

EDUCATION INTERNATIONALIZATION

**SOME REMARKS ON POSITION OF
HUMANITIES IN THE
INTERNATIONALIZED HIGHER
EDUCATION**

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Abstract: Active participation in the internationalization of science and higher education would no longer be just a efficient tool to establish and promote a process of globalization with its strong unifying tendencies as quick as possibly, but could become free and equal dialogue between the independent nations and cultural circles in the equal and common pursuit of the listening each other in the pluralized world.

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If we speak about the science and education today, it should first be emphasized that the science since the beginning of the New Age lost the characteristic of *theory* as pure observation of the existing beings, inherited from the Greek antiquity, and become the *production of the objectivity* of being. The mathematical construction and empirical experiment are the most important ways in which such science is *a priori* delineating the area of objectivity, in which the totality of the beings of nature, man and history are established as objects of the cognitive subject.

As such primal power and productive force, science is not a separate intellectual area in the external relation to the integrated complex of the industry, economy and the production of material and spiritual goods. In the unique process of creating, sharing and distribution of things forcibly set in the role of market goods it plays an important, if not the most important role. Modern science is the main driving force of the world market, which means of a planetary struggle over power. There are many signs that the modern policy on the global level is in the function of science and that in fact it is not the policy which dominates

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and controls science and its processes, as this might seem. To realize its primary role of production of goods as efficiently as possible, science itself must be continuously transformed, in the direction of greater suitability for principally total quantification, and of better adaptability to the most subtle processes of more sophisticated technical experiments. Likewise it must increasingly reject any pursuit of the knowledge that would be an end in itself and must be accommodated to the applicability as its only purpose.

If we take this into account, it is not difficult to understand that mathematical physics or mechanics at the beginning of the New Ages has become the central and most important science, and that in the course of the centuries and to this day the mathematical sciences, later still the natural and technical sciences, and finally the bio-technical sciences have become the major and most prestigious sciences, the sciences in the true and full sense of the word. All the other, that means the social and humanistic sciences, if they wanted to keep at least some importance and influence in the whole of modern society, had to be transformed according to the model and method of the natural sciences. Of course, this change of essence and purpose of science must also be followed by the change of the way of education appropriate for such science that is solely productive.

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Some kind of the resistance to the described process of unification of sciences in terms of their full quantification, experimenting and the focusing solely on the use and applicability has emerged in times of classical modernism in the field of humanities. One can hardly overestimate the importance of the so called humanities (or *Geisteswissenschaften*, as they are called in the German), which in the late 19th and in the first half of the 20th century have taken maximum efforts to preserve level, coverage and methodical multiplicity of widely understood human knowledge, effectively defending the uniqueness and peculiarity of the kind of knowledge that is quite different than the exact and experimental natural science.

The human sciences, which after the collapse of the universal system of speculative philosophy in the so called German idealism were established as the continuation of the Neo-humanism of the late 18th century in its reaction against the dogmatic and one-sided mathematical rationalism of the early Enlightenment, have actually rediscover the peculiar sense of history, of art, of the power and importance of myth and language, of the Greek classics and generally of study and interpretation of the ancient world.

Even though this modern humanities basically accept the universal method of natural science, with its origin in the ontological nominalism of the late Middle Ages, they are attempting - although in analogy with this method and within its horizon - to build their own scientific method, which would indeed remain strictly scientific, but would still have been

at least partially adapted to peculiarities of its subjects. In the 20th century it was primarily endeavour of Hans-Georg Gadamer, whose philosophical hermeneutics emerged from the long tradition of the humanities. With his hermeneutics he linked up with the humanistic resistance to the universal pretensions of method of exact natural and technical sciences and tries to force the scientific and technical consciousness to recognize its own limits. As part of this attempt Gadamer exposes first of all the original truth of art, history and language, in which the man acquires experience of his irremovable finitude, that can not be retrieved by any method of quantifying and can not be imposed by generally applicable, universally verifiable and in that sense objective evidence.

It might seem that such a hermeneutics finally provides a sufficient methodological basis for the complete independence of such related sciences as art history, archaeology, ethnology, economy, philology, pedagogy, psychology, literary theory, history, political science, jurisprudence, etc. Their research and their teaching should be guided by entirely different methodological principles than those prevailing in the natural and technical sciences. Art, history, language above all give a man a life experience that is substantially different from the experimental production of scientific knowledge and in which the world and the meaning of human finite existence in the world are manifested in a completely different light than in scientific knowledge.

Yet it seems that Gadamer in the later years of his long life felt a certain uncertainty about the long-term perspective of hermeneutics, and the humanities in general. Tone of his later expressions is rather resigned. He emphasizes that the humanities at its very founding followed the scientific ideal of the natural sciences and that in the second half of the 20th century within the humanities can even be noticed the moving of their centre of gravity, in which they are getting closer to the natural sciences, and even identify themselves methodologically with them. Psychology was the first to be transformed into a natural science of the measurable acts of consciousness, and further to the completely naturalistic determinate neurone-science, and as such raised the demand to be the universal foundation for all humanities. Similar role after that tried to carve out for itself a structuralism, then the universal linguistics and the general semiotics, and finally, the information science and the general science of communication. In this way, all the traditional content of humanities is today on the way of complete transformation into a universal cultural anthropology built on the model of technical sciences and bio-engineering.

These changes, in which all the sciences, especially social sciences and the humanities, are rapidly transforming, to the end that they should better meet the needs of the technical production of goods within the

planetary world market, cause the substantial change in the position and structure of the university as a centre of higher learning. The idea of free knowledge, which should be an end in itself, as well as the principle of closest association of research and teaching, which had both been the leading ideas in establishing a modern Humboldt University in Berlin, from where they in a short time spread throughout Europe, Japan and the U.S., are rapidly losing their attractiveness.

Especially after the recent Bologna reform of the European higher education it becomes evident that the traditional university institution is definitively replaced with a conglomerate of high schools with the main purpose to prepare the students as quickly and as efficiently as possible for active participation in the process of universal material and mental production. According to their methods, ways of teaching and evaluating the results, the modern science has, in principle, overcome the inherited dichotomy between natural sciences and humanities, but only in this way that the social sciences and the humanities had been fundamentally changed and totally adapted to all essential characteristics of natural, technical and bio-technical sciences, in which, by the way, the so called basic or fundamental research is increasingly giving way to the applied science. There is no longer any mention of the traditional distinction of theoretical, practical and productive knowledge, as there is no more any system of knowledge and the sciences at all. Within such arbitrary gathering of knowledge and education, fundamentally devoid of any idea based on reason and any articulate, architectonic arranged system of sciences, the philosophy, once the queen of sciences, has nothing more to do.

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Seen in this horizon, the internationalization of science and higher education is undoubtedly a very effective tool for the final transformation of the entire science into the most powerful force of production of the globalized world market, with its highest purpose of steady growth and constant surpassing himself. However, in view of what in this event disappears and vanishes, the internationalization is the best way to remove and erase any independent individuality, single, incomparable and unrepeatable uniqueness of every living and inanimate thing, and more broadly, of every individual nation and every particular culture. The unconcealed administrative and promotional effort to coerce all sciences and all higher education to be preferably conducted on one single language, namely English, is just one symptom of such general tendency.

Certainly, it would be pointless to blindly oppose the process started many centuries ago and such one that is over the centuries steadily progressing on one-way path. What remains is to strongly emphasize that the man especially in such phenomena as the language, art and history is being subjected to the real experience of truth which, however, completely detaches from any scientific project and any attempt to be

joined in the network of quantifying construction area called “objectivity”. In the elevating splendour of beauty in art, and in the fateful game of freedom and necessity in history, as well as in foreshadowing, and that means both revealing and at the same time concealing winking of the language, the man gets opened the *wide field of truth* that surpasses him and that he must again and again fit in to be truly human, and the true man.

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Let me conclude this brief address by attempting to support what was said here with a few remarks concerning only one of the above mentioned essential phenomena, namely *language*. First I would like to say what the language is not, and then what he is, or rather what it could be.

First of all, the language is not a “system of signs”, it is not merely a means of expressing and communicating thoughts and attitudes for various purposes of human communication. What is more, language is not essentially and primarily a sign at all. Secondly, language is, literally, world-making. That means: only that which has reached the light of presence owing to the primordial naming force of language exists for man and belongs to the illuminated region of his world. Finally, language is never simply “language”. The actual living language is always a specific language, which we call *mother tongue*. Any mother tongue rests upon the opaque foundation of its own singularity and distinctiveness with respect to all others. Any mother tongue is a decisive shaping force determining a definite population, a so called nation, binding it fatefully to its allotted land and to the sky measured for this particular nation only by the divine signs or their absence, and finally to fundamental decisions by which it secures its own place in the history of the world.

Furthermore, mother tongue is essentially *supra-individual*. It would be far from truth to say that an individual merely uses his language. On the contrary, anyone who is on close terms with language, the poet above anyone else, is literally used by it, is being induced, over and over again, to respond to language in his moods and thoughts and to follow, as long as he can, the intricate and almost impassable paths of primeval experiences which are stored in words and in the trepidations of their mutual relationships. As a member of a linguistic community, man is not an independent, self-ruled individual, but one of linguistic travel companions, who is bound to the others, present, past or to come, by innumerable ties, even when he is utterly and completely alone.

Besides, mother tongue is essentially *primeval*. No fiction of a hypothetical beginning of language is of any avail in the encounter with the intrinsic infinity of any individual language. By speaking his language man participates in the entire history of his nation, multifariously refracted and modified, which dies in oblivion to be resurrected again in abrupt historical decisions. Each, even apparently

the least important word of a language, contains infinity of magic, mythical, narrowly religious or worldly layers of meaning which are otherwise most frequently concealed in everyday use.

Taking into account this irremovable individuality and inexhaustibility of the different languages, as well as the function of each of them in producing the world that is *proper* and *its own* for each nation and each culture, the active participation in the internationalization of science and higher education would no longer be just a efficient tool to establish and promote a process of globalization with its strong unifying tendencies as quick as possibly, but could become free and equal *dialogue* between the independent nations and cultural circles in the equal and common pursuit of the listening each other in the pluralized world.