

***Profesion and Love. Profession Revisited***

*Sabine Seichter*

*Goethe University Frankfurt a.M.*

*What is known today as "Education," started at the end of the 18th century and became the professional science for teachers and professional educators, no longer considering the family.*

*The problem of professionalization has accompanied the development of "Education" from its beginnings till nowadays.*

*This paper accepts that the claim for professionalization is necessary and legitimate. But on the other hand total professionalization considered as a technology includes the danger of overestimating objective and eliminating subjective criteria. This paper presents educational love as a valid concept in order to establish balance between objective-social and subjective-personal demands. Educational love will be interpreted as the dialectic relationship between nearness and distance, emotions and rationality, individuality and collectivity. The paper finally leads to a revised understanding of educational professionalization.*

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Going over 200 years of history we run into a strange paradox: on one hand the social demand for professional education having become increasingly necessary and on the other hand the growing danger of greater educational professionalization becoming a mere technology, conducive to forgetting the authentic task of education: the promotion of the individual scholar, or in other words, the waking of the person and the follow up of its self determination.

Going back again to our starting point we would find that, since Friedrich Schleiermacher, education has always moved in a dialectic tension between nearness and distance, emotions and rationality, individuality and collectivism. Education has always tried to avoid emphasizing only one of these dimensions, and in practice avoid the education of a unidimensional man.

Considering the concept of „love in education“, we can understand it as a fundamental educational paradigm and it seems desirable to study the history of this paradigm from its beginning in the early 18th century to its present crisis in the context of the empirical Social Sciences of Education . This would be interesting to do, but time restrictions oblige me just to make a few points.

### **1. Education as an Art**

The love paradigm in education was created when education migrated from the family to public institutions. This was promoted by the ideas of the french revolution, particularly the idea of equality, and the restructuring of the family from the extended to the nuclear family. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi was one of the first thinkers who fully understood both these realities and it was not casual that he became the „father“ of the love paradigm, precisely invented by him to counteract these tendencies. When equality is adopted mechanically, we lose the indivual child, and the teacher has to teach the entire classroom in the same way. The loss of the extended family affected education and it become more rational and lost its emotional dimensions. However, Pestalozzi presented from both natural and supernatural perspectives that the ideal educator is the mother.

To avoid mechanization and rationalization of education he hoped that future professionals would learn education from mothers. Pestalozzi never understood maternal love as a blind unidimensional emotion, rather he understood it in a reflexive dialect tension. In his eyes the upcoming rationality of professional educators seemed to be as wrong as pure maternal emotions without reflection.

During the 19th Century – the schooling century – the school as a social institution has been interiorly perfected and exteriorly extended to more people and for more time. At

the end of the 19th Century, the school as a social institution reached its climax and was highly regarded for being broad in its scope and uniform in its methods. Obviously the demand for professional teachers reached its highest point. It is interesting that at the same time that the school was highly considered as being a perfect institution. A protest movement criticized the perfect organization and uniformity of the school. These critics, based on a pseudo Rousseau approach, focused on the point that the school had forgotten the individual child. This movement took on different names in different countries such as *Reformpaedagogik* in Germany, *Activismo* in Spain and Italy, *Ecole Nouvelle* in France, and Child Centered Education or Progressive Education in the English speaking world.

This led to the controversy between teaching and development. In the face of this controversy, the so called „*Geisteswissenschaftliche Paedagogik*“ in Germany not only took up again the love paradigm in education, making explicit reference to Pestalozzi, but also to his warnings of over professionalization in education. Following Schleiermacher and Dilthey all the important authors of the *Geisteswissenschaftliche Paedagogik* (Herman Nohl, Eduard Spranger, Wilhelm Flitner, Theodor Litt, and others) revitalized the love paradigm for the same two reasons. First to avoid the danger of over-professionanlization and second to bring together nearness and distance, emotions and rationality, teaching and development, interpreting education as a creative and personal activity so as to never become a technique. They interpreted education and teaching as the meeting point or dialogue between mature and immature persons that should help the latter reach personal autonomy. This was understood as the nucleus of the love paradigm. From an epistemological point of view, pedagogical theory and educational practice then grew together, theory being reflection on educational practice. Leaving aside education as a technique they introduced the concept of semi-professionalism.

Later, in the 1970s Nina Toren conceptualized semi-professionalism identifying three dimensions. First, comparing with professions like Medicine, education is less based on theory, second educators and teachers are less capable of defining their own profession, and third teachers and educators are more personally involved with their students. Again, the love-paradigm supports this idea and is conducive to its understanding as a

committed, (Flitner called it „*reflexion engagée*“), „I – Thou“, dialogue based on personal confidence and interpersonal responsibility.

## **2. Education as a technique**

Things completely changed when in the 1960s the *Geisteswissenschaftliche Paedagogik* fell into a deep crisis affecting and eventually eliminating the love paradigm, and the technological approach became the favorite. Not because teachers no longer loved children, but due to the epistemological revolution, the love paradigm had to be put aside and full professionalization required again. The concept of education had totally changed. It was atomized and split into teaching, informing, counseling, animating, organizing and managing. The individual child was understood as a learning object, standardization took the place of individualization. The science of education was understood as „cause – effect“. One of the hardest critics of traditional education, the sociologist Niklas Luhmann, focussed on its technological deficit and the concept of love was stigmatized as late romanticism.

## **3. Professionalization revisited**

Today, four reasons account for the changing panorama. First, researchers have recognized that a system of complete educational technology is unattainable and not even desirable. Even the promoters of a perfect technological system as, for instance, Wolfgang Brezinka in Germany give up their dreams and are less optimistic. Second, the self understanding of teachers as partial technicians is always partial and undermines their self esteem. Third, most of the empirical research produces statistical data and mere abstractions which are of little help for the practical schoolwork. Fourth, the role of the teacher as the classroom manager has transformed teaching and education. They focus on optimizing knowledge, schools are organized in order to economize time – patience and leisure, once the teacher's virtues have disappeared.

Thus, schooling is modled like a business. Students are seen in the light of the Human Capital Theory to be used in the market. But the old pedagogical wisdom of Rousseau type contingency cannot be eliminated, and freedom or autonomy should not be eliminated. All this is conducive to a critical revision of the concept. And the question now again risen is to what degree can education be profesionalized. Today´s critics recommend deprofessionalization.

Some recent critics of professionalization say it has changed people for things, in the vein for marxist materialism, others criticize the modern science of education as having become a science of things. This process of educational depersonalization has led to an undestanding of individuals as particular cases of laws.

The love paradigm can now be seen as returning from back-stage.

The world famous north american philosopher, Martha C. Nussbaum fights the depersonalization tendency and is very critical of instrumentalization of children and students and the limitation of personal autonomy in the classroom. Personal relationships have become comercial.

John Haugland speaks of a new existentialism and presents an ethic focused the „other´s“ unicity, not be sacrificed to any kind of standardization or regulations. What previously was known as love in education has forcefully been turned into Nel Noddings´s concept of „Caring“ which she now presents as the basic principle of education and schooling. In this context she underlines that objective research is not useless but it does not touch the core of education which is caring. (*cura personalis*). She also states that caring is not a mere abstact theory but is directed straight to the individual and particular person.

In sum, it can be said that the love paradigm has had a changing history. Turning to Pestalozzi´s predecessor, Gianbattista Vico, at the height of European illuminism, there is little to be carried out „*more geometrico*“ in human activities such as politics and education, because human action depends on free decisions and creativity goes far beyond the arithmetic calculation of natural and social sciences. In the fields of politics and education there is, in Plato´s words, not much *episteme* and plenty of *doxa* (not logical deductions but prudence and the necessary wisdom). Another reason is that technologization and full professionalization corrode the essence of education which as a human act must be able to fail, even though it should not.

Finally we must state that this characteristic (*doxa*) reveals the essence of love in education and in life. This is precisely what makes love a long term educational paradigm.

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