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Man as a subject of cognition in the perspective of pedagogical anthropology – Georgy Shchedrovitsky’s anthropological ideas and searches

Streszczenie: Aktualnie antropologia pedagogiczna staje się integralną dyscypliną w procesie edukacyjnym. Człowiek jest badany z punktu widzenia historii i kultury, w okresie przemian politycznych i ekonomicznych oraz na każdym poziomie rozwoju społecznego.

Współczesny świat jest niezwykle różnorodny i niejednoznaczny. Narastają nierówności społeczne na wszystkich poziomach, rośnie liczba ubogich, pojawiły się nowe światowe problemy migracji i uchodźców. Zobowiązuje to również antropologię pedagogiczną, aby pomagała pedagogom w szybkim i skutecznym rozwiązywaniu palących problemów związanych z edukacją i wychowaniem. Artykuł pokazuje, jak prace naukowe rosyjskiego filozofa Jerzego Szczedrowickiego mogą pomóc współczesnej antropologii pedagogicznej. Podano ogólną ocenę wkładu J. Szczedrowickiego w rozwój antropologii pedagogicznej i zwrócono uwagę na aktualność praktyk naukowych naukowca, które nie straciły aktualnie na znaczeniu i mogą być wykorzystywane zarówno w pedagogice, antropologii pedagogicznej, jak i edukacji międzykulturowej.

Słowa kluczowe: antropologia pedagogiczna, natura ludzka, reorganizacja, treści kształcenia, wychowanie, badania naukowe, metodologia, nauka, logika, nauczyciel, edukacja międzykulturowa

Introduction

For pedagogical anthropology today, man is becoming important as a subject of cognition, despite the fact that there are different theories and points of view in scientific literature. “The man perceives life as a whole, but when they want to perceive it deeper, they approach the boundaries of their cognition, convinced that they cannot fully realize this” (Ablevich, 2003, p. 37). In all historical periods, the content of education was presented as a system of scientific knowledge and skills, moral, ethical, aesthetic and ideological

ideas. The content of education has always included individual, forward-looking, cutting-edge, innovative and creative experience as well as social expectations because “social expectations are a significant source of change” (Smietanska, 2020, p. 107).

Scientific problem: It is suggested that Shchedrovitsky’s scientific philosophical theories have not received a deep anthropological analysis yet. This situation directs the study towards the clarification of several issues: to what extent his works are valuable and promising in scientific and practical terms for modern pedagogical anthropology and what his contribution to its development is.

Topicality and originality:

- Shchedrovitsky’s works have been studied and analyzed, and the genesis of his understanding of human nature from the point of view of pedagogical anthropology has been carried out;
- the significance of his works concerning the restructuring of the content of education for pedagogical anthropology and scientific tasks of pedagogy have been determined;
- the gaps pertaining to Shchedrovitsky’s anthropological views in the philosophical and pedagogical scientific ideas are being filled up in a certain way;
- a view on the anthropological integrity of Shchedrovitsky’s teaching is presented.

The object of the research is the scientific activity of the Russian philosopher Shchedrovitsky.

The purpose of the research is to show the significance of Shchedrovitsky’s philosophical and anthropological works for modern pedagogical anthropology.

General methodology:

The following research methods were used in this article: content analysis of the main sources; historical-systemic, interpretational, hermeneutical, biographical, systematization and interview methods; pedagogical-anthropological, structural and systemic analyses.

The method of content analysis helped to analyze the scientific works of G. Shchedrovitsky, as well as the works written about him by his colleagues. Applying this method, we relied on the obtained knowledge about the true content of the text materials, which allowed drawing a conclusion about the real intentions of the scientist and showing the use of his ideas in specific life situations. In this situation, content analysis has a philosophical and an-

thropological meaning, which consists in moving away from the diversity of textual information to a more abstract model of the material.

The historical and systemic method made it possible to study the specific phenomenon of the past in a certain historical period as an integral historical system: the analysis of the structure and functions, internal and external relations (morphology), as well as dynamic changes (genesis).

The pedagogical and anthropological analysis allowed us to show the process of the development of anthropological approach by G. Shchedrovitsky. It is shown that this process had a holistic and unbreakable nature and had a holistic, complex impact on the development of the sensible and resolute spheres of the human personality, the improvement of all aspects of its development: spiritual and moral, which are interrelated and interdependent.

The method of interpretation made it possible to show the synthesis of the ideas in G. Shchedrovitsky's works as a system of knowledge. The traditions of spreading his teachings by students are traced.

With the help of the hermeneutical method, the art of G. Shchedrovitsky's interpretation of philosophical, anthropological and pedagogical problems is shown.

The structural and systemic analysis allowed us to trace the sequence of scientific search in G. Shchedrovitsky's creative work to establish structural links among philosophy, anthropology and pedagogy.

The biographical method allowed tracing the scientific growth and formation of the scholar's world on the basis of the study of his scientific works, correspondence and diaries. This method was combined with the interview method, which enabled us to expand and deepen the history of G. Shchedrovitsky's scientific research.

The method of systematization gave a possibility to combine many philosophical and anthropological elements that are in some relations and connections with each other and form a certain integrity and unity of the works by G. Shchedrovitsky with the tasks of pedagogy.

The methodological basis of the research consists of Shchedrovitsky's philosophical and anthropological ideas about the integral and universal cognition of human nature; about the construction of philosophical and anthropological teaching, forecasts, conclusions and laws, taking into account the holistic and systematic knowledge of the constantly developing human nature, his philosophical and anthropological ideas about the restructuring of the content of education, scientific tasks of pedagogy, about the teacher and their place in the educational and upbringing process.

Man as a subject of cognition in Shchedrovitsky's works

In this part of the article, we would like to draw attention to what is important in Shchedrovitsky's creative work for the development of modern pedagogical anthropology. Little has been written about his views from this standpoint. We would also like to give an appraisal of the views of the scientist which modern pedagogical anthropology can use in its theory and practice. First of all, this will concern the scientist's views on man as a subject of cognition. The topic of human development has always been relevant, and it remains the same today (Bezgodov and Barezhev, 2018, p. 314).

At the beginning of the 21st century, the expansion of theoretical and practical research related to human development became characteristic of science. What kind of man is needed in a modern society and with what universal values? Is it time for cultural changes and how to use the gained experience? (Misiejuk, 2020, p. 150). These are the main questions of today. In many ways, this kind of research is associated with the emergence of new borderland disciplines and the combination of various areas of natural science with humanities with their help. In his work Shchedrovitsky paid a lot of attention to these issues. Russian scientists V. Maralov and V. Sitarov emphasize that universal human values are not constructed in the historical process artificially, but are revealed in it, building up into culture (Maralov and Sitarov, 2017, p. 17).

Among specific anthropological steps Shchedrovitsky suggested starting the development of a project of a future man. The scientist believes that in order to carry out practical educational work and rebuild the existing system of education and upbringing or build a new one, it is necessary to have a project for the upcoming product of this system – a specific and multisided description of the man of the future society, it is necessary to understand clearly what activities this man will have to perform, what his views on the world and attitudes towards other people will be (Shchedrovitsky, 2006, pp. 85–144; Shchedrovitsky, 1993, pp. 96–116). The scientist further emphasizes that without such a project it is impossible to raise the question of restructuring the content of education. From his point of view, the creation of a project or a number of projects of the man of the future should become the first stage of engineering pedagogical work and the first part of work in a specific engineering task of educational goals.

In this context, the originality of Shchedrovitsky's anthropological thought consisted in a thorough examination of the ways of developing projects for the future man. To ensure the development of projects of the future man, spe-

cialized work was needed. How did Shchedrovitsky imagine this important anthropological work? Designing a person, as he pointed out, should become more and more professional and should be increasingly separated from the actual political formulation of the developmental goals of society (Shchedrovitsky, 1993, p. 95). Using this line of reasoning for this important anthropological problem, the scientist offered the next stage of work. He proceeded from the fact that in order to design a future man, deep scientific knowledge about man, certain models of this man and, most importantly, special scientific studies of man were needed, which were practically not carried out in the Soviet Union. In Shchedrovitsky's creative work the problem of projects of the future man concerned another issue that is one of the most important in modern pedagogical anthropology, namely, the use of knowledge from various scientific disciplines that affect the man in one way or another (Shchedrovitsky, 2004). This was a bold proposal at that time, which could contribute to a deep and scientifically grounded restructuring of the content of education, which, by the way, the party and Soviet leaders did not want to carry out. He also offered to create new disciplines concerning humanity, the study subject which should be "not the 'material' world itself, but the process of human interaction with it. The most important place in this area of scientific research is occupied by the disciplines that consider: 1) methods of obtaining and using knowledge, 2) its organization and structure, 3) methods of storage and, finally, 4) its transmission to other people, in particular to the younger generations, and the methods of its assimilation" (Shchedrovitsky, 2006, p. 15).

Reconstruction of the content of education and scientific tasks of pedagogy

Shchedrovitsky justified the restructuring of education based on historical, cultural, scientific, economic and political characteristics of the Soviet Union. Calling education and upbringing a sphere of social activity, the scientist paid attention to the fact that this sphere in the state was archaic, disorganized and imperfect. (Shchedrovitsky, 1993, p. 4; Shchedrovitsky, 2006, pp. 30–31). He opposes the established in pedagogy point of view that the main thing in pedagogical problems is to determine the content of education, and the problem of methods is secondary and subordinate. He criticized the existing educational system and insisted on a constant deep and logical analysis of the educational process using scientific methods. In modern pedagogy, this is called "pedagogical reality" (Ronzhina and Vasiliev, 2017, p. 30) and

“competence-based approach to the organization and assessment of the results of learning” (Volobueva and Glotova, 2017, p. 33).

How did Shchedrovitsky understand the restructuring of the content of education and educational system?

Shchedrovitsky was one of the first in the 1970s and 1980s who offered a bold anthropological solution to the restructuring the content of education and the educational system. This solution contained five principles:

1. Restructuring cannot be carried out by means and methods of the existing pedagogy.
2. Restructuring of the content of education cannot be limited only to a decrease or increase in the number of subjects. Restructuring should cover the content and forms of organization of the entire system of human knowledge.
3. The form, structure and content of scientific theories concerning the tasks of education and upbringing of the younger generation should be rethought and meet the needs of today's pedagogy.
4. Not only pedagogy depends on the level of the development of science, but science also depends on the needs and mechanisms of education and upbringing.
5. Children should be able to apply the knowledge acquired at school in practice (Shchedrovitsky, 1993, pp. 6–7; Shchedrovitsky, 2003, pp. 256–257).

An important component of Shchedrovitsky's philosophy of education was the program of the forthcoming work on building the science of pedagogy. When planning the program of the work, the scientist proceeded from the fact that various processes of the system of education and upbringing had already been analyzed and described both in philosophy and psychology, sociology, logic, cultural anthropology, etc. In this context, it is important to pay attention to the scientist's anthropological approach in his further consideration. From his point of view, none of the sciences listed above could single out the laws and mechanisms of the processes of education and upbringing. Further, he correctly notes that in psychology, sociology, logic, cultural anthropology, knowledge has been accumulated concerning various aspects of the processes of education, which is very essential for further work, and therefore it is necessary to take into account general philosophical and special knowledge in all situations. At this point, it was important for him to define the role and task of pedagogy among the listed sciences. Here

the scientist asserts that pedagogy should act as a complex science, which should unite all the knowledge for the effective organization of the educational process (Shchedrovitsky, 2006; Shchedrovitsky, 1993, p. 9).

By the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, in Shchedrovitsky's mind there was a completely clear understanding that methodology was not just teaching about the means and methods of human thinking and activity, but a very special form of organization of all activities, thinking and life of people. He was sure methodology could not be transferred as knowledge or a set of tools from one person to another, but it could only be formed, including people in a new sphere of methodological activity and thinking, providing them with a complete and integral life activity. After such theoretical considerations, the scientist raises the question concerning new forms of practical organization of thinking and activity, in which collective methodological thinking could be formed not only in restricted and esoteric groups of methodologists, but also in significantly wider groups of professionals and specialists (Shchedrovitsky, 2005, p. 251).

The scientist organized and conducted his seminars in all the republics of the Soviet Union, which were devoted to the projects of the future man, the creation of the science of pedagogy, as well as other important philosophical and social problems. The seminars were of a thematic nature. In 1979, Shchedrovitsky proposed a new form of interaction between philosophy and methodology – the organizational-activity game (OAG). These games were held in almost all the republics of the USSR. Organizational-activity games made it possible to combine the organization of interprofessional teams for the implementation of projects and programs with a refined philosophical discussion and with a strict methodological reflection (Biography, 2019).

Today, teachers assume that business games used in modern educational practice involve modeling the subject and social content of the student's future professional activity (Bagina and Borovkova, 2017, p. 51).

Conducting his games, Shchedrovitsky gathered talented teachers and scientists, with whom he discussed the problems listed above. According to the scientist's ideas, the participants of the games in the future were to become the creators of the science of pedagogy and new methodology. He emphasized: "We play in order to be able to change, transform and develop this thinking activity for the game turned out to be a very convenient means and method for mastering this natural (and therefore acting as if naturally) mental activity, for its development and transformation" (Shchedrovitsky, 2004, p. 18).

We had a chance to meet a participant of the games Maria Zhigalova, a talented and energetic school teacher then and a professor at Brest Technical University now. She was asked two questions. The first one was: "Has your participation in Shchedrovitsky's seminar somehow changed your life?"

Yes, my participation in the seminar, which was held in Zhdanovichi, near Minsk, radically changed my life. The presentation of my experience and my concepts was held for the participants of the activity games and members of the jury, philologists and teachers of Moscow Institute for National Education Problems, among whom was the candidate of philological and pedagogical sciences S. Biryukova. After my speech and questions of the jury I was offered studying at the postgraduate course which resulted in my thesis for the degree of the Candidate of Philology in 1994 and my doctoral dissertation at the Russian Academy of Education 10 years later. Thus, the activity games conducted by the innovative scientist G. Shchedrovitsky led me to science.

The second question related to her scientific work and extensive methodological practice was: "How do you assess Shchedrovitsky's anthropological ideas concerning human development and the restructuring of the content of education from the position of doctor of pedagogical sciences and professor?"

I share many of his standpoints and consider them relevant and promising today for a number of reasons:

Firstly, it seems to me that his idea that a person is not born, but created, since belonging to humanity is determined not by the genotype, but by human involvement in the structures of activity and thinking, turned out to be more timely than ever. It is obvious today, because in the age of high technologies, when the structures of activity and thinking are so diverse and have such different impacts on the life and world outlook of a person, only high motivation created by the family and school, and therefore a creative teacher, development, persistent everyday hard work on oneself, involvement in the real pursuit help both the student and the teacher to achieve the set goal. Without this, pedagogy loses all meaning.

Secondly, how can one disagree with Shchedrovitsky that the most important problem in education and in society as a whole has been and remains the problem of man, which has now come to the forefront of humanitarian knowledge? However, it seems to me that humanitarian knowledge itself requires the same way, because any significant discovery can always be directed both to good and to evil, and what this choice will be depends only on the thinking of the man.

Conclusions

Shchedrovitsky offered a logically grounded and anthropologically verified project of the future man. In this project, from the point of view of the scientist, important components should be the man's activity, their views on the world and interaction with it and relationships with other people. Shchedrovitsky's point of view that the project of the future man should be included in the pedagogical teaching about the goals of education deserves a high anthropological assessment. The scientist justified the problem of pedagogical research and showed its place in the project of the future man, combining the diversity of human qualities and attitudes towards himself, a concrete person, society and nature. Thus, the project of the future man offered by Shchedrovitsky, can be safely called anthropological.

The article reveals the content of Shchedrovitsky's main ideas concerning the restructuring of the content of education and scientific tasks of pedagogy. In the field of pedagogy, the scientist offered a deep and scientifically grounded restructuring of the content of education and gave a rich methodological and methodical material for pedagogical anthropology. The originality of anthropological thought consists in the skillful and obligatory combination of certain standpoints of philosophy, logic and pedagogy in terms of restructuring the content of education and scientific tasks of pedagogy. He fearlessly criticized the state education system, calling it archaic, disorganized and imperfect, paying a lot of attention to the fact that the very activity of teaching and upbringing was hardly analyzed by scientific methods. These conclusions caused a lot of controversy among scientists and criticism of his views, there were supporters and ill-wishers. Being a philosopher and logician, Shchedrovitsky foresaw what difficulties awaited pedagogy in the future, and proposed his own version of the restructuring of education, which provided a place for pedagogical anthropology. The scientist created his own philosophy of education, in which an important place was given to the creation of the "science of pedagogy", the author's approach to understanding methodology based on the accumulated experience and the seminars conducted by him. A special place in the philosophy of education was given to the teacher.

Shchedrovitsky's anthropological approach occupies a special place in the structure of anthropological knowledge. The scientist used an anthropological approach and determined the relationship between sociological, logical and psychological analysis in the study of the object of pedagogy. At the same

time, he proceeded from new practical tasks of pedagogy, formulated in the Soviet Union in the second half of the 20th century. When defining the content of education, he identified and justified the need for the knowledge that was required to solve theoretical and practical problems of pedagogy formulated anew. He revealed under what conditions and how the necessary knowledge could be obtained, and he also determined the means and methods of which sciences and in what sequence it would be necessary to use for this.

Shchedrovitsky constantly worked on deepening and expanding his own philosophy of education, which resulted in practical activities in the scientific school he created and in seminars organized in all the republics of the former Soviet Union. The result of his practical activity is a number of well-trained students, who carry out the ideas of their Teacher in different countries today. Among these students one should mention M. Zhigalova, G. Davydova, A. Piskoppel, V. Rokityansky, L. Shchedrovitsky.

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Abstract: Contemporary pedagogical anthropology is becoming an integral discipline in the educational process. The man is studied from the standpoint of history and culture, in the period of political and economic changes as well as at each level of social development.

The modern world is extremely diversified and ambiguous. Social inequality at all levels is growing, the number of the poor is increasing, new world problems of migration and refugees have emerged. This calls for pedagogical anthropology to help pedagogics to solve pressing problems of education and upbringing quickly and effectively.

The article shows how scientific works by the Russian philosopher George Schedrovitsky can help modern pedagogical anthropology. The general assessment of G. Schedrovitsky's contribution to the development of pedagogical an-

thropology is given and the attention is paid to the relevance of scientific practices of the scientist which have not lost their importance today and can be used both in pedagogics and pedagogical anthropology.

Keywords: pedagogical anthropology, human nature, reorganization, content of education, upbringing, research, methodology, science, logic, teacher, younger generation, intercultural education

Translated by Andrei Harbatski