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CHALLENGES TO EDUCATION AND SCHOOL TODAY

I would like to express my deep appreciation and profound gratitude to the university of Ioannina and the Faculty of Philosophy for having rewarded me this honorary doctorate. I can only say thank you for the honor.

Presently we seem to live in a globalized world, being easily in contact with everybody, everywhere, yet having still deep roots in our own economic and cultural regions. This poses a challenge for education and school. At the global level, we are, for example, connected by internet and thereby we witness large refugee movements, and at school, international comparative tests put demands on us. Regionally, we are rooted in our native country and we have cultural as well as social traditions. Cultural identification, spatial integration and mother tongue education are important signs of our regional existence in nation states. In schools it is about one of the central conditions for teaching, that all students speak the same language. For a long time students have learnt in their own national educational systems and were preparing thus for the transition into the adult world. The aim of education was, that the knowledge and values of the older generation were passed on to the younger one, but in a way that younger people had the opportunity to develop as adults (Schleiermacher 1983). It was an evolutionary approach: the morality of a society should increase by education (Langewand 1987). Now we know that this challenging program of education has failed. For Schleiermacher the separation of the political and the educational system was an important condition to be able to write his program. But this is not true, if we have a look to our modern societies. In all modern societies, we can observe the attempts of the political system and especially of the educational policy to influence the educational system. It seems that political interests in education have triumphed again and again. But history teaches us that this can be a very dangerous development. In Germany this has happened during the time of National Socialism and later on in the former German Democratic Republic in a so called socialist regime. In both cases an attempt has been made to establish an education state, it means, the state stresses an order for educating, which is the basis for everyday life of society.

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Another basic idea for the education system in Germany was given by Humboldt (1984). His central assumption was that if you learned the language of a people you became familiar with their ideas concerning humanity and moral positions. In the tradition of this thinking I have learnt ancient Greek, for example. Both approaches have a common point: the aim of education is not only the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies, but rather the adaption to important values and norms.

Today two languages are of central interest: Mathematics and English have become the *linguae francae*. The predominance of these two languages is an effect of globalization. There is a big difference in relation to both examples I have mentioned up to now: both languages have in the sense of Humboldt no dimension concerning humanity.

Currently, the most pleasant challenge resulting from globalization is still the internet. In a positive sense it opens for us the opportunity to gain information from around the world, but it covers us with information which we neither needed nor wanted to have. Many people spend a lot of time on the computer or the smartphone. If internet services such as Google or Facebook are used, they collect data about us, in whose passing on we have no interest, because disadvantages can originate for us. Therefore we must learn to protect ourselves from the negative consequences of the internet. At the same time we also have to get familiar with the use of the new possibilities provided by internet. E-Learning is one of the new opportunities. It enables one at every place on earth to take part in education. The only condition is, that we understand the language. Many of the offers require the knowledge of English. Up to now in schools and universities in Europe we do not use the opportunities of E-learning enough. With the support by E-Learning we could organize the learning processes of the students better. For example, students could organize and structure their learning better steering for themselves. These introductory examples already demonstrate the Janus face of globalization. At the same time it becomes clear that school and education are challenged to find answers.

The biggest challenges are currently posed by the world's refugee movements. War, hunger, and poverty can be causes of migration for people. In history there were many examples for migration, the reasons often similar. But the present refugee movement has a new dimension, and it is becoming apparent that the flow of migration will increase and not decrease in the coming years. The economic imbalance between rich and poor countries is likely to grow. While in industrial nations the population is shrinking, there is in other regions in Central and South America, as well as in Africa and Asia an increase in population caused by the higher birth rates and improved health care. Here a special problem stems from the fact, that as a rule the better educated part of the population emigrates. Therefore the investments in education in these regions don't pay off and the social problems in the poorer countries will probably continue. The refugee movement has also consequences for the countries with a richer population: Xenophobia increases, for example. People in the richer countries fear that their standard of living will go down. Moreover, in these states costs arise, because the immigrants must be integrated into the social infrastructure, must learn the language of the particular country, and be schooled to work in the labor force.

The challenge, which I'm interested in, is the fact, that we are confronted with new education problems. In Germany we had some experience with the so called guest workers during the second part of the last century, but this experience can't be transferred to the new situation easily. For there are at least two reasons: first the guest workers were brought to Germany at this time, because there was a high demand for workers adapted to low skilled labor. Now the demand has changed: in rich countries more highly skilled workers are needed. This can be seen in traditional immigrant countries already. If these countries pursue an active immigration policy, well qualified immigrants are attracted. Australia and Canada can be considered, as examples of this type of immigration: the average socioeconomic status of immigrant people corresponds to the average socioeconomic status of national people. In addition, the immigration of people will be furthered by possessing qualifications which are needed in these countries. Hence the integration of immigrants is not difficult to achieve. As opposed to this situation the new immigrants who come to Europe now, are partly well-qualified but their qualification often don't fit European needs. They need special training programs to be integrated properly. Insofar we have to make changes in our education systems. These changes are needed by other reasons, too. In the past 30 years we have learnt that education is not finished if we leave school, professional training, or university, but we need continuously further training. Second and in addition, we only know by now, that we have made many mistakes in the past concerning the integration of guest workers and their families, especially their children. The results of PISA have demonstrated this. Therefore we need new ideas concerning the integration of children of these families. Language training isn't enough for immigrants.

Globalization is characterized by a further fact: things which can't be compared are compared with each other. They are abstracted from cultural specific features and are tried to set worldwide standards. As a result, this means that one culture prevails, and this is the American one. We have seen this in Europe with the OECD international comparative studies. These studies tested across countries how successfully students solve tasks in mathematics and physics as well as in developing their reading competencies. It is the attempt to compare the success of different educational systems in different countries through standard-answer-format tests. Eventually, some educational systems showed to be very successful, especially in Finland, Japan and Korea, but others not, for example, in Germany. The assumption may be right, that in subjects like mathematics and physics a common world curriculum exist, and it may be not problematic, because the competencies in these subjects are an essential precondition for technology and technology education. Economical development in countries that do not have inventories of raw materials is largely dependent on success in this area. But education is more than just the training of competencies in mathematics and science, it has additional priorities. A further question remains: are language competencies and competencies in reading or literacy in different countries similar, too? I will not discuss this point.

In Germany the PISA results have shocked educational policy makers and started a fundamental change in the educational system providing for new structures in our school system. We have extended primary schools to all day schools. More important, however,

we have nationwide established new institutions with the order to carry out comparative studies with standardized response formats in the *Länder*, the different parts of Germany. By the results of PISA 2010, these changes seemed to be successful, in so far as Germany has improved its position relative to other OECD countries. On the surface we have therefore performed better. But we also have to ask what is the price of such a development? In mathematics, the schools changed their curriculum, and intensified the topic of stochastics, to name just one example. In the core subjects, mathematics, science, German and foreign languages competence-based tests have been developed and used in national comparative studies. In languages under the heading reading skills new formats have been introduced into the curriculum, students read texts and then answer questions about it. Everyday use texts found in this way more attention than reading classical literature. In Germany, a phase began in which certain competencies in the school were trained, leading to a loss of traditional contents. Teaching to the test got a central position within schools and instruction. For the US Nichols and Berliner (2007) and Koretz (2008) have lamented this development: traditional subjects lose importance and the diversity of education is threatened. To what extent will take place similar developments in Germany, cannot yet be conclusively ascertained. Nevertheless, the advantages and disadvantages of this new trend in evaluation of educational processes can be estimated now.

Many countries in Europe still have the character of nation-states. With the new refugee movement this character can probably not be maintained. In place of the nation-state multicultural societies will evolve. Immigration is a challenge to these societies and education systems. For a long time Germany has refused to accept this new development, for example, cultural diversity was not seen as an advantage. The education system was at best prepared to naturalize people with a migrant background, although the cultural standards were not adhered to. Gogolin (1994) has complained about that. There was only an intercultural education with the aim to support people with different cultural roots so they could assimilate.

Now we will have to arrange ourselves with the fact, that people with different cultural identities will live in Germany and would want to maintain their cultural and religious traditions. In Germany as in other European countries, we have but only one tradition to support immigrants in adapting to Germany. Even Prussia was very successful with the implementation of education to equip Polish immigrants in the Ruhr area, since it enabled them to adapt within one generation to Germany. After 1960 we tried to continue this kind of policy with children of immigrant workers. The results of PISA and PIRLS demonstrate that this objective has largely not been achieved: in the German education system children with immigrant status are not as successful as it is the case in other countries. Recent studies show, however, that this is also related to the education of the parents of these children. For Wolfsburg it was, for example, demonstrated that the children of Italians were less successful than those of the Greeks. The reason was that the Greek immigrants were better educated than the Italians and were able to support their children better. Similar trends I have mentioned for the classic immigration countries Australia and Canada. However, at present in many countries of immigration a tendency is emerging

among immigrants, to orient themselves by becoming fundamentally religious. A similar development is going on for the white population in the United States as it can be seen with the Evangelicals and the Tea Party. The social tensions are obvious in the societies.

What are the challenges arising from these developments for education and school? Firstly the new immigrants need to acquire sufficient knowledge of the language of the host country. To allow a faster integration of adults, it would be helpful, if the language courses would be carried out related to professions and the level of education of the participants would consider. This requires flexibility in the language courses. E-learning could be helpful here. Secondly, one would have to teach them important cultural and legal foundations of the host country. This would be successful, if a reference to the country of origin could be was being established. In this way a multicultural society with a leading culture can emerge. The difficult relationship between common cultural standards and cultural variations among groups of immigrants can become a discussion point. Thirdly, a bilingual upbringing of children in kindergarten and school just with reference to Humboldt's concept would be helpful. To do this, we need teachers with appropriate cultural and linguistic background. The host countries have to accept that there are also parts of society with specific value systems, including their religions. In accordance with Schleiermacher we have to transmit the values of the older generation to the younger and to find a balance between those of the host country and immigrants.

Finally, we have to state, that business and government are trying to set new standards for school. Now, at first glance, we are threatened to get a new education state, when government and business will try out curricula, timetables et cetera to have influence on the reorganization of the schools. This is often described as a demand for transmission of cultural techniques. This development can be seen very well in Germany at present. There is increasingly a desire to lead schools on the model of companies. This is already visible when you see that there is increasing talk of school management or classroom management. With the acquisition of these concepts it is suggested that it is possible to transfer techniques of management to the educational system. In this context, it is also spoken of new public management. It goes without saying that public institutions, especially public schools, do not work for profit. But the new idea is that they should, nevertheless, check their efficiency. To implement this, we need leadership in the school. This assumption is true for the entire school system and single schools, too. In the educational administration the idea exists that the school systems could be controlled bureaucratically, at the same time. Objectives are formulated for the organization of school in curricula and there is an increasing tendency by the administration to check that they are being achieved. For a long time it has been attempted in Germany to control schools on inputs. The hope was that arrangements of the educational administration would be implemented in each school and successfully completed. Currently, one can observe a change in this assumption. The educational administration is trying to control via the output. School inspections, external evaluations and comparative tests are carried out with this intention. Also schools have to fulfill the task of social integration. In addition to teaching of skills it is in

democracies important to fulfill the task of social integration. For this, teachers must be trained. But the processes in the schools are not controlled. There is a simple reason for this, as I will explain.

Schools operate as semi-autonomous entities and according to Mintzberg (1989) as a simple organization or as a professional organization. The character depends on the size of each school. I will discuss the case of the professional organization. In his model, Mintzberg has transferred to school a distinction between the school management, a middle management, and work in the classroom. In addition, he has added the task to standardize communication between school management and teachers. He has also distinguished a support staff, for example, with which the development of teaching practice is applied. In the professional organization responsibility for action is decentralized. If a teacher closes the classroom door to teach, he or she is alone with his or her students and can hardly be controlled in his or her actions. That's why we need distributed leadership in schools. Therefore, the activity in the classroom is difficult to control. You can check the results at best, as Mintzberg (1989) has explained. He calls this type of organization professional bureaucracy. Therefore, the control of output, as it takes place today in schools and in the classroom is appropriate. It follows, that new forms of organization in the schools are useful. In order to achieve better coordination between the teachers they should collaborate in teaching development. At schools professional learning communities of teachers should be established with this objective. This is also a requirement that the schools and teachers can better meet objectives in the classroom. Traditionally, it is assumed, that the students learned what the teachers taught. Now the ultimate goal is that all students learn in one class. Therefore learning environments need to be created that are stimulating for all students. They must be so designed that differences between students are not an obstacle for teachers to organize the learning of their students, even if the differences between them are large. Heterogeneity among students and inclusion are new demands in modern teaching. Instructional leadership is expected within the school.

Let me conclude my considerations: There are two challenges for education and the school-system today. Firstly, the traditional assumption that we can acquire skills at school and university in order to work successfully in a lifetime employment system may need to be changed, because education is a lifelong process. Therefore, we need new additional types of schools, which give the opportunity to acquire new skills in our adult years. Systems for continuing education are a new format. In these institutions further learning for the adult refugees and later on immigrants can successfully be organized. In the future we have to accept, that the cultural and religious differences between the students will increase. Secondly for this reason we need ideas for schools and instruction, because diversity between the students will increase. For this reasons more learning processes among the students themselves should be provided by the teachers, who in turn are supported by well and professionally organized management structures. We have to organize schools as professional bureaucracy institutions with a strong school management and the teachers in the working core.

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