

Editorial

Theology and Philosophy of Education or on the Meaning of Academy

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*...I see myself
standing upon your shoulders touching
a grey, broken sky—
but you, weighted down with me,
yet gripping my ankles,—move
laboriously on,
where it is level and undisturbed by colors.*

William Carlos Williams: A Portrait in Greys

Fulfillment of an existence as *homo educandus* (Palouš, Svobodová 2020, 8, 162) was the task of life seen by Radim Palouš (1924–2015), the founder of the philosophy of education as a doctoral study programme at Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic), Faculty of Education. Despite this programme being today named philosophy as is usual at several places in these days, we can see a specific school of philosophy of education that stems from these roots which were planted by Radim Palouš and Jaroslava Pešková (1929–2006), philosopher and one of the first women with the title of professor from the Czech nation. Both were known as phenomenologists, students of Jan Patočka (1907–1977), and researchers in comeniology – from Jan Amos Komenský or Comenius (1592–1670). This school, founded in Prague, has its followers in more than seven universities in Central Europe today. A seal of this school is the meaning of education as the spine of life, as it was for both Comenius and Patočka (Komenský 1987, 35, 156; Komenský 2008, 43; Patočka 1998, 357; Patočka 2003, 488; Patočka 2018, 365; Patočka 2022, 44–45). However, education does not mean only a preparation for employment or a career. Education should be the way how we can prepare to live as humans, humanly (Patočka 1975, 115; Patočka 1996, 117): “Education is where the free, autonomous ideal lives and breathes” (Patočka 2022, 44).

Although we are still living in all levels of schools more from the tradition founded by René Descartes (1596–1650), we are able to see also the negative consequences of this approach. Almost four centuries after the beginning of a systematic approach to the world and man as

objects, explained by Descartes (1637, 1642) in the subject-object method that should give us *clare et distincte percipere* (1642, III, 1) or *connaissance claire et assurée de tout* (1641, I), or understanding clear and the most certain (*claire et plus certaine* – 1637, II) or very clear and distinct (*fort clairement et fort distinctement* – 1637, 4), we can see the change of our world and relationships in a society as consequences of this approach. Comenius saw danger in the method of Descartes in his time (Komenský 1989, 156; cf. Komenský 1989, 92; Patočka 2003, 358, 361; cf. Patočka 2016, 23; cf. Čapková in Komenský 1992b, 40). Therefore, Comenius wanted to explain what is necessary to do for improving our humanity (Komenský 1974, 286; Komenský 1992a, 19; Komenský 1992b, 52).

At the beginning of the 20th century, many writers, artists, philosophers, scientists saw that science alone is not enough for preparing a better future for human beings and the world. At the beginning of the 21st century, all people could see that we are challenged by more than one crisis and that we are in these crises globally. However, do we have something new in education after the children-centred school programmes started at the beginning of 20th century? Practising student-centred learning today, are we doing enough to meet the challenges of today?

Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), a philosopher and mathematician who recognised the value of phenomena and our task to save phenomena as most important since the beginning of philosophy, was (therefore obviously) not the first phenomenologist, but he is known as the founder of the school of phenomenology. In his book *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, he mentioned the problem with “fact-minded sciences” which “make merely fact-minded people” (Husserl 1970, 6). Husserl described the situation of European sciences as being blinded by a vision of prosperity produced by the positive sciences (Husserl 1970, 6). Jan Patočka, the only Czech from Husserl’s students (Patočka 1976, 631), tried to show the way from (not only European) crises in the task of the true change, *metanoia*, conversion (Patočka 1975, 129; 1996, 134), that could give us a new direction for “a life in truth” (Patočka 1975, 87; 1996, 82; cf. Pieper 1989, 64; cf. 3J 1:3–4). This change should be the change of the whole approach to the world and life. Only those who are able to change in this way, who are “capable of conversion, of *metanoia*”, are spiritual people, as Patočka put it (Patočka 1975, 129; 1996, 134–135).

Many of the students of Jan Patočka started to educate the new generation about the role of the true change. On 6th November 2024, some previous students of Jan Patočka spoke at the conference *Philosophy and University*, which was organized as a commemoration of 100 years from the birth of Radim Palouš. Patočka, Palouš and Pešková were mentioned in many papers presented on this occasion as thinkers who reminded us of and promoted philosophical ways in education that are necessary for having universities as places, where academy still has the meaning given in Athens in antiquity (cf. Pieper 1954, 102; Pieper 2015, 7).

Theology and Philosophy of Education is a journal that reminds us of these roots where philosophy is philosophy of education and theology is theology of education; it means both philosophy and theology realize, in a way, care of the soul (or care for the soul, ἐπιμέλεια τῆς ψυχῆς, *epimeleia tēs psuchēs* – Patočka 1975, 105; 1996, 104), as education.

Tim Quinlan with his article *Dedication to the Truth: Newman's Philosophy and Theology of Education* opens this second issue of the third volume of TAPE. John Henry Newman and especially his notion about our compound nature requires our reflection if we want to share inspirational ways for education. Paul Lentern describes the method of the Jocist movements – ‘See, Judge and Act’ – in his article *Reflection, Action and the Double Transformation* and its relevance for today. Lucia Bieliková analyses the didactic potential of the work of C. S. Lewis in her article *The Theme of Love in Religious Education Built on the Story of Psyche and Orual*. Pedagogical implications of the movement of existence (where care for the soul is realised, as Jan Patočka described) are shown by Lina Marcela Gil-Congote in her article *Individuation and Movements of Existence in Jan Patočka: Horizon of Education*. Dominika Jagielska analyses *The Concept of Education of Paweł Smolikowski*. Jana Kucharová offers a brief overview of *The Role of Teacher and Pupil in the Context of Autonomous Learning*.

Dear readers, see, judge and act, the second issue of the third volume is here for you,

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