

SYSTEMIC SOCIETY TRANSFORMATION: HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE AND THE PRESENT, ITS PROSPECTS IN TERMS OF GLOBAL SOCIETY AND INTEGRATION PROCESSES

Hans Walz

Hochschule Ravensburg-Weingarten. University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Topic of my speech:

Ethical basics for science and professional practice (in the perspective of social work) in view to interprofessional and intercultural cooperation in the process of global society transformation

In our universities as well as in our societies we all belong to different disciplines and professions. But if we wish to live and work together, we need a basic perspective for inter-professional and intercultural cooperation local, global and glo-cal.

1. Which ethical perspectives are leading us in our scientific or professional area?

- Maybe a specific religious or political perspective like Catholic, Protestant, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Marxist, Pacifist, Humanist or Socialist
- maybe a patchwork of value orientation
- maybe Value neutrality according to the classical sociologist Max Weber,
- maybe a value orientation like in the 'Critical theory of the Frankfurt School' (Theodor W. Adorno, Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse, Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas)

Whatever direction our perspectives of thinking and acting take, in view of the question of value orientation in the science, the following three points are currently most evident in the worldwide community of science: (1) Despite personal declarations of neutrality, values may unwittingly obtrude research; (2) It is not clear that neutrality, even in principle, is possible; (3) It is not always evident that neutrality is desirable; on some questions (for example discrimination of migrants, violence against women or abuse of children) nobody should be neutral.

2. From Aristotle to Kant: A perspective of freedom and justice for all

2.1 The need for a basic ethical perspective of intercultural and inter-professional cooperation

In September 2004 15 colleagues from several universities in southern Germany came together for an interdisciplinary conference on Ethics. We represented several disciplines in our Universities. For example: law, social work, public administration, agriculture, marketing, engineering, sociology, physics, economics and philosophy. Our goal in the conference was to develop a leaflet on basic ethical perspectives for interprofessional cooperation at our universities and for inter-professional and intercultural cooperation with other universities, both national and international. This was because recently we recognized that a basic ethical perspective, agreed to voluntarily, for all our different disciplines and cultures was necessary. For example, in our national and international projects for health management, or European exchange programmes for students, and last but not least: for planning and managing the living conditions in our cities to enable a successful coexistence of people from different cultures and religions. After a first step of the debate a philosophically-oriented colleague proposed:

We could write on our leaflet as basic understanding of ethics according to the following sentence made by the ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle (384/3 – 322/1 a. Chr.).

2.2 Aristotle's ethical view of well-being and critical discussion thereof

Ethics in the view of Aristotle, is the theory of a good and successful life which is taken from his concept of 'Eudaimonia'. Eudaimonia is less 'happiness and rather more of a 'good

life, having to do with character'. It is the activity of soul and the development and integration of happiness, success, wellbeing and having a good guardian spirit.¹⁶ 10 of the 15 colleagues agreed to this understanding of ethics according to Aristotle. The other five did not agree. One of them opposed by stating: This ethical goal of Aristotle is too individualistic and idealistic, Immanuel Kant would say: too moralistic and fostering elitism. Another critical colleague added: From a critical sociological view, the ethical theory of Aristotle concentrates on the development of men and well-off citizens. Women and slaves are more or less neglected. All these terms focus on the common (!) understanding of human beings on men. All these arguments can be summarized as follows: The ethical theory of Aristotle supports the tendency to neglect social groups who are not supported by helpful living conditions in the society to fail to achieve 'eudaimonia'. Furthermore we can generalize that all ethical theories, which exclude some social groups, are not suitable for a basic worldwide, ethical perspective to live and work together with people and different disciplines, professions, cultures and religions. As a goal for the development of an ethical theory in view to the process of European enlargement and integration and furthermore, in view of the worldwide process of globalisation we can proclaim: **The goal for ethical theory is, to support the development of justice and well-being for all human beings and to prevent exclusion of any social ('marginal') groups.**

2.3 Freedom and justice for all in Kant's concept of ethics

Freedom as fundamental human right: On the 12th of February in 2004 we have celebrated the 200th anniversary of the death of the great philosopher Immanuel Kant (*22.4.1724,+12.2.1804). He was the first philosopher in the modern history to develop a rational theory of ethics through the perspective of justice. He rejected the goal of 'well-being' found in Aristotle's theory of ethics, because this aim is too hypothetical. Instead of well-being Kant developed the concept of freedom as the fundamental ethical goal. Freedom is for him the only value and right, which all we human beings bring with us at the time of our birth. Freedom therefore is the basis of all ethical theory and practice. Kant argues: If everybody wishes to live in freedom, then he must also respect the freedom of others. Since all others are equal to each other, freedom can only be achieved, when we respect the equal right of others to live their lives in freedom too.

Justice as a consequence of freedom for all and the categorical imperative: This perspective, to realize freedom in human equality, which we call dignity, leads to Kant's proclamation for justice as a logical consequence of freedom for all human beings. In this global perspective Kant develops his ideas of the necessity of an universal right in the process of world citizenship.¹⁷ Kant formulates his universal perspective of a principal guideline for all human beings in the so-called Categorical Imperative. (Universal Law Formulation): **"Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time hope that it should become a universal law."**¹⁸

The two terms 'categorical' and 'imperative' mean that this principal is in a logical sense a 'categorical' challenge for the ethical behaviour of all human beings. This means, in the view of Kant, that this imperative can be the basis of an universal law for all human beings. In view of our individual behaviour as well as for our professional or scientific activities, this categorical imperative means, that immorality occurs, when the categorical imperative is not followed. When a person attempts to set a different standard for themselves than for the rest

¹⁶ See in the ethical and political scriptures of Aristotle (384/3 – 322/1 a.Chr.) with the title 'Ethica Nichomachea' the book 'Ethica Eudemia', especially Eth. Nik. A.6 and 9).

¹⁷ See Kant 1784, 15-32, here: 22.

¹⁸ <http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Categorical+Imperative>, 7.10.2004.

of humanity. With regard to our question, 'What could be a basic ethical perspective for intercultural and inter-professional processes of living and working together in science and practice?', we can now conclude that **freedom and justice for all human beings are the fundamental ethical perspectives for living and working together in intercultural and inter-professional processes.**

Freedom in the Declaration of Human Rights and in sciences : We can see: Kant's concept is the one scientific concept to show freedom and justice in science and practice. In the Declaration of the Human Rights, proclaimed in 1948 from the United Nations in New York, this perspective is shown as a basic orientation for living and working together in local, national, continental and global processes of intercultural, interprofessional cooperation .

Meanwhile many scientists adopt the perspective of freedom and justice to their understanding of science, for example the philosopher Hanna Arendt , the geographer Arno Peters , the sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas. In the science of Social Work I am reminded of the studies by Joseph Wronka ,Jim Iffe and Silvia Staub-Bernasconi , in view of more and more practitioners all over the world, also in Belarus, who integrate the perspective of freedom and justice in their theoretical concepts of Social Work.

3. The perspective of freedom and justice in sciences: for example the concept of Social work as a Human Rights Profession'

In 1992 the UN, in association with the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), brought out a handbook entitled "Human Rights and Social Work" for the study and practice of social work and in it, proclaimed social work as a worldwide, human rights profession..Silvia Staub-Bernasconi was one of the first in the world's community of social work scientists to demonstrate the importance of Human Rights for teaching social work at our Universities. But in contrast to the philosophical concept of Immanuel Kant, who derives the universal perspectives in ethic and science from freedom, she proceeds from the concept of human needs. Indeed, this alternative is not only more definite than the concept of freedom, but also more suitable to Asian thinking. This is also demonstrated to us by the peace-researcher Johan Galtung, who also bases his theory of human rights on human needs in his book entitled "Human Rights in another key". Finally,Silvia Staub-Bernasconi also shows us, that on the basis of needs, it is more relevant, to develop a scientific self-understanding of the science of Social Work.

3.1 Universal human needs as a basis for Human Rights

In her article "The professional self-concept of Social Work" (1995) Staub-Bernasconi shows, that human rights can offer Social Work the possibility of leaving the alienation imposed by external institutions which have the power to give orders to help, to an independent scientific order instead of a theoretical foundation. She has developed the following basic theory:

Human Rights are the local and global answer to basic human needs. Responding to these needs, Social Work can gain an independent scientific basis for its self-concept. This means that in Social Work need-orientation takes priority over function-orientation. To support this theory, Staub-Bernasconi demonstrates that the development of Social Work in German-speaking areas is characterized by being too bureaucratic, different from Social Work practice in Latin America during the Sixties with their re-conceptualization of their methodologies. Because of this Staub-Bernasconi demands social workers take the needs of the relevant people as the basis of their work – their needs and their resources, rather than function and regulation."This demand is not something new", she says, "It was proclaimed in 1921 in "utmost radicality" by Ilse Arit from Austria, one of the early founders of the theory of Social Work. Long before Maslow and Rogers came up with their ideas, Arit

had developed a theory of human needs relating to frustration about a life in illness, housing shortage, poverty, unemployment and hopelessness. Finally Staub-Bernasconi (1995, 320) concludes: "Considering how the theory of Social Work developed, the category of need has a central significance; and it can be considered as the root of different theories opening up new ways of dealing with the reality of social life – especially the opening up of new resources..."

3.2 Needs as basis for an independent scientific concept of Social Work

According to needs as a basis for Human Rights and also for Social Work, Staub-Bernasconi distinguishes between three categories of needs, in line with her colleague in Zurich, Werner Obrecht (1995): 1. Biological needs to protect our body against violation; 2. Psychical needs to stimulate our senses, to perceive the world around us and to find our ways in it; 3. Social needs for emotional care, participation in social groups, dignity.

Current research results show it can be confirmed that these needs belong to every person, worldwide. Therefore a theoretical-scientific explanation of Human Rights exists and at the same time for the concept of its realisation - local, global and 'glo-cal'. On the basis of this concept of Social Work we can conclude: In whatever institutions social workers are employed – governmental, religious or any other so-called 'free' ('private') institutions – **the obligation and responsibility of Social Work grows directly out of the needs of the society's citizens ('clients')**. All orders coming from institutions are indirect orders because in general they depend directly on the needs of the social citizens. When regarding human needs as basis for Human Rights, the affected people should not be seen as a 'client' or 'customer' but as a 'social citizen'.¹⁹

3.3 Human rights-orientation in social work regarding Multiculturalism

The orientation of Social Work on basic human needs and by the Human Rights that respond to those needs, has a quality of urgency about it. In the "Ethics of Social Work – Principles and Standards" (IFSW General Meeting in Sri Lanka 1994) this urgency is proclaimed as follows: Social Work is not a profession with professional values "as you like", Social Work is a Human Rights profession. This is also emphasized in the latest definition of Social Work, proclaimed by the General Meeting of IFSW and IASSW in Montreal in 2000: "Principals of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work." The most current definition of social work according to the worldwide international guidelines for 2003 is as follows: "The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work." (IASSW/IFSW 2003,6f.).

3.4 Linking Human Rights and Sustainable Development

Human Rights are not to be understood as a fixed dogmatic block of articles. Rather their basic ethical demands have to be developed and continually realised in actual manifestations – globally and regionally. So this development could happen when we confront the pillars of Human Rights – dignity, self-determination and justice – with the global and regional circumstances of human coexistence. The result of this coexistence is the urgency that all human beings are responsible for building their future through participation and cooperation.

Living conditions include the three most important dimensions of ecology, social life and economy. The significance of these collective dimensions for our common future was proclaimed 1992 at the UNCED-Conference in Rio de Janeiro, where most states of the world (178) committed themselves to developing the concept of 'Sustainable Development'. This concept is also called 'Agenda 21', because it deals with the most important global tasks in

¹⁹ German: ‚Sozial-Bürger‘ und ‚Sozial-Bürgerinnen‘; see Staub-Bernasconi 2000,161-6.

the 21st century. The essential message of 'Sustainable Development' was already expressed in the so-called 'Brundtland-Report' from 1987: **Sustainable Development "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."** This principle guidance was overtaken by Principle 3 of the Rio-Declaration with the following demand: "The right of development has to be realized in a way that the needs of today's and future generations to development and environment will be fulfilled justly."

3.5 The urgency of intercultural and inter-professional cooperation

Considering that most tasks in Social Work are so complex (theoretically and practically) that they can only be solved by interdisciplinary or inter-professional co-operation, and that most sciences and professions (e. g. technicians, economists, lawyers, architects, et al.) are more orientated towards the concept of Sustainable Development than to Human Rights as Social Work, it seems necessary to combine the anthropologically emphasized concept of Human-Rights-Orientation with the future-orientated ecological, social and economical dimensions of the Agenda 21. The connection between these two concepts to the principal guidance of '**Human-Rights-orientated Sustainable Development**' (Walz 2000) can be seen as a scientific basis for interdisciplinary and inter-professional cooperation in a global, local and 'glo-cal' scale.

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PROCESY INTEGRACYJNE W RAMACH WSPÓLNOTY NIEPODLEGŁYCH PAŃSTW

Katarzyna Czerewacz

Politechnika Białostocka, Białystok, Polska

1. Uwagi wstępne

Procesy integracji regionalnej stanowią ważny element polityki gospodarczej państw we współczesnej gospodarce światowej. W przypadku krajów silnych gospodarczo często stanowią one element rozszerzania zakresu swoich wpływów gospodarczych i politycznych w regionie. Kraje słabsze poszukują w ich ramach drogi ekonomicznego rozwoju, bezpieczeństwa gospodarczego i politycznego.

Po rozpadzie Związku Socjalistycznych Republik Radzieckich nowopowstałe państwa musiały dokonać nowego określenia swojej roli i miejsca w gospodarce światowej, wyznaczyć kierunki ekonomicznego rozwoju oraz określić zakres prowadzonej zagranicznej polityki ekonomicznej. Próba rozwiązania tej trudnej sytuacji, a jednocześnie stworzenia nowego systemu odniesień była inicjatywa powołania na obszarze poradzieckim Wspólnoty Niepodległych Państw. Ważnym czynnikiem generującym konieczność współpracy w regionie są silne zależności i powiązania infrastrukturalne oraz chęć zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa w regionie.