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ROLE OF EDUCATION AND POLITICS IN THE FORMATION OF A PUBLIC SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL SPACE OF HUMAN SELF-EXPRESSION

PAPEL DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y LA POLÍTICA EN LA CONFORMACIÓN DE UN ESPACIO PÚBLICO SOCIOEDUCATIVO DE EXPRESIÓN HUMANA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article is to investigate the relationship between education and politics in the process of forming the public space of interpersonal interaction and human self-expression. The paper demonstrates the interrelationship of politics and education as a practice of construction of the public space of personal self-expression. The study examines the supra situational logic behind the transition from the singular to the universal, realized in the educational and training process, as well as the transition from the private to the public, realized in political life. The authors conclude that everyday life demonstrates the version of educational goals being subjected to the interests of politics. This relationship between politics and education majorly distorts their true nature. The study of the common cause of politics and education suggests their inner kinship as strategies for human emancipation.

Keywords:

Education, politics, state, power, common cause, universal, public space.

RESUMEN

El propósito del artículo es investigar la relación entre educación y política en el proceso de formación del espacio público de interacción interpersonal y autoexpresión humana. El artículo demuestra la interrelación de la política y la educación como práctica de construcción del espacio público de expresión personal. El estudio examina la lógica supra situacional detrás del tránsito de lo singular a lo universal, realizado en el proceso educativo y de formación, así como el tránsito de lo privado a lo público, realizado en la vida política. Los autores concluyen que la vida cotidiana demuestra la versión de las metas educativas sujetas a los intereses de la política. Esta relación entre política y educación distorsiona en gran medida su verdadera naturaleza. El estudio de la causa común de la política y la educación sugiere su parentesco interno como estrategias para la emancipación humana.

Palabras clave:

Educación, política, estado, poder, causa común, universal, espacio público.

INTRODUCTION

Literature on the problems of education is commonly dominated by an approach in which politics and education are defined as spheres of social existence that have no inner interconnection. Their external relationship is conceivable as a hierarchical subordination: either education is subordinated to politics, or politics is subordinated to the goals of education. The first option prevails when describing the existing situation in society, and the second dominates during the constitution of the proper social order.

In day-to-day existence, one is most often confronted with the subordination of educational goals to political interests. The subservience of education to politics does not necessarily take on a conscious, purposeful form. In this context, studies of the relationship between knowledge and power, ideology and education, which are prevalent in modern times, are symptomatic. In other words, this relationship acts as one of the instances of power, a direct manifestation of the will of the state or social system to nurture the necessary and useful citizens, an effective way of legitimizing the existing socio-political order. This arrangement presupposes, first, an identity of politics with the power struggle and, second, the dominant view of the purpose of the institution of education as one that is largely exhausted by the fulfillment of the social order of power.

The above raises the issue of the extent to which, within this interpretation of politics and education, they can fulfill their purpose, that is, to function as practices of human self-expression.

Research on the relationship between politics, power, and education is presented in many contemporary works. Substantial contributions to the study of various aspects of this problem have been made by H. Arendt, L. Althusser, P. Bourdieu, J. Dewey, J.-C. Passeron, M. Foucault, and many others. Of special importance among these are the works of Foucault, which address the relationship between education and the formation of disciplinary power. On this matter, the researcher states that “every educational system is a means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them” (Monin et al., 2023). Accordingly, there is a problem in identifying the sociopolitical foundations for the relationship between power and knowledge.

This point of view has been appearing in studies on the influence of ideology on the formation of public consciousness since the time of K. Marx, so it is no surprise that it was the followers of Marx's ideas that developed this theme. According to Althusser (2011), the school appears as an institution for the reproduction of labor power

in accordance with the existing structure of the division of labor. From this follows the view of the school as an environment for the construction of professional qualifications and the reproduction of the individual's subordination to the rules of the established order. The main goal of the educational system becomes a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class ‘in words’ (Ravochkin et al., 2022).

In accordance with these preconditions, Bourdieu (Althusser's student) together with Passeron developed their concept of the sociology of education. In their joint study (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2007), they reveal the specificity of the relationship between the educational system and the system of class relations, according to which the democratization of social relations gradually leads to power ceasing to rely on mechanisms of physical coercion and beginning to widely use symbolic violence. Bourdieu & Passeron (2007), believe that the transformation of social conditions leads to the fact that the transfer of power and privilege must take place in roundabout ways through recognition by the educational system.

Of importance for our study is Arendt's “The Crisis in Education”, which offers a critique of the interpretation of education as an instrument of politics and of the political activity itself as a specific form of education (Arendt, 2014). The scholar believes that the difference between politics and education is that the former is the sphere of interaction between equals, while the latter is the interaction between adults and children, which is conceptualized by Arendt as authoritarian. However, let us note that the withdrawal of politics beyond teaching and education paradoxically contributes to the market colonization of the space of education and is followed by the spread of the depoliticization of politics (Pertsev et al., 2023).

Despite the time-honored tradition of juxtaposing education and politics, the connection between educational and political theories is still little explored because, in our view, education cannot be merely a preparation for adulthood. Although the educational system is interpreted by most researchers as a means of imposing dominant ideas of the world and the place of the individual in it, it can also, we believe, serve as a basis for overcoming ideological dictatorship. The fact is that with the help of education, a person gets the opportunity to subject the foundations of their own life, current norms of society, and the ways of perceiving the world to reflexive thinking.

The goal of the present study is to explore the relationship between education and politics in the process of shaping the public space of interpersonal interaction and human self-expression.

METHODOLOGY

The primary research method is the analysis of literature in the problem field of the study of the relationship between politics and education.

The keywords used to form the source base for the study were “education”, “politics”, “state”, and “power”.

The analysis of the source base of the study using the methods of theoretical generalization, comparative analysis, analysis, and synthesis enabled us to determine the relationship between education and politics in the process of forming the public space of interpersonal interaction and human self-expression.

DEVELOPMENT

There are two possible interpretations of the presence of politics in education. One directly affirms the importance and legitimacy of the presence of politics in education as its main determinant. Thus, politics is a driving force in determining the purpose of education. The state (the possibility of the existence of politics, in this case, is identified with it) uses the educational system to substantiate and justify its existence (Urmina et al., 2022).

The famous Aristotelian definition of man as a *zoo politicon* rests on an understanding of politics as a public space in which citizens interact to resolve public affairs. In such a space, the influence of power hierarchies and the violence associated with them are minimized. In this context, the ancient Greek democratic state-polis, in contrast to the sphere of the private, domestic economy, was, according to Aristotle, the space of coexistence of equals. Accordingly, the concern for the good of the state involved the participation of equal citizens in public matters. The mere fact of being born a free man in the polis was not enough to be a *zoo politicon*, to correspond to human essence. According to Parvizi & Navid (2021), “the individual becomes a participant in politics only in the cultural quality of being free and equal with others”. Thus, education was charged with shaping man as a cultural and political being.

Concern for the good of the state has as its most important condition the transition from the naturalness of the singular, the private to the artificiality of the universal, the public. In this transition, a person manifests themselves in deeds and words in front of others. Not simply by exhibiting that which is supposedly already inside them. In action and

speech toward others, a person is born a second time, beginning a new thing and becoming themselves. “With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance” (Arendt, 2000, p. 135). Politics as a way of exercising public space provides a stage on which the human personality manifests itself.

Politics begins to be identified with the struggle for state power, and education is perceived as an instrument of its retention. Hence the long tradition of interpreting education and upbringing in the context of the legitimization of the current regime of power. Illustrative examples of this instrumental attitude toward the educational system can be found in the texts of numerous dystopias, which usually give education and upbringing one of the leading roles in the construction of an ideal society. An instrumental, substrate vision of education transforms it into a retransmitted of power’s plan. No anti-utopia can do without a description of the educational system, which is intended to be an effective tool for influencing human consciousness and shaping it in accordance with the needs of a particular political system. Thus, the self-development of human subjectivity is subordinated here to the task of shaping a person to conform to certain patterns.

Yet not only the ideal but also the real state seeks to raise and shape the person it needs. The example of anti-utopias most vividly describes a variant of the explicit use of education to satisfy the interests of political power, when symbolic violence is reinforced by all other types of violence and is secured by them. In the literary space of dystopias, political power often does not even try to conceal its violent nature.

Even in totalitarian societies, education can find ways to evade certain political practices and is never entirely confined to them.

In our opinion, the ability of education to escape complete dilution in the actual practices of power is contained in its culture-creating function.

Education as a space for the cultivation of human subjectivity can constitute other spaces of social interactions, which, according to Monin et al. (2023), can be defined as heterotopias, that is, realized utopias. Heterotopias of education are constructed outside the total determinacy of learning and education by the external interests of political power. In this context, we can agree with Sharonova et al. (2022), that education is a necessary utopia, through which a person gets an opportunity to look at themselves and their time as if from the outside. Education as the cultivation of human subjectivity puts to critical test any stable

sociopolitical order, any dogmatic claim to naturalize the connection between power and knowledge (Tran et al., 2021). Thus, the development of critical and independent thinking at school becomes not so much a cognitive problem as a problem of constituting an appropriate space for interpersonal communication and interaction.

Learning how to be tolerant of another, of another's opinion, is achieved only through interaction with the other based on the exploration of specific cultural content. The ability to debate in the classroom lays the groundwork for the desire and ability to engage in discussion about societal issues. First, the child must become a citizen of the school on an equal footing with teachers and administrators and participate in common activities. Education must become a common cause for all involved. Then power, control, and discipline do not disappear from the educational process but are determined by the logic of its assimilation.

School as a space for the deployment of a necessary utopia forms preconditions for the development of the ability to work together with others. Only in such activities can the student become a responsible person, because passive inaction is irresponsible by definition.

In the example of ideology, we can observe the implicit functioning of the mechanisms of symbolic violence, the hidden use of education in the interests of political struggle. The subjects of the pedagogical process reproduce the ideas prevailing in a certain sociopolitical environment, often without awareness of their ideological engagement, one-sidedness, and abstractness. In this case, the apology of the existing socio-political system unfolds not as an explicit order from the authorities, but as a natural process of information passing from one generation to the next. However, in our opinion, this relationship between politics and education significantly distorts their true nature.

The traditional understanding of politics as a struggle for power is challenged by the vision of Rancière (2006), who believed that the aforesaid situation corresponds not to *política* but to *policía*. In other words, not everything that revolves around power is politics, and what revolves around power is not politics. Rancière (2006), argues that politics is not the exercise of power. We immediately omit politics, "leap over it" if we identify it with the practice of power and with the struggle for its possession. Therefore, power is the point of attraction of the police, of an order in which it becomes impossible to share the sensual among all the participants in the process and argue about the common good.

The definition of politics as a space of power struggle tends to treat it as a practice of ruling society through a variety of technical means. This realization of politics

presupposes the existence of the universal as a certain, naturally given. The question of the common good is seen as settled and cannot be questioned or critically analyzed. Within these limits, politics is not a project to be put into practice together with others and then to maintain its existence, but a *fait accompli*. Therefore, symbolic violence is conditioned by the desire to develop agreement in society and protect the established socio-political order with the system of differentiation, due to which a certain group of people occupies a position corresponding to their interests and needs. It follows that those who seize state power are not then interested in the existence of a regime of politics, a regime of dispute around the common good. On the contrary, they seek to replace politics with a regime of governance and the debate of the universal with unanimity. However, Rancière (2006), states that politics is not the art of governing communities, but a form of human action that is based on differences and exceptions to the rules by which human groups are brought together and ruled.

In the socio-political history of humanity, the state has often taken the place of the universal. In socio-political discourse, too, the state begins to speak on behalf of the common, to serve as an embodiment of the common cause. It is a common notion that the state is the source of politics and the production of the social order to education. However, given the above, it becomes evident that the state is rather a source of a unanimous order or, in other words, an abstractly universal one, the absolutization of which proves detrimental to politics. The state, as the site of legal physical and symbolic violence, relegates politics to the police regime. The strengthening of the state can be coupled with a growing unity of the masses, which paradoxically leads to the formalization of the common cause – depoliticization (Magomeddibirova et al., 2022).

An important sign of the process of depoliticization is the degradation of public space, i.e. that space of human relations in which a person can be seen and heard as a sovereign individual. Public space is always constituted as if for the first time. It is built over the private needs of a person as an individual. Moreover, public space is not constituted through coercion. This is precisely why within its boundaries unfolds not discourse (the language of power) but *parrhesia* (free speech).

If universal order is already in place and is perceived as certain, someone is bound to remain outside of it, is excluded from it, and therefore remains incomprehensible and unheard. The needs and interests of those who cannot express themselves and manifest themselves in public space are seemingly non-existent. Under such conditions, the political process of participation in the creation

and definition of the common good, rather than simply an adaptation to its already available state forms, ceases. In this case, politics becomes impossible.

The police regime borders on desymbolization, that is, the human community in this perspective is exhausted by its empirical existence, and hence human development in it is limited to the dominant principles of available existence, which are not called into question. Within this socio-political order, there are two opposing modes of implementation of the political process: consensus and antagonism.

Arencibia Dávila et al. (2019), offer the solution to this problem. In her opinion, politics does not eliminate the conflict but transfers the antagonism into an agonal form, in which the confronting parties recognize the legitimacy of each other because any society that sanctions the conflict runs the risk of its eventually becoming too intense, creating a threat to the existence of civil peace and stability. To find a solution to this problem, there must be a unified symbolic space. Without a common symbolic space, the implementation of politics becomes problematic.

In our view, such a common endeavor in which a single symbolic space is built, which is reproduced anew each time in the address of one person to another or one generation to another, is precisely education. Thus, we are bound to turn to reflection on the cultural ways of the constitution of the human community. Education has always played and continues to play a crucial role in this process. Education is understood as a common cause, not as a sphere under the jurisdiction of a limited number of professionals.

If there is no real common cause, the presence of symbolic violence grows. Politics is constituted as a public sphere, as a space where one can be seen and heard. However, apart from this, it is a space where one gets the opportunity to see the other in oneself, to perceive oneself as the other. The term “common cause” refers to the ancient tradition of coexistence in the mode of *res publica*, i.e., according to A. Kharkhordin, “it is a certain state of the people, which is maintained by the constant participation of citizens in solving issues of public importance”. According to this tradition, a politics that creates prerequisites for the common cause can be a democracy grounded in education.

In this context, it is useful to refer to the works of Strauss (2012), who, unlike Arendt, believed that education is a political question *par excellence*, because it provides an opportunity to resolve the issue of “how to reconcile order which is not oppression with freedom which is not licence” (p. 25). The solution to this problem becomes possible if modern society is understood as a community of

educated people. Under this understanding, the relationship between politics and education is revealed from a different perspective: education does not comply with a predetermined political order but creates the conditions for the possibility of politics as such.

The situation is likewise complicated by the fact that in today’s world power unfolds as an invisible, anonymous process. After all, compulsion never leads directly to persuasion (Sahuichenko, et al., 2020). The result of effective symbolic violence is the naturalization of power, the transformation of the subjects of social relations into its personification. The implicit, non-reflexive domination of the abstract-universal in the pedagogical process gives the educational environment bizarre forms, within which education and the production of the desired individual begin to be identified. As a result, politics, the state, and the existing social order are enabled to solve their specific problems at the expense of education, ultimately at the cost of the development of the human person. Education, according to Mukhaev et al., (2022), should not serve goals defined outside of its primary purpose: the growth of human capabilities. The goal of education should be to create the possibility of continued human growth, which is made possible based on equality, outside of which learning and education come to be subordinated to externally imposed goals. Consequently, the essence of education as a common cause is realized under conditions of equality. Not only is politics made possible through education, but the latter is carried out in accordance with the logic of human development, that is, it defines the purpose of its existence in itself, can be an emergent process only in the mode of politics, in the mode of an open possibility to start the dispute over the common good over and over again.

CONCLUSIONS

Education is a common cause in which the personal development of all its subjects, teachers and students alike, takes place. Education is a common cause because the formation of the individual is a social event, drawing on which the individual can distinguish themselves from the collective and settle into something special, the mode of existence of which is the universal.

Politics is also an activist contestation of participation in the universal. In this context, politics is a public space for the revelation of the human essence, which is accomplished through engagement in a common cause, aligning oneself with its universal meanings.

Consequently, both politics and education constitute a specific space in which politics allows the renewal of the existing sociopolitical mode of existence, and education

allows the construction of heterotopias of personal development of all subjects of the educational process. Education needs politics to be an emergent system and to be defined by the immanent needs of human and cultural development. Politics, to be an open dispute about the public good, needs education as a model of another space of human manifestation in interpersonal interaction.

In politics and education, the individual is presented not simply as the private in opposition to the common, but as one that embraces the common – as an individualized generality. It is at this point that politics and education converge as close as can be since they are practices of creating the common, of active participation in it.

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