet time Suchomlinsky was a symbolic figure for a new trend in philosophy of education which opened the existential turn in pedagogical thought correspondent with cultural turn by western humanitarians. By Makarenko's case it was just the opposite. He was accusing as an educational ideologist of totalitarian regimes. But this evaluating is not completely correct because the educational theory of Makarenko also can be regarded as a Kantian transformation complementary jointed with the Marxism⁴. His methodology is based on ideas of life philosophy (A. Bergson, F. Nietzsche) and the conception of collectivism can be regarded as an important contribution to successful socialization of the young generation. Justifying of Makarenko's collectivism is connected with the inquiry of competences, necessary for the team-work. As an antipode of Makarenko is often named H. Vashchenko who has developed in emigration (Germany) a version of a national-patriotic education founded on the platform of Christian ethics⁵.

3. For example, В.Кремень, *Філософія національної ідеї. Людина. Освіта. Соціум*, вид-во "Грамота", Київ 2007.

4. М.Культяєва, А.С.Макаренко як освітній філософ, [в:] Педагогічна спадщина А.С. Макаренка і сучасність, вид-во "Цифрова друкарня№1", Харків 2013, с. 123-124.

5. В.Довбня, *Філософсько-педагогічна спадщина Григорія Ващенко в контексті української інтелектуальної традиції*, "Видавництво "Аспект-Поліграф", Ніжин 2012.

Those traditions which are now reviving both in philosophy of education as in pedagogics too were interrupted for a long time, especially in the Soviet period when the communist ideology was dominated. Though the dogmatic Marxism was declarative declined on the post-soviet space, its influence is still staying perceptibly in attempts to develop an alternative to former canonized methodology which should be applied to all possible cases. So the claim of the Marxist dialectic to be the universal method has taking-over the synergetic approach with its ambitions to explain both the educational and social processes from the postulate of the self-organization⁶. The paradigm-changing and looking for a new paradigm with the same status which former the materialist dialectic had possessed were determining for the mainstream of researches in the 90-th years of the XX century.

The other tendency was prepared through the speeding up of export western theories devoted educational problems which are using with the same goal: to find the only correctly and innovative theory to be able to change the system of education in Ukraine or to show the ways to reform it. The Marxism's shadow is still lying on philosophy of education in Ukraine. That can be seen in the interpretations and receptions of philosophical and pedagogical theories exported from abroad and in propositions of their applications without proofing the validity of them in Ukrainian contexts. The selection of these theories as source materials is often contingent and their interpretation scheme shows meta-theoretical ambitions. For example it might be mentioned a reception of educology setting in the Marxist matrix without setting boards of its methodological validity⁷. As a confirmation of this observation can be regarded the fact that the educology in Russian interpretations shows the same ambitions to be an universal methodology for all educational phenomena.

All described sample cases takes place not only in philosophy of education, but also in theoretical pedagogic which remains on its old positions deco-

rated with quasi renewal achievements. The last can be observed not only in return to Humboldt's idea of the university and its educational applications, but also in Kantian turn to "pedagogic from the child's perspective". Both might be explained more detailed.

The Humboldt's idea of university is discussed in the last decades in Ukraine not only by educational philosophers, but also in the pedagogical and intellectual communities. The vision of the future of university and the whole system of education shows the discrepancies in understanding of its destiny, autonomy, cultural and social functions, status of academic community. All that problems are established in discourse of the idea and reality of the University. But they were regarded either on a very abstract level, or idealizing the western models of universities existing in completely different conditions. The deficit of critical reflection and delighting from organizational possibilities and research conditions in leading western universities makes blind their including observers from Ukraine (fellows of different grants), which sometime gave the priority for the optic of the "what" by dismissing in gone by the reflection of the "how". The future of university and vision of the necessary reforms of those institutions are clarified by grasping both global and local contexts. The leading universities in the USA, for example have successfully combine the Humboldt's ideas of unity teaching and research with development of self-sufficient educational marketing and management. The discussion of university autonomy in Ukrainian constellations is fluctuating between paternalism from the state side and independence in educational management and employment. The allocating function of universities is not at all regarded in actual philosophical and sociological researches implementing in Ukraine. Gaining theoretical and practical experience is a very important task which may be a necessary link for strategies of educational reform and practice, but the reforms cannot to be based only on the fragmental knowledge foundation and the attitude of the mimetic rationality. Critical

6. For example, В. Андрущенко, В. Лутай, *Філософія освіти в Україні: стан, проблеми та перспективи розвитку*, "Наукові записки АН ВШ України" 2004, № 6, с. 59-72.

7. For example, В. Огнев'юк, *Освітологія як відображення міждисциплінарного підходу у наукових дослідженнях феномену сучасної освіти*, [в:] *Розвиток сучасної освіти: освітологічні наголоси: наукове видання за матеріалами першої Всеукр. Наук.-практичної конференції "Освітологія – науковий напрям інтегрованого пізнання освіти"*, Київ ун-т ім. Б. Гринченка, Київ 2011, с. 53-62.

thinking and pragmatic considering joint with ethic of responsibility and academic honesty are that what make American universities so attractive not only for East Europe, but also for West Europe⁸.

Not all tendencies of Ukrainian philosophy of education were named and reflected here. But those which were regarded might draw the conclusions about its complicated relationship to its own history. Some meaning of the history of education give impulse to moving forwards and some others brake

it. An important step in direction to changing style and profiling of philosophy of education in Ukraine is recognition of its multi-paradigmatic structured problem field without rivaling for the leading position. The tendencies was drown here make only a segment of intercultural and subcultural communication under educational philosophers in Ukraine searching for new resources for the innovative development of education and society.



8. As an example here may be served the long term analyze of M. Roche: Roche Mark. *Was die deutschen Universitäten von den amerikanischen lernen können und was sie vermeiden können*, Meiner, Hamburg 2014.