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Einleitung

In der Ringvorlesung kam ein breites Themenspektrum zur Sprache: vom Überblick über den aktuellen Stand der erziehungswissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen zur Waldorfpädagogik; über Erhebungen zur Ausbildung der Waldorflehrkräfte und zu den Bildungserfahrungen der Waldorfschülerinnen und -schüler; bis hin zu einzelnen vertiefenden Schwerpunkten wie dem Epochenunterricht, dem Verhältnis der Waldorfschulen zum Zentralabitur und zur Inklusion sowie den Kenntnissen über ihre Elternschaft. Diese Reihenfolge wird in dieser Dokumentation beibehalten.

Den Anfang macht *Gert Biesta* mit grundlegenden Überlegungen zur Frage, wie schulische Erziehung nach Ausschwitz gelingen und was die Waldorfpädagogik dazu beitragen kann. Die Ich-Entwicklung der Schüler/innen steht für ihn im Zentrum. *Jost Schieren* schließt daran mit seiner Darstellung der Entwicklung der Waldorfpädagogik und der Begegnung zwischen ihr und der Erziehungswissenschaft an. Er unterbreitet Vorschläge, wie der Dialog produktiver werden kann, wobei dem Verhältnis zur Anthroposophie eine Schlüsselrolle zukommt. Nach diesen beiden mehr programmatischen Ausführungen schlägt *Dirk Randoll* eine andere Richtung ein. Ihm geht es um empirische Daten, die einen Eindruck von der real existierenden Waldorfpädagogik vermitteln. Er stellt ausgewählte Ergebnisse mehrerer Studien vor, die dazu entscheidende Einblicke liefern und an deren Erhebung er maßgeblich beteiligt war. *Heiner Ullrich* beschließt diesen Überblicksteil mit von ihm recherchierten neuen Erkenntnissen zur Beziehung zwischen der frühen Waldorfpädagogik und der theosophischen Reformpädagogik am Ende des 19. und zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts. Auch Kundige werden hier Überraschendes entdecken.

Den zweiten Themenblock eröffnet *Guido Pollak* mit einer Erörterung der Aufgaben der Lehrer/innenbildung. Er hält die Persönlichkeitsentwicklung der zukünftigen Lehrkräfte während der Ausbildung auch in Zeiten prädominierender Kompetenzdiskussionen für unabdingbar und sieht hier Stärken des waldorfpädagogischen Ansatzes. *Christian Reintjes* und *Gabriele Bellenberg* haben diesen anhand der dualen Klassenlehrer/innen-Ausbildung am Waldorf Institut Witten Annen genauer untersucht. Ihre vielseitigen Befunde liefern reichhaltige Informationen zu Merkmalen der angehenden Waldorflehrkräfte und weisen auf Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zu denen in der staatlichen Lehramtsausbildung hin. Danach geht *Walter Riethmüller* vertiefend auf den Klassenlehrer/innen-Beruf ein und beleuchtet ihn insbesondere aus der Per-

spektive des Autoritätsbegriffes, der bei Befürworter/innen wie Kritiker/innen dieses Berufsbildes gleichermaßen im Fokus steht. Durch die Auseinandersetzung mit dem aktuellen Diskurs zur Auffassung dieses Begriffes werden seine Bedeutung in der Waldorfpädagogik und mögliche zukünftige Veränderungen aufgezeigt. Und schließlich diskutiert *Wilfried Sommer* aus didaktischer Perspektive ein Alleinstellungsmerkmal der Waldorfpädagogik, das für die Klassenlehrer/innen in der Unter- und Mittelstufe wie auch für die Fachlehrer/innen in der Oberstufe von herausgehobener Relevanz ist: Den „Epochen“-Unterricht in täglich stattfindenden mehrwöchigen Unterrichtseinheiten. Dessen didaktisches Modell wird herausgearbeitet und insbesondere zu Klafki's Theorie der kategorialen Bildung in Beziehung gesetzt.

Im dritten Themenblock werden die Schüler/innen in den Mittelpunkt gerückt. *Christiane Adam und Till-Sebastian Idel* zeigen am Beispiel rekonstruktiver Fallstudien zweier sehr unterschiedlich gelagerter Schulbiografien eindrücklich, wie Schüler/innen das waldorfpädagogische Spannungsfeld zwischen Vereinnahmung und Ermöglichung erfahren und mit ihm umgehen können und welche Konsequenzen die Schulzeit für sie haben kann. *Dirk Rohde* geht anhand des hessischen Biologieabiturs der Frage nach, wie Schüler/innen die Anforderungen zentral gestellter Prüfungsaufgaben erleben und sie bearbeiten. Die Analyse von Interviews mit Abiturient/innen fördert hinsichtlich ihrer unterschiedlichen Umgangsweisen damit zahlreiche Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Gymnasiast/innen und Waldorfschüler/innen zutage. *Hanne Handwerk* schließlich legt anhand einer rekonstruktiven Längsschnitt-Fallstudie dar, wie Inklusion in der Waldorfschule ausgestaltet werden kann. Dabei werden die Rolle der Klassenlehrerin und von ihr genutzte besondere waldorfpädagogische Gegebenheiten wie der Verzicht auf Nichtversetzung und das Theaterspiel zentral, sodass die Schulbiografie des von der Autorin untersuchten Schülers sich zu einem Gelingensfall entwickelt.

Den Schlusspunkt setzt *Albrecht Hüttig*. Er ist einer der Initiator/innen der ersten repräsentativen Studie zur Elternschaft der deutschen Waldorfschulen und referiert die wichtigsten Befunde in seinem Beitrag. Er macht deutlich, dass damit zum ersten Mal ein unschätzbare Fundus an belastbaren Daten vorliegt, denen in der bildungspolitischen Diskussion schon jetzt und auch in Zukunft ein erheblicher Stellenwert zukommt.

Dem im Vorwort ausgesprochenen Dank schließe ich mich nachdrücklich an und danke meinerseits Steffen Borzner für die vertrauensvolle Zusammenarbeit.

Dirk Rohde

On education, the school, and society in an age of instant gratification: Steiner education's unique contribution

Gert Biesta

Introduction

Steiner education¹ has been around for just over a century – the first school being opened in Germany in 1919 – and has not just proven to be a resilient educational concept, but also a popular one. The fact that its popularity is still increasing all over the world also suggests that Steiner education continues to be seen as a *relevant* educational concept. Steiner education emerged as part of a wave of educational renewal that took place in the early decades of the 20th century, known under such names as 'Reformpädagogik,' 'progressive education' and 'éducation nouvelle,' and many traces of this movement still play an important role in today's education. This is partly in the form of clearly identifiable educational concepts – next to Steiner education, Montessori education is probably the most prominent example – and partly through ideas and principles that have become part of mainstream educational thought and practice. These include the recognition of the importance of children's active participation in the educational process, the role of discovery and real-world experimentation, and the emphasis on a broad and balanced curriculum and the education of the whole person.

My ambition in this chapter is not to conduct an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of Steiner education, but rather to identify some of the unique insights Steiner education has to offer contemporary education. The approach I will take can be characterised as 'oblique,' as I will not put Steiner education in the centre but rather will begin with raising a number of bigger questions about contemporary education and highlighting a number of concerns about the direction contemporary education seems to be taking. It is from that angle that

1 In some countries Steiner education is known as Waldorf education, in others as Steiner-Waldorf education, and in still others as the Free School. In this contribution I will use the phrase 'Steiner education.'

I will look at Steiner education in order to highlight a number of ideas, principles and practices which, in my view, are still highly relevant for education today. I offer this chapter as an attempt at bridging the gap between Steiner education and what we might term ‘mainstream’ education. On the one hand, I hope to be able to show to the latter where the ongoing significance of Steiner education might lie. I am, however, also concerned that those working within Steiner education often lack a sufficiently precise language for articulating what is ‘at stake’ in Steiner education. My chapter is therefore also a modest contribution at improving the discourse about Steiner education itself.

From past to present: Has education lost the plot?

When we look at the history of education – and for the sake of the argument I will look at some big steps in the history of education in the ‘global north’ – we can identify a number of major ambitions that still form an important part of our contemporary educational memory. From ancient Greece we have the idea that one of the prime purposes of education is the cultivation of ‘civic excellence.’ From the Reformation we have the idea that one of the main concerns of education is literacy, that is, the ability to read and, more specifically, to read for oneself. From the Enlightenment we have the idea that education has a key-role to play in critical thinking, that is, making up one’s own mind rather than obeying to others. And from the late 19th century onwards we see ongoing attempts at making education available to everyone, irrespective of gender, wealth or social position – something which was, of course, seriously lacking up to that point.

Citizenship, literacy, critical thinking, and inclusion are, of course, still important themes for today’s education, but when we look at what nowadays occupies the minds of many educational policy makers, politicians, researchers, but also the media and the public, we actually find a significantly different mindset. We hear about scoring high in PISA and similar systems, becoming as good as, or even better than ‘Finland’ or whatever country seems to be at ‘the top,’ there is a focus on striving for ‘excellence’ and ‘high performance,’ and generally on trying to be better than others, from the individual level of competition between students in classrooms, up to the global level of competition between countries and national education systems. The laudable ambitions of more than two thousand years of education seem to have been overtaken by an obsession with measurement, data, monitoring and managing, where performance itself seems to have become the main aim, rather than to ask what the performance is ‘about’ and ‘for’ (Biesta 2010).

The fact that at different points in time different views emerge about what education should aim for, does suggest that the answer to this question cannot

be plucked from the air and be settled once and for all but is actually historically contingent. Views about the purpose and point of education change over time and are particularly influenced by the ways in which we perceive the challenges of our times. They depend, in other words, on how we wish to relate to our past and present – and such positioning is important, not least because there is a strong tendency in education only to look towards the future.

Education ‘after’ Auschwitz: The question of human freedom

With regard to this, I wish to suggest that even in the first decades of the 21st century we still live in the shadow of ‘Auschwitz.’ ‘Auschwitz’ has not just shown us that the systematic *eradication* of (other) human beings is a real possibility; it has also shown us that the systematic *objectification* of (other) human beings is a real possibility, that is, that it is possible to treat other human beings just as objects, as things, and not as subjects in their own right. This is why I tend to agree with the opening statement of Theodor Adorno’s essay ‘Education after Auschwitz’ where he states that the “premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again” (Adorno 1971, p. 79). Interestingly, Adorno adds that this demand is such that he doesn’t think that it needs justification or should be justified, as “to justify it would be monstrous in the face of the monstrosity that took place” (ibid.).

It is, of course, one thing to agree that this is the first demand upon all education, but it is still another to figure out *how* education might ensure that Auschwitz will not happen again. In this regard, Primo Levi’s observation that because Auschwitz has happened “it can happen again” (Levi 1986, p. 199), is perhaps more realistic and more honest, as it acknowledges that ‘Auschwitz’ is not simply the evil that is outside of us and that we should keep at bay. It acknowledges that we all carry the possibility of ‘Auschwitz’ also *inside* ourselves. ‘Auschwitz,’ however, not just shows us the possibility of *evil*, including how ‘banal’ evil actually can be (Arendt 1963). ‘Auschwitz’ also confronts us with our *freedom*: with the fact of our freedom, the issue of our freedom, the question of our freedom, the riddle of our freedom and even the mystery of our freedom. ‘Auschwitz’ shows us that we *can* act, but also reminds us that we *must* act, that is, that our life is not laid out before us, but that we are agents of our own life, and that this is our existential condition. We can, of course, use our agency to forfeit our freedom. We can decide to hand over our freedom to external authorities, where acting in *good* faith – which can be important – can always turn into acting with *blind* faith. And we can end up in situations, or ‘find’ ourselves in situations, where the whole idea of our freedom simply hasn’t arisen or is impossible to arise (for example Freire 1993).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "Emile, or On Education" (1762) is one of the first texts in the modern educational tradition that puts the question of freedom explicitly on the educational agenda. In the book Rousseau not only argues that the work of the educator is to protect Emile – who stands for the child more generally – from too strong influences from the outside world. This is indicated in the famous opening sentence of the book: "Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man" (Rousseau 1979, p. 37). Rousseau also shows in much detail what educators might do to make sure that Emile is not overwhelmed by forces from the 'inside' – the 'passions,' as Rousseau calls them. Unlike popular belief, Rousseau is therefore not advocating a romantic version of child-centred education in which the world is seen as 'bad' and the child is seen as 'good' (also Böhm 2016). Rather, what is at stake in Rousseau's 'project' is the possibility for the child to exist as subject of its own life, and not as object of what other people want from it. The work of the educator, then, is first of all aimed at safeguarding the 'space' within and the conditions under which the child's existing-as-subject can become a possibility.

Freedom, education and the question of the 'I'

The 'work' of education is, however, more than just that of providing and safeguarding the conditions under which it becomes possible for children to exist as subjects of their own life. Education is also there to 'promote' this more actively. Yet here we encounter a rather old but still ongoing discussion about the relationship between education and freedom. For some there are only two options here. Either we are interested in the child's freedom and therefore should not interfere with their lives, which basically means we should not try to educate; or we do try to educate, but then we are automatically limiting the child's freedom. If we put it in this way, then we not just end up with a paradox – and the philosopher Immanuel Kant did indeed refer to this line of thought as the educational paradox (Kant 1982) – but also end up with two options that both seem unattractive, one where we just let children do what they want to do, without limits, and one where we interfere in their lives and run the risk of treating them as objects of what we want, rather than as subjects of their own life. (An excellent discussion of these complexities can be found in Mollenhauer 1983.)

A more interesting and more meaningful way for looking at the relationship between education and freedom can be found in the writings of the German educationalist Dietrich Benner. In an interesting passage in his book "Allgemeine Pädagogik" (Benner 2015), Benner raises the question what the actual contribution of education to the child's life is. He raises this question, acknowledging that children are born with a certain natural 'make up' – their talents,