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## THE NECESSITY FOR UPBRINGING TO BE FREE IN THE CONTEXT OF POSTMODERNISM

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### Abstract

Analysing the educational processes one can notice many diverse approaches to the process of upbringing. It is often connected with particular pedagogical trends, a given concept of a human being or a specific understanding of basic categories devoted to a human being in the process of education. It also includes the understanding of a category which is very important in and for the upbringing process that is freedom. In the following study it has been outlined how to understand freedom in postmodernism in relation to a humanistic or personalist understanding of it.

*Keywords:* postmodernism, freedom, value, technocracy, technology

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### 1. Introduction - technocracy versus the contemporary man's freedom

An individual's integral development surpasses a mere modernisation formula, and is always connected with an integral dimension and human development. According to various definitions, technocracy is a system of governance by highly qualified experts and knowledge engineers who on the basis of their knowledge and competences are supposed to grant the progress of a society and optimal functioning of its individuals. Such technocratic progress is marked by neutral and objective criteria taken from some scientific disciplines like Economy, Marketing, Law, Medicine, or Engineering. The term 'technocracy' was created by Howard Scott who refers to the utopian concepts of Francis Bacon [1].

Technocracy assumes that man functions in a social system constantly changed by some specific political and ideological circumstances. Thus technocratic solutions are suggested as a form of overcoming certain deficits. For instance, a way to overcome a communicative deficit both between people and on international grounds, is making information technology more and more common, as it is the most urgent need in building mutual relations between people and between nations [2].

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Technocracy modifies ways of looking for solutions which are optimal for and desired by man. In a technocratic discourse which accompanies this process, technology is in a sense a measure for human activities value. Thus technology as such is not a negative manifestation of human rationality, but it is rather a rational solution to coping with reality. It is also a certain tool of human's freedom. Thanks to technology, man acquires new possibilities to realize his or her own freedom, both the authentic one and the one represented by various needs of immaturity. Alongside with technological progress, appears a whole spectrum of possibilities of using technology to overcome one's physical or work limitations, or to improve the conditions of living. On the other hand, technology also enables activities which are not a sign of freedom, but are only connected with a desire of making profit, achieving success or a mere willingness to become visible. Technology may in this way oppose free, responsible and moral human activities, e.g. in the field of Bioethics.

## **2. Upbringing as a value and educational problem**

Upbringing is the process of improving man's will and intellect, which takes into account and makes use of the features already possessed, and assigns particular activities to protect and mutually deepen people's relations. It should be a domain of Pedagogics to take care of people's wellness and being accepted. If they just care about their own comforts, they create the illusion of good as if it was based on possessing products. In postmodern concepts it manifests itself in gathering things only for oneself. What matters is only a pleasant effect, which is not always the same as good. In the face of postmodern challenges, it should be crucial for Pedagogics to support the intellect in its discovering the truth so that the will would not desire everything as good [3, 4].

Pedagogics which takes such aspects into consideration is a theory that provides rules for choosing the activities to raise the intellect to the level of wisdom, and the will to the level of righteousness, i.e. to the permanent choice of good, and sticking to it. Thus one should try to evoke in human beings' behaviours which are sensible, just, brave, calm, self-possessed, in accordance with the knowledge about rightly realized love, faith and hope.

For the intellect and will to react appropriately you should achieve in the first one the skill of love, which encompasses everything from the position of truth and good. You should also achieve in the will the skill of righteousness which chooses the truth and which will present the intellect to the will as good.

## **3. Upbringing in an axiological context**

Postmodernism, assuming the axiological relativity, does not account for the importance of applying in Pedagogics the principles of education and upbringing i.e.:

- wisdom as being guided by the truth and good,
- faith as an intellectual input into upbringing because of the truth,

- patience as an input of will into upbringing because of experiencing good,
- humility as an intellectual approval to accept the truth,
- mortification as an approval of the will to choose good and omit what is fascinating for the senses, and whose rejection causes pain [5].

In turn, a fundamental value of love is understood in postmodernism as utilitarian and it is often restricted to hedonistic aspects connected with the sphere of sex. Love is one of the most important values and it does not express itself in any particular manifestation of good [6]. Postmodernist love is an opposite to a live representation of a human existence or a way leading to the admiration of life [7]. Connected with love are faith and hope, the results of reality, truth and good. They release love and are indispensable to develop freedom. However, it seems that the postmodernist independence is not in fact any freedom at all. The condition for freedom is presence and being in a relationship.

#### **4. The necessity for upbringing to be free**

Authentic freedom linked with other values allows people to choose the good. Before taking a decision we have to intellectually grasp what is its subject matter. The key is to get to know it, because you cannot desire something that you are not aware of. Knowledge is an intellectual skill thanks to which we can understand the key issues. What the intellect recognizes is showed to the will which may accept or reject it. Accepting an idea by the will is a fascination. An efficient and independent taking decision is an act conditioned by the quality of the will [8].

It precedes the judgement of good, which consists of presenting existence to the will as good, which is motivating for acting. One may sometimes think that freedom should be known to us better than anything else. But such attempts of presenting freedom as something well known could be illusory, because it is not defined by any idea or scheme (Table 1). Pinckaers thinks that “freedom is always above the act which it caused or above a thought in which it reflected itself” [9].

**Table 1.** The link between love, faith and hope is presence, i.e. the condition for freedom

	<b>What it is built on</b>	<b>Essence</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>What it is about</b>
Faith	truth	sharing	trust	opening oneself
Hope	good	persistence	good deeds	doing good
Love	reality	fascination	Missing	acceptance

Source: own study based on [7]

Upbringing to be free at this stage generally means learning the basic rules of life under the master’s (educator’s) supervision, or, in its initial stage, under parents’ guidance. The first stage of shaping freedom is based on discipline manifested in the relation between a student and a master who teaches the rules of education, art, morality or wisdom. Discipline encompasses passing

knowledge and shaping mind and will. It touches upon children's natural inclinations, their spontaneous feeling of truth and good, their conscience. In postmodernism we encounter a theory of freedom indifferent to values where discipline manifests itself as a restrictive strange will. Upbringing then stops being a service or co-operation, and becomes a fight [10, 11].

According to postmodernists, in the initial stage of the upbringing process, discipline is often regarded as an unpleasant limitation to the freedom of action. Still, the key moment of this process after, the time of obedience, is when starting a 'debate' between a child and an educator, between a student and a master.

## **5. Upbringing based on values vs. upbringing indifferent to values**

Educators help children to understand the aim of discipline, its rights and rules. They show that discipline is not, as some of the proponents of postmodernism claim, restricting their freedom, underestimating their dignity, or enslaving, but that it helps to grow to act in a valuable way and to warn the freedom, which is still immature, against some deceptive mistakes. At the beginning freedom is externally shaped by subjection to the educators' proposals. The external aspect is experienced through imposed requirements and restrictions. It is only the law-abiding behaviour that may become integrated with children's internal sense of truth and good, which will be fundamental for building their true freedom [11-13].

In this way the law may lead to freedom which lets children listen to their internal Voice. The second stage of freedom shaping is characterized by the supremacy of personal initiative and effort, the development of interests, forming virtues and a personal disposition to act. The upbringing then becomes self-upbringing. Pleasure, the need for a prize or fear of punishment, which determine the initial stage of the upbringing process, do not matter any longer. This in turn leads to the love of Truth and man himself. As it is stated, "any person is so valuable that the only appropriate reference to them is love" [7].

Virtue is not a habit acquired by repeating certain deeds. It is a personal ability to act, a result of a sequence of valuable deeds, a possibility to grow and improve, a disposition to act characteristic for a human being. The third stage of upbringing corresponds with freedom to develop fully. It is characterised by mastering actions and creativity. The development of freedom makes people capable of undertaking various acts according to a plan and realising them in spite of obstacles and negative experiences. When people experience authentic freedom, it is possible for them to control the actions thanks to the upbringing, concentrated energy, constant effort and obedience to cognition and grace. Our integrating personality gains autonomy from the external facts. Our acts get formed and mature as representations of a still growing freedom, and bear the feature of our personality (Table 2). Alongside with the development of freedom forms the openness to the others and a true realisation of one's own desires [14].

After the first stage of upbringing to be free and the acceptance of discipline, freedom building is based on the internal aspects. In the upbringing to be free formed by value, an authority and recognizing the stages are necessary when an initiative needs to be raised. One should try to connect freedom with its nature, with an individual grace, wider social strata and a community [15].

A long-lasting process of forming freedom requires the readiness to accept the external help, to build on everything that happens externally and internally, comes from God or people, even though it might appear as obstacles or unpleasant things. The maturity of freedom develops in us energy enabling us to create. Wisdom and love inspiring our freedom push us to undertake valuable initiatives. Here our freedom has its share in God’s creative freedom, if freedom is shaped by value.

**Table 2.** Postmodernist freedom vs. freedom formed by values [9].

<b>Postmodernist freedom-indifferent to values</b>	<b>Freedom formed by values</b>
The ability to choose from the opposites (good and evil). Freedom comes exclusively from will.	The ability to act in any time according to values and perfection (choosing evil is the lack of freedom). Freedom belongs to the mind and will.
Excludes natural inclinations, submitting them to choice.	It is rooted in the natural inclinations to truth and good, to what is a value.
Doesn’t require forming and growing in stages. It is complete from the very beginning, being free or not is the same.	Given from the very beginning. Necessary to be developed by upbringing, exercising, subjecting to discipline. Its growth is important for freedom.
It is all included in every free choice. Each deed is independent, separated from others.	Deeds are linked as a whole with a vision compliant with an aim.
Doesn’t need a virtue nor purposefulness.	Virtue is a dynamic skill which constitutes freedom indispensable for development. Purposefulness is a vital element of free acting.
Law is an external constraint and freedom limitation.	Law is an external help necessary to develop freedom in the first stage of upbringing.
Focused on necessity and law, limited to fulfil strict obligations.	Attracts to truth and good, evokes the desire for happiness.

## **6. Conclusion**

Realising freedom based on values, contrary to postmodernist freedom, leads to a valuable life. It is both an aim and a condition of upbringing. Thus, the essence of upbringing and education should be looking for and finding values which are not self-subsistent, their recognition, understanding and acceptance, which in turn leads to the authentic freedom. It is not the postmodernist freedom,

indifferent to values, but freedom based on values that subjected to Truth leads a human being to an authentic freedom and to their authentic good.

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