

Crisis and Development

Education is a science that is composed of many sub disciplines, i.e. pedagogy of kindergarten, pedagogy of schooling and curriculum, pedagogy of leisure time, of adults, of theatre, museum etc. These and other fields in educational research have been discovered step by step because the real purpose of pedagogy is to prepare people for life situations. In modern societies life situations are changing rapidly and getting more and more complex. In order to cope with them people need continuously new competences and it is a task of education to fit them.

One life situation that can never be avoided is the crisis. Take a natural developmental crisis like puberty or take an accidental crisis like the lost of a beloved person, in any case the person is under an unusual pressure. This life situation charges him with change. He or she has to change his life and this indicates a very specific learning process. What he or she learns in such a life situation influences the development of the personality and is possibly important for the entire life.

Pedagogy of Crisis is a new field of educational research working on the situation of human being in crises. It presents case studies, text analysis, stimulations and theoretical frames which are interesting both for scientific and everyday life. Its target is to sensitize everyone in every age of life for the meaning of critical life events and for the contribution of crises for development. Therefore *Pedagogy of Crisis* is a necessary research in the pre-field of crisis psychology and crisis therapy. Pedagogical research on life crises offers a useful concept to a successful life.

Volume one of *Pedagogy of Crisis* (Adl-Amini 2002) emphasizes the context of “change and meaning”; volume two works out the context of “crisis and development”. The message of the first volume is: *Every change in life has a meaning that the person himself has to search for*. The message of the second volume is: *A Crisis is never a condition; it is always a transition stage in life leading us to development*. I first published this idea in a monograph (Adl-Amini 1992) and some articles that contain the basic conception and scientific foundation. In the two volumes of *Pedagogy of Crisis*, this conception and foundation has been developed more and more specific.

Pedagogy of Crisis is based on two magnificent theories, namely on the philosophy of consciousness by *Hegel* (1770-1831) and on the existential analysis and logo therapy by Viktor E. *Frankl* (1905-1997). The Hegelian philosophy of indefinite development of human consciousness can easily be understood if we would try to give a description or definition of a bud. Building any sentence with “*A bud is...*” would make a condition of the bud and the bud would be stopped or frozen in its development. Every bud is *growing up*, is *coming up*. Every bud has the tendency to leave its condition and grow up to a *flower*. No growing process can yet be described or defined by saying “*it is...*” We therefore have to look for another way to determine a bud. Let’s see how Hegel manages this problem in his famous “Phenomenology of Spirit”

“The bud disappears in the growing to a bloom, and one could even say that the bloom disproves the bud. We can further say the fruit declares the being of a bloom wrong.” (KP 2, S. 11)

Hegel is saying that the being of a bloom can not be real because a bloom is not a condition. Therefore the verb “is” is wrong. It can not describe the process of *growing to a fruit*.

May be the point will be more specific and clear when I give another example. A picture of the Niagara Falls can never describe the natural process of enduring water falls. It can only represent a moment in this process, just a state of flux. If you want to have a real impression of the Niagara Falls you have to see a movie or film. A Photo doesn’t do this. A Photo can only hold a frozen moment of a process. By reducing a process to a moment the lively essential gets lost. No Life, therefore, “is” ever. It always is growing and getting. The process of life is a process of development and development can not be described by the verb “is”.

Lets take this philosophical sight to our every day life. There is a lady who introduces herself to us by saying:

“Hello, I am Christine Heitmann. And who are you?”

There seems to be nothing unusual or wrong in this sentence. Nevertheless we have here a magnificent mistake. Because in the few seconds while speaking Mrs. Heitmann has been changed – unobtrusive but indisputable. Her body has produced hundreds of new cells, other hundred have died in the same time. Her psyche is perhaps strain because of excitement or joy.

Her blood pressure has probably gone up. A number of biochemical processes have been occurred in her body. So we can not say that Mrs. Heitmann has been remained exactly the same person in the same condition she was some minutes or seconds before.

One may feel or take such changes quibbling and insignificant. Nevertheless, there are existent and their sum is indeed our life process. Now, if Mrs. Heitmann could look at herself with Hegel's eyes she would rather choose other words, i.e.:

“Hello, I am growing up or going to be Christine Heitmann. And who are you going to be?”

No one speaks so. But remember, we say every day: the sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening. Every body knows that the sun neither rises nor sets. The sun doesn't move at all. Our daily language covers up often the truth. In this point philosophers are sophisticated and unmask us. Now I am going to see how a man or woman speaks while he or she is in a deep crisis. Usually one uses to choose expressions like:

“I am in a deep crisis. It is the hell. My life has no meaning any more...”

Referring to the philosophy of Hegel and to the idea of continuous development we logically have to change these expressions to:

“I am developing my mental life in a crisis. On my way to paradise I have to pass through the hell. My mind is concentrated on meaning in life...”

The person who speaks in this manner has no more crisis. He or she is rather on the way of development. There is a fundamental difference if somebody describes his or her life situation with this or that words. The difference is a question of consciousness, of being aware of what is happening. It is a question of self competence. It is a difference if you are managing your life in the hell or if you navigate it out of the hell.