

Comment by Monica Osorio Simons

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(English, Español)

SEEKING TRANSFORMATION FROM OTHER COMPETENCES

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There is no denying that we are on the edge of a civilizing age, with an absolutely unpredictable ending, as it has already happened many other times in human history, but this condition has probably never been as global as it is now.

If this situation, in a certain way, causes us anguish, we can not fail to recognize that we are living a strategic moment in which all structures are being questioned despite the fact that the system, mainly economic, tries to maintain its rules of the game, even if it changes their names by fashionable words like "green economies".

We also know that in all fields, whether political, business, scientific, educational etc., we have always had serious and committed people or professionals, but there have also been those totally focused on personal interests, directly or indirectly damaging the vast majority of the population, then, we also know the transcendent and absolutely strategic role that is expected of lifelong education for all, from the earliest age.

As time goes by, in order to face these urgent demands, the increasing intentionality of local, regional, national and international cooperation, of joint work, of the development of the dialog in order to reach the realization of the necessary progress becomes more evident; but, on the other hand, in formal education, in a general way, with few exceptions, school curricula still continue to be imposed and copied on models that no longer respond to the current dynamics of society and a world that is changing almost every day and by virtue of virtual reality at such an amazing pace, so it is necessary to question to which extent what is taught today in schools has or will have some use in the coming years.

The colleagues who preceded me related a series of fundamental items of reflection so that we can move beyond the theorizing of points that I think are quite clear in relation to what are the possible solutions for us to advance in the quality of educational structures that can contribute to the preparation of citizens who can actually build their present and future life,

bearing in mind that this task, for a long time now, is not restricted only to the formal field of education. On the contrary, Popular Education, especially in Latin America, and in Brazil in a very special way since Paulo Freire, constitutes a vital and essential tool for the empowerment of communities, being the backbone of the perception that educators must be mediators of processes and not mere conveyors of contents.

This virtual exchange alerts us to the great complexity we are working on, involving many different aspects, such as:

- The diversity of historical, cultural, political, environmental and even religious realities that are decisive and must be taken into account in the face of the risk of universalization of concepts and strategies in an attempt to advance so that we all have the same opportunities of personal, family, community and professional fulfillment;
- The concern not only with the readiness to enter the labor market, but with other aspects inherent to the exercise of full and mainly active citizenship;
- The need to motivate people if we want to produce significant changes. We can not fail to recognize that, considering everything that is happening in the world, hope is not always the common denominator.

That is, we can affirm that, given the present condition of the planet and of humanity, it is increasingly evident that, apart from the points that were already related in previous articles, there are other concomitant and vitally necessary ingredients that we must also pay attention to regarding this construction in which so many have been working to get out of the status quo, of incontestable exclusion and socio-environmental injustice and therefore lacking of full realization, quality of life and happiness.

In a certain way, Jorge Osorio's article presents very important reflections in this sense of looking for ways that are not necessarily those offered by the school, generally hostage of the current and dominant neoliberal economic political system.

In our opinion, to talk about the need to invest in "interpersonal skills", as pointed out by Priti Sharma in his article, is a significant progress, but we also understand that for this to be viable there is a previous step that must be fulfilled. We also need to work and universalize the internal development of people beyond religious denominations, given that there is something very strong and vital that unites us ancestrally.

We need to work more intensely the sensitivity, the sense of cooperation and siblinghood, the practice of silence not as something imposed but internally desired, the sense and value of internal discipline, the ability to dream and mainly develop the sense of COMPASSION, not only as a consequence of specific actions in extreme situations but in dealing with environmental disasters, for example, and as daily and recurrent practices in all areas of life of people within the family, in working, professional and education environments, whether formal or non-formal, making people better choose what and how to do things, moving to live not only from their personal and selfish needs but from more fair and humane values which, with absolute certainty, only increasing purchasing power of the communities is not a real solution, as we were alerted by the "indiano" Economy Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen.

In fact, there are already several examples and practices around the world in this sense, but

we need to universalize them so that they are no longer isolated facts and become a common denominator for the entire world population, from the beauty and richness of their diversity.

I want to thank the effort made by the ICAE, of which I am always proud of being an active member, for having organized this new Virtual Seminar which, like the others we already participated in, always help us to work with clearer and more productive focuses.

I think I can conclude my contribution with a phrase from Walter Benjamin that says: "Not merely does each age dream the next one, but it aims, in so doing, to awaken", that is, we can not stop dreaming, much less stop working hard to accompany this phase of transition and, as midwives and male midwives, help the Planet to be born for a new time of humanization.

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