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A DISCOURSE ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: GLOBAL THEMES, POSTMODERN PERSPECTIVES

ABSTRACT. Epistemology mirrors reality but not perfectly, and in the process molds reality but not exactly as intended or anticipated. Horizontal interconnections also exist between and among epistemology, ideology, theory and praxiology. However, these relations are neither deductive nor deterministic in nature but are merely resonant, and then unclear, ambiguous and confounded. In this paper, the point is made that we need a grand reflection on both our paradigms of reality and our predicaments of life as lived, to deal with the discontent of humanity at this moment of the history of our civilization, and to engage in praxis "to act on our world and to reconstruct it" to make it moral, just and more humane. To undertake such a grand reflection, we need a practical philosophy of knowledge – that is, a practical epistemology – to bridge across the multiple epistemological approaches now crowding our discussions. An epistemic triangle formed by systems thinking, constructivist thinking, and dialectical thinking is offered to serve as the starting point of crystallization for building a common ground for epistemologies. It is shown how such an epistemological diagram could be first used to develop a minimum ideological consensus and then to bring orderliness to the chaos of contemporary themes of our civilization and issues of education and culture within and across nations. Finally, an agenda for educational leadership for educational practice is offered to fit the needs of the global community of nations as we enter the twenty-first century.

KEY WORDS: educational systems, epistemic triangle, globalization, ideology-epistemology filters, practical epistemology, systemic approaches, U.N. social summits, UNESCO conferences

INTRODUCTION

Epistemology is both mirror and mold of reality. A good epistemological mirror would first help us find reality and then make and remake it (Honderich, 1995, pp. 241–248).

On the eve of the twenty-first century, both the mirror and the mirrored seem to be in less than a perfect state. The cold war has ended, but real peace has not broken out. There is talk about the end of history, but not about the commencement of a great human future based on moral and material justice. The global integration of the national economies of the world has become a near-reality, but a world moral order fit for our times has not emerged. Economic globalization has indeed produced unprece-

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dented wealth in the countries of the North, but material abundance has not been justly distributed among nations or within societies, and the gap between the rich and the poor is indeed becoming increasingly wider. The rich countries of the North, are experiencing levels of prosperity never seen before in human history, and yet they have their children in poverty, and their homeless, their sick and hungry, with the safety nets of state welfare pulled from under them all (Greider, 1997).

The experiment with planned development of less developed countries during the last half century has proved to be a failure. Nation states in the developing areas of the world, weakened by international debts and burdened with structural adjustment policies imposed by international donors and development banks, have lost their sovereignty to the multinational corporations. For lack of resources their institutions – economic, social, political, cultural and educational – have be decimated. Unable to provide basic goods such as education and health to citizens, these weakened states have lost legitimization of their own people. An estimated 1.3 billion people live on income of less than $1 (1987 PPPS) a day (p. 28). Some forty millions are ravaged by deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Without work, without a safety net provided by the state, or communities, people experience suffering that is impossible to describe. The planet Earth itself is under threat of death through over-exploitation by producers of goods and populations of consumers (UNDP, 1999).

PIECING A MIRROR TOGETHER: SEARCH FOR A PRACTICAL EPISTEMOLOGICAL STANCE

The epistemological mirrors or the paradigms to view reality available today are many. Of course, there is more to epistemological paradigms than the goodness of their cognitive stances and the persuasiveness of their justifications. Paradigms indeed become part of the politics of intellectual and cultural establishments, and compete for defining knowledge, choosing means and ends of educating people, and determining ways of building institutions, and reforming societies. In the hands of the powerful, paradigms continue shifting and shaping (Kuhn, 1962).

The logical-positivist paradigm with its assumptions of one reality out there, and its trust in the verifiability by the experimental method to test research hypotheses, had been the dominant paradigm both in sciences and social sciences for most of the twentieth century (Guba, 1990).

By 1960s, logical-positivism (and its corollary structural-functionalism) was being successfully challenged by constructivists who believed that reality was individually and socially constructed – though, granting we

are all born in a world already half-constructed. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Guba, 1990; Sarbin and Kitsue, 1994).

The new epistemological discourse quickly came to have an interpretive color covering naturalism, phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, limits of rationality debate, hermeneutics (as the theory of interpretation of meanings), deconstruction (a kind of hermeneutics seeking to break open to reveal presuppositions and privileged positions and embedded hierarchies in social texts), critical theory and postmodernism (Schwandt, 1997).

The two great philosophic thunderclaps of the last half of the twentieth century have been: critical theory and postmodernity.

Critical Theory

Critical theory had its roots in the neo-Marxist, critical sociology of the Frankfurt School. It has been called the most complex and influential philosophic movement of this century that draws from dialectical philosophy, political economy, history, social sciences and psychoanalysis, and has had multiple intersections with poststructuralism, postmodernism and feminism (Ingram, 1990).

At the core, critical theory is a theory of participative democracy rooted in the analyses of social reproduction and resistance. Habermas (1971) has been the most well-known proponent of critical theory who has been passionately critical of modern-day structures of governance that have made the individual ever more powerless. He has talked of three human spheres of specific human interests – technical, practical and emancipatory – and regrets that the communicative-normative rationality of discourse and debate has been surrendered to the purposive-rational rationality thereby reducing the sphere of emancipatory concerns of self-determination, and exercise of power for practice of freedom. Communicative action (resonating to the values of dialogic action) is central to the strategy of critical theory to bring about normative and, subsequently, political and cultural change.

The Feminist Critique

The feminist critique has drawn heavily from critical theory and shares with it the emphatic themes of empowerment and emancipation. The feminists ask that we shift from our patriarchical social standpoints from which we have constructed male-female dualism; and that we should deconstruct the systems and structures of epistemology and ideology which have equated males with objectivity, reason and power, and

females with subjectivity, emotion and subordination (Alcoff and Potter, 1993).

Postmodernism

Since the 1970s, postmodernism "has determined the standards of debate, defined the manner of 'discourse,' and set parameters on cultural, political and intellectual criticism" (David Harvey, 1990, p. viii). Postmodernism, as David Harvey (1990) explains, is a cultural condition arising from an unprecedented "time-space compression" in human experience. Postmodernism is about "cultural production" and about "ideological transformation."

Modernism and postmodernism are inevitably discussed in a point-counterpoint relationship. However, both modernism and postmodernism have been difficult to define in the first place. To complicate matters, modernism and postmodernism have been found to be *not* two different, discrete, and mutually exclusive phenomena. Indeed, modernism is known to have anticipated and included many characteristics associated today with postmodernism. On the other hand, a lot of what is seen as postmodernist has been found to be continuous with assumptions and processes of modernism.

In elaborating the schematic differences between modernism and postmodernism, David Harvey (1990) uses this language: Modernism is positivistic, technocratic, rationalistic and marked by austere autonomy. Modernism assumes simple (or complex) causality in all processes and phenomena, believes in the potency of manipulative reason, and has a fetish for totality. Modernism conceptualizes progress as linear, and seeks standardization of knowledge and production. It searches for absolute truths and engages in rational planning of ideal social orders. It is thereby full of monotony and pretensions of universals. It believes in universal human history, and is full of metaphysical solemnities and grandiose metaphysical claims.

Postmodernism, on the other hand, in David Harvey (1990)'s language, is: playful, self-ironizing and even schizoid, having an irreverent pastiche, and a brutal aesthetics of squalor and shock caught in its collages and montages of contrived depthlessness. Postmodernism, he continues, is marked by pragmatism, indeterminacy, heterogeneity, pluralism, difference, fragmentation, discontinuity, and intense distrust of totalizing meta discourses. It does not look for causalities but for polymorphous correlations. It accommodates tacit knowledge and intuitive experience. It is for self-actualization and for the validity and dignity of others within a new structure of feelings.

Postmodernism is thus part epistemology, part aesthetics, part politics and part utopian imagination. Postmodernism resonates with discourse theory, critical theory, dialectical thinking, constructivist thinking, theory of democracy, individual empowerment, and much else. Postmodernism while it accepts the existence of the domain of intersubjectivity, asserts that the individual subject plays an active role in the construction of its own subjectivity. At an other level, postmodernism has social and economic basis, and is indeed a link between economic and sociocultural realities, enabling postmodern cultural forms and what have been called more flexible modes of capital accumulation (David Harvey, 1990, p. vii). One of its most important tenets, which it shares with critical theory and feminist critique, relates to the power of the dominant discourse to be able to enact hegemony by eliciting acquiescence from the surrounding culture, and by silencing all other discourses. The four essential characteristics of postmodernism are: skepticism of the grand narratives, rejection of the idea of a unified human subject, problematization of the idea of representation, and the celebration of difference (Lyotard, 1984; Smart, 1993).

Problems of Postmodernism

Postmodernism taken to the extreme, can itself become totalizing. It can become nihilistic, can debunk history, abolish all centers, all hierarchies, and negate all collective experience and all standards, thereby posing serious ethical dilemmas. It may ghettoize the marginalized and may make the disadvantaged distant. However, by accepting the reality that we come into a world already half constructed and then joining this idea with the ideology of emancipation, postmodernism could help us peel off the lies and mystifications of much that masquerades as truth and encourage the raising of voices against totalitarianism and globalization.

Toward Practical Epistemology: A Discourse on the Epistemic Triangle

The epistemological approaches of constructivism, critical theory, feminist critique, and postmodernity, I had found to be both inspiring and illuminating but not easily amenable to practical use in understanding, planning, and designing purposive actions.

The germ of a practical epistemology was found elsewhere, in systems thinking (Bertalanffy, 1968; Checkland, 1981; Bahg, 1990) – an epistemology that also rejected linearity and reductionism of logical positivism but had not been given much attention within the discourse of the paradigm debate and paradigm dialog (Guba, 1990). I discovered that systems thinking provided applicable ideas regarding relationships between parts and wholes; interdependence among systems, subsystems and suprasys-

tems; configurations of systems in overlaps, intersections and hierarchies; and emergence of qualities when parts came together to make wholes which were then not reducible to earlier states.

In the process of making practical uses of systems thinking (Bhola, 1997; Hilgendorf, Locnikar and Nichols, 1996) it had been possible to enhance the practicality of systems thinking itself. To the concept of General Systems Theory (GST) was added the concept of Unified Systems Taxonomy (UST) to fill the emptiness of structures with substances, thereby, differentiating technical systems, from socio-technical systems, conceptual systems, and social systems, depending upon their interactivity (Bhola, 1995).

In the practical applications of systems thinking for educational practice, it was also realized that systems thinking assumes constructivist epistemology since systems are constructions and indeed the question of constructing "boundaries" of systems was central to systems thinking. It was also discovered that dialectical logic was also crucial to systems thinking since the concept of emergence could not be handled without assumptions of dialectical relations and dialectical logic. Within a philosophy of purposive action, three classical laws of dialectics as reflected in systems were found: (i) the law of interpenetrating opposites, (ii) the law of transformation of quantity to quality, and (iii) he law of negation of negation or the irreversibility of direction of history of events (Mitroff, 1981; Gould, 1984, p. 32).

The above lead to the development of the epistemic triangle formed by systems thinking, constructivist thinking and dialectical thinking (Bhola, 1996). Implicit herein is the idea that to understand, describe, or to design a purposive action, it should be located in the field formed by the epistemic triangle. All the three approaches – systems thinking, constructivist thinking and dialectical thinking – should then be used in "atonceness" – though, depending on the history, structure and content of a purposive action, one or the other of the three angles of the triangle would serve as the arrowhead (Bhola, 1998).

It needs to be stated that the epistemic triangle does not exclude positivist thinking. Positivist thinking is considered to be one instance of constructivist thinking. Indeed, our reality is not all homogeneous but is a montage of multiple contexts and contents. Some of these contexts are "contexts of control" and are amenable to positivist assumptions. Other contexts are "contexts of accommodation" that make sense only by making constructivist assumptions (Cronbach, 1982).

Ideological Filters, Epistemological Overlays on the Epistemic Triangle

A recollection of the brief reviews of critical theory, feminist critique, and postmodernity should show that the epistemic triangle does not stand outside of or in opposition to these epistemologies. These epistemologies are unabashedly ideological and they are linked each with the other, *and* with the epistemic triangle, through the concepts of construction and deconstruction.

Sometimes, critical theory and postmodernism may seem to be anti-systems since global systems and structures and grand theoretical designs are suspect with postmodernists. Postmodernism is, rightly, against the "system as establishment" – the Kafkaesque bureaucratized system that oppresses. But it is against system*atics*, and not against system*ic* thinking: ideas of mutual interdependence, moving and permeable boundaries, and emergences of the unanticipated, etc. Postmodernism and dialectical thinking are also congenial with each other in that postmodernism prefers mutant over type, process over product, trace over cause, indeterminacy over determinacy, and contingency over commitment.

As the diagram on p. 188 should show the triangle can be placed within the circle of influence defined by critical theory, feminist epistemology, and postmodernity. Ultimately, all epistemologies can be dissolved into the Discourse Theory.

In presenting this diagram,[1] I draw courage and support from Tozer's (1998) remarks that philosophies of education should be "finding common ground" by "bridging across," "spanning perspectives," and drawing upon "diverse philosophic traditions . . .," p. xii.

Discourse theory has strong roots in linguistics and theory of literary text, but it is the "social text" that is the object of analysis in discourse theory. The social text is studied both for syntax and semantics, and codes and rules: looking for both the subtexts and the supratexts. In seeking to analyze structures and processes, agents and agencies, it draws from psychology, communication studies, semiotics, sociology, political economy, and philosophy. The core of its epistemology is the two-some of construction and deconstruction, and its ideologies are provided by critical theory, and postmodernity (Salkie, 1995).

But how should we as education leaders use discourse theory to develop descriptive, analytical, interventionist, or evaluative discourses for use in

[1] Didactic presentations in word and image begin to sound and look systematic, and positivist. The positivist look and feel of the diagram presented here is more apparent than real. It is systematic only in the sense that didactic arguments have to be systematic to be understood. However, we need to remember that we have made systemic, constructivist, and dialectical assumptions in the course of our presentation of the diagram.

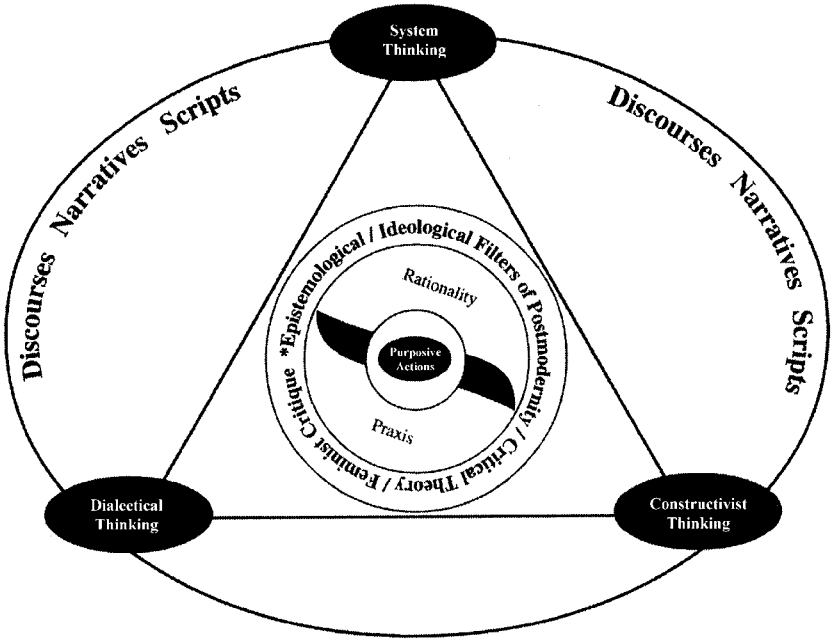

Figure 1. The epistemic triangle: toward new integrations, expanding syntheses.

the practice of education. It can be said that there are as many ways of scripting a discourse as there are to write an "essay." Which raises the next question: how to compose an essay that can pass as a discourse or as a special script of a discourse? Essays are always personal, so will be discourses. A general way of going about developing and structuring discourses can be suggested for emulation or improvement.

To begin a discourse, we need to begin with an initial description of the purposive action of interest. The "means and ends" calculus inherent in the purposive action should be identified. The analysis should then be located within the epistemic triangle. Depending on the purpose of the discourse (or a script of the discourse) which may be descriptive, planning-oriented, or evaluative; and depending on the history, politics, structure, content and ideology of the agents and agencies involved, a particular angle of the epistemic triangle should be used as an arrowhead to open the argument. Ideologies and assumptions of critical theory, feminist critique and postmodern distrust of grand narratives (and inversely their sensitivity to contexts) should be allowed to influence the composition of the discourse.

THEMES OF CIVILIZATION AND EDUCATION: GLOBALIZATION WITH A HUMAN FACE

As should have been anticipated from our description and analysis of critical theory and postmodernity, epistemologies have implications both for ideology and praxiology.

The themes relating to inventing a future for the Twenty-first Century to be presented below are indeed suffused with ideological positions that accept the inherent morality of inclusive and plural social systems, and of participative democracy and tolerance of difference. Superiority of race, chauvinism of cultures, fundamentalism of religion, and personal pride, it is being implied, may be no more than reflections of false consciousness (Gallagher, 1992, p. 21). Our identities are indeed in significant ways accidental; our religions are different paths constructed to reach the same unknown – a God above religions; and the cultures of the world having unfolded and renewed in different historical circumstances have come to be not superior or inferior but just different. However, these ideological positions are not widely shared, leading to acrimony and conflict.

From Colonization to Globalization

The theme of Globalization dominates all description, discussion and debate on the present and future condition of humanity today. The slow, steady and subordinate integration of the economies, polities and cultures of the world into one dominant Western reality can be traced back to the 1600s. Globalization as we know it today was anticipated by dependency theorists as early as thirty years ago (Frank, 1972). The dizzying acceleration of history and intensification of cultural processes that has made globalization so pervasive a phenomenon could be marked by 1989, the Fall of the Berlin Wall.

Globalization has manifested itself most dramatically as integration of world economies and in the emergence of a near-complete free market on the world scale. While Globalization has created immensity of wealth beyond belief, it has not brought about a just distribution of wealth among or within nations. The integration of politics and of culture that is following the integration of economy, and the dispersion of technologies of production, transportation and communication are creating bewilderment followed by resentment and violence as people experience the feeling of loss of space of their own on the globe. Both Popes and Presidents are warning us that the seeds of the destruction of capitalism may lie inside its own excesses. The ghost of Marx may be flitting around, laughing its macabre laughter.

Clash of Civilizations: Crisis of Institutions and Identities

Globalization has created greater disparities and communication has made those disparities much more visible. Losing economic ground and political power, even sovereignty, peoples and nations are retreating to religious fundamentalism and cultural jingoism. There is talk of impending clash of civilizations (Huntington, 1993).

Globalization as an economic force is out of control because no institutions of global governance have emerged, and even "a minimum global moral consensus" is not on the horizon. Institutions within nations are also under stress. Religions as institutionalized systems provide little by way of spiritual and moral support to the faithful and are too often used to justify bigotry and intolerance, ethnocentricism and fundamentalism in culture and politics. Institutions of governance, politics, economy, culture, and indeed of marriage and family are under tremendous pressure.

Narcism has destroyed any and all consideration for the other. Responsibility to the family and community is disappearing. Material criteria have overwhelmed the moral questions, as profits are preferred over people. Appetites are insatiable, consumption is unbounded. Limits of growth may already have been reached and the damage to planet earth may already be irreversible.

Flights of Human Idealism: Development Summits of the 1990s

The 1990s will be remembered as the decade of global summits when the world's best minds stood together as the keepers of the world's conscience and engaged in an exercise of social imagination worthy of sages. What they say has implications for the content of curriculum for all the levels of education in all the locations for education around the globe.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (also called the Earth Summit), held during June 1–12, 1992 in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil (UN, 1993a) placed the issue of sustainable development at the core of the world development agenda and asked that sustainable development should be harmonious with the protection of forests, waters, environment and biological diversity. The conference clearly underlined the link between poverty in the South with high levels of consumption in the North.

The World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14–25 June 1993 (UN, 1993b) was called to review the progress of Human Rights enshrined some 45 years ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The conference saw clear connections between and among human rights, democracy and development. Human Rights were declared to be the Common Language of Humanity, and with their universality, our tool to overcome the divide between identity and alterity (otherness). All

human rights, it was said, should be seen as universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated.

The International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994 (UN, 1995a) made clear connections among demography, environment and poverty as causes for lack of development. It was suggested that population-related policies be seen as integral parts of cultural, economic and social development. The conference asserted that "advancing gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's ability to control their own fertility, are cornerstones of population and development-related programs."

The Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action adopted at the end of *The World Summit for Social Development*, March 6–12, 1995 (UN, 1995b) was characterized by United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali as "a new social contract at the global level." The Social Summit asserted that social development cannot be achieved by relying on economic growth arising within uninhibited market forces. To ensure enabling economic environments, respect for human rights, and accountability of governments was considered a necessary set of conditions for sustainable development. Of course, all this would not be possible to achieve without the will to "attain universal and equitable access to education and primary health care" and to "formulate and strengthen time-bound national strategies for the eradication of illiteracy and universalization of basic education."

The Beijing Declaration and A Platform for Action adopted on September 15, 1995 at the end of *The Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, September 4–15, 1995, Beijing, China* (UN, 1995c) proclaimed that women rights were human rights. Advancement and empowerment of women was to be assured with full opportunities for participation in decision-making process and access to power as fundamentals for the achievement of equality, development and peace. Economic independence had to be guaranteed. The feminization of poverty had to be stemmed. Women had to have the right to control all aspects of their health, including sexual and reproductive health, and in particular, their own fertility. The provision of basic education, life-long education, literacy and training, and primary health care for girls and women was considered a necessity.

Themes of Education

The themes of the civilization on the eve of the twenty-first century that have been captured in the summits of idealism are all indeed themes of

socio-economic development. Understandably, education has come to be chosen as *the* instrument for development of nations. The reasons for the choice of education as an instrument of preference are both political and theoretical. The alternative to "change by education" is "change by structural change." The governing classes of representative democracies as well as of regimes run by revolutionaries of different ideological hues prefer the slow evolutionary organic change brought about through education rather than structural re-arrangements in which they themselves may have to lose their power, properties and privileges.

There are, of course, also paramount theoretical justifications for development by education. Development today seems impossible without "knowledge" – not only of new skills of production, but also new social, and political skills of managing, and self-governing. It should be stated that adult education – as distinguished from formal education – has a more progressive role in development since it reaches adult men and women immediately and directly, thereby accelerating and intensifying the processes of development that touch the lives of adults – bypassed by the formal system and now stumbling and staggering in their lives without knowledge that is available to the schooled. In countries with high illiteracy, adult literacy must be central to processes of adult education because illiteracy and thereby the inability to deal with the world of knowledge in print is clearly a limit, not removed by media as was once supposed.

Knowledge today is the life-blood of vibrant societies. Knowledge – scientific, technological, and managerial – has made possible discovery and innovation, and the manifold increases in levels of productivity. The inequalities and disparities in the distribution of knowledge across the globe parallel the distribution of wealth and poverty, power and powerless across classes within societies and between countries. Modern knowledge needed to initiate and sustain development processes is either not available or not accessible to poor nations. Knowledge now being a commodity has to be bought at a high price.

The relationship between knowledge and education is obvious. It is in institutions of higher education that modern knowledge is produced and old knowledge is put to test. It is through the institutions of primary and secondary education that knowledge is disseminated among the people as part of the social reproduction of labor needed by the society. Sadly, institutions of education in developing countries of the world are progressively becoming knowledge-poor. Universities lack faculties, libraries and laboratories, There are rich schools for the advantaged few and poor schools for multitudes of the underprivileged. The idea of public education – the grand plan for the democratization of the knowledge in societies –

that took more than a century to develop and take hold, is under threat of privatization.

From an international perspective, the themes of education discussed in international fora during the 1990s are worth our attention:

World Conference on Education for All

The World Conference on Education for All, sponsored by an Alliance of UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank (and supported by several other multilateral and bilateral agencies) was held in Jomtien, Thailand during March 5–9, 1990 (UNESCO, 1990). The *World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs* adopted in Jomtien proclaimed to the world that: "Every person – child, youth and adult – shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning."

Both the Declaration as proclaimed and the accompanying Frame of Action promised balanced development in the education of (i) children, (ii) youth and (iii) adults. The educational objectives did include adult literacy, numeracy, and inculcation of attitudes and values. Educational objectives included more than training in skills and economic productivity, and did indeed include concerns for individual actualization, family life and development of community in the twin perspectives of lifelong learning and sustainable development.

Education for All even in its conceptualization had been in fact "*Basic* Education for All." It later came to be misunderstood as "*Schooling* for All." The equating of adult basic education with the professionalization of labor was reinforced by the overall world trend of globalization. With the new international division of labor a lot of semi-skilled work moved to countries with low labor costs where educational needs were then defined as adult basic education with training.

The Delors Commission Report

The Report of the Second Education Commission (Delors et al., 1996) declared Globalization to be the transcendental phenomenon of our times. To create a system of education worthy of our times, the Delors Commission Report constructed four philosophic pillars on which the proposed

structures of education must squarely rest: (i) Learning to know, that is, acquiring "sufficiently broad general education with the possibility of in-depth work on a selected number of subjects;" (ii) Learning to do, that is, "becoming involved in work experience schemes or social work;" (iii) Learning to live together, "by developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values;" and (iv) Learning to be well-situated in all natural, social, political, and cultural realities (pp. 23–24).

While the report was meant to be a report of education to the whole world, on closer examination, it becomes clear that its preoccupation seemed to be with the formal economies under Western-style free market capitalism, and its conception of education included formal education and training, thereby excluding adult education for life and livelihood in the informal economies of the developing world where almost a billion live in poverty. The objective of education, according to the Commission, seems to be: to learn to cope with all the cultural, social, technological and educational demands of globalization, not to reinvent Globalization.

The Delors Commission adopts the vision of basic education, as proclaimed at the World Conference on Education for All held at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, and declares it to be central to education systems of all the nations of the world in the Twenty-First Century, calling it a "passport to life." The Commission then calls secondary education "crossroads to life" and suggests that it be given a pivotal role in providing multiple pathways to schooling for the young. Higher Education itself is sought to be democratized and the University is made a place of culture and learning open to all. The burden of learning throughout life is meant to be carried by higher education. The special needs of adult education and adult literacy in developing parts of the world are neglected by the Commission. One wonders how the *second socialization of the world's adults* will be undertaken to bring about a future world of human rights, political freedom, economic fairness and new social contracts if learning throughout life is restricted to the university campus?

Individual chapters contributed by Commissioners discuss issues such as: education of the gifted and the talented, and how equity and excellence could be combined to deliver such education; upgrading school education by upgrading quality of teachers, curricula and school management; the socializing role of the school to help learners withstand the economic logic of today's education and work for moral revival and thereby rebuild human communities; redefining both education and development in contextual terms to save development in the developing world from structural adjustment; and the need of an education for cohesion and solidarity and the

necessity of offering everyone an opportunity of devoting more time to learning.

Other ideas from the Commissioners underscore: the need for understanding the model of limits of material consumption, teaching tolerance, and combining education and work, and linking planning at global, national and local levels for sustainable human development; the need for the state to accept its responsibility for public education that empowers and provides social healing; the need for wisdom and compassion in the new global society, encompassing the literacy needs of the illiterates and the education of *all* the leaders – religious, political, economic, cultural and educational; the need to let go of the idea that a state has to be mono-ethnic and to incorporate the idea that an education for a multicultural world can address simultaneously the requirements of national and global integrations; the need of education for harmony, closeness to nature and neighbor, and a balance of the material and moral; and, finally, the idea that education and culture must be harnessed together for both economic and human development, getting the best out of the East and West, the North and South for a global culture of tolerance and caring.

The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education

While, the Delors Report is surely a disappointment for adult education professionals around the world, adult educators have had the good fortune of an appointment with destiny at the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, held in Hamburg Germany during July 14–18, 1997. In its *Agenda for the Future of Adult Learning* the Conference committed itself to "ensuring the universal right to literacy and basic education" for all including adults *and* children. Since in most developing countries adult literacy has to be the portal to most, if not all, adult education, the Agenda of Action adopted at the Conference asked that national efforts in behalf of adult literacy be advanced: "By mobilizing sufficient financial and human resources through a strong financial commitment to the advancement of literacy by intergovernmental organizations, bilateral agencies, and national, regional and local government, as well as partnerships involving formal and non-formal education, volunteers, non-governmental organizations and the private sector."

The *Declaration of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education* added: "Literacy, conceived broadly as the basic knowledge and skills needed by all in a rapidly changing world, is a fundamental human right. In every society, literacy is a necessary skill in itself and one of the foundations of other life skills. There are millions, the majority of whom are women, who lack opportunities to learn or who have insufficient skills

to be able to assert this right. The challenge is to enable them to do so. This will often imply the creation of preconditions for learning through awareness-raising and empowerment. Literacy is also a catalyst for participation in social, cultural, political and economic activities, and for learning throughout life. We therefore commit ourselves to ensuring opportunities for all to acquire and maintain literacy skills, and to create in all Member States, a literate environment to support the oral culture. The provision of learning opportunities for all, including the unreached and the excluded, is the most urgent concern. This is the advice, that adult education and adult literacy policy makers, planners and providers need to head (UNESCO, 1997).

World Conference on Higher Education

The theme of the World Conference on Higher Education held in Paris during 1998 was set by the French Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin in his plenary address when he said: "If higher education must adapt to the market, I reject the mercantile vision by which it could be determined by the marketplace ... University must first dispense knowledge and qualifications, but it must also be a place of training for democracy, of citizenship, and individual fulfillment (Newsletter, 1999)."

Priority areas identified by the World Conference on Higher Education were ensuring equal access to all on basis of merit, relationship of higher education with work, higher education and sustainable development, its contributions to national and regional development through endogenous capacity building, higher education that is student-oriented, virtual higher education, research and qualitative evaluation of the University's own mission and achievements, contributions to other sectors of education, eliminate exclusion and gender stereotyping in higher education, service to the society, mobilizing the power of culture and promoting democracy and a culture of peace, autonomy, social responsibility and academic freedom of higher education faculties, its role in lifelong education, and sources of funding for future expansion. There were also discussion of the need for taking concrete steps to reduce the widening gap between industrially developed and developing countries, particularly the least developed countries with regard to higher education and research. Attention was drawn to possibilities of international networking and advisability of changing brain drain into brain gain through training program located in developing countries and international academic mobility (UNESCO, 1998).

CHALLENGES OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: RESONANCES BETWEEN EPISTEMOLOGY AND IDEOLOGY, AND POLICY AND PRAXIS

The epistemology-ideology matrix developed in the earlier part of the paper should have enabled us to make better sense of the themes of civilization and issues, and problems of education and society that crowd our existential world, and that fragment our consciousness and benumb our conscience. The same matrix of epistemology-ideology should now help us develop a sense of the challenges that face the educational leadership at levels both national and international:

A New Moral Order for All Humanity

First and foremost is the challenge of social imagination that will help us invent a new moral order for all humanity. That in turn will demand a minimum moral consensus and perhaps a belief in a God above all religions. The globe that has shrunk should be a globe that is shared. All the people on the globe must accept that all the people without exception must have their own cultural and physical space on this Spaceship Earth where all humanity can live in true interdependence and multi-ethnic, multi-cultural pluralism. The unprecedented wealth produced through the exploitation of the resources of the globe must be fairly shared among all the people living on the globe.

Educational policymaking on global level by institutions such as UNESCO, UNDP, and others must go beyond mere "dialog and discussion" of the problems of educational systems abroad; and should also concern itself with the task to raise and deploy resources to save the fast degrading educational systems around the world. Indigenous knowledge and experience must be accumulated and appropriately incorporated in the modern knowledge systems.

Perspectives and Purposes of Education Policies

Policymaking today has become both global and local at the same time. National policies must take in view global realities as well as needs of locations within nations. Educational policies should not only train to compete in the global market. People must be trained also for the informal economy and intermediate technology for them to be able to work productively in the local communities and informal economies.

Public school systems of nations built during the last century should not be allowed to be decimated through privatization, but should be protected to be able to continue their historic role of democratization of education and equality in societies. The division of labor between the state on the

one hand and the private and nongovernmental sectors on the other hand should be carefully managed.

Education policies must deliver both school education and out-of-school education for those who missed the chance to go to school and for those who would want to learn new development skills as part of a continuing education process during their life spans. There should be a balance in regard to allocations to higher education versus education of adults and universal elementary education to ensure that the democratizing role of adult and elementary education are not sacrificed for prestige of training higher level manpower that the nation may not ultimately be able to use and may simply export.

Educational policies should make systematic use of affirmative action policies, should accommodate people with disabilities and provide opportunities to groups so far excluded such as: women and girls, and others bypassed for reasons of ethnicity, religion, and social class.

Curriculum, Content and Process

There will always be pressure on schools to perform the task of social reproduction of labor for the society. But schooling must not stop there. Education must transmit culture and tradition that is renewed in the very process of transmission and reception. Knowledge, that is, must not be merely received but should be individually constructed in transactions between teachers and learners. Learners must become aware of their selves and identities. The young learners should be made aware of the fact that a very big part of our selves is accidental depending on the accidents of our birth – in terms of place, culture, religion, and class of our parents. Such understanding of the processes of formation of human identities should create awareness and tolerance among the educated.

Pedagogy and Process

The aim of the educator should not be to establish and impose procedures and routines, but to create "conditions for learning." The pedagogic process should be in the spirit of liberational pedagogy, using learning as conscientization. Individual learning would thus be seen as individual construction of knowledge – with the realization that while knowledge is individually constructed and owned, there is yet a collective construction of knowledge to which a whole culture contributes and in which children are born and grow up during their formative years. Media and materials of instruction such as telecommunication and the Internet should not be employed so as to exacerbate existing disadvantage.

Assessment, Program Evaluation, Research Methodology

Learner assessment will have to include some self-evaluation. Achievement testing must resist the convenience of multiple choice tests that are easy to score, rank and correlate, but should depend more and more on portfolios developed by students with or without teacher guidance.

Program evaluations must be constructivists, developing evaluative accounts that use both quantitative and qualitative methods. Research should also use eclectic methods: enabling the researcher to make warranted assertions using a variety of methods singly or in combination to be able to look for strongest warrants to make assertions with the most "truth" content.

Training of Teachers

Teacher education will have to be given the highest consideration and teachers given the best possible set of incentives and rewards for them to stay and grow within the profession. Teacher training will have to be considered as the task for creating, not drill masters best able to put up with routines and boredom, but as the challenge of socializing teachers as members of an intelligentsia. They should be truly educated people capable of both reflexivity and reflection.

Given the will, the above agenda will be attainable in practice.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion we must face the question of the audience for this discourse. Will our voice reach those for whom it is intended? It will not on its own. Therefore, it is important that educators who do happen to join the present discourse to continue the process of reflection and action. It is these leaders, who as an important act of leadership on their part, must develop adaptations of this discourse suited to the educational leadership at the international level and national level, to educators in the academia and in the administrative structures in states and district, and on down to principals, teachers and learners, and, of course, to community leaders and parents.

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