

education through the teaching of basics rather than to provide a sm allelite w ith higher academic education .

Critique of the Concept of Education

Education and training often are seen as key-functions w ith regard to the developm ent of a society .H ow ever, education and training now adays becam e m ore and m ore oriented to-wards econom ic grow th, that is they have becom e a function of econom y. The orientation tow ards econom ical grow th does not take into account the lim its of grow th and the ecological problem s already caused by uncontrolled econom ic grow th. The first deficit of the presently w idespread concept of education is its orientation tow ards econom ical grow th. M ay be that in this situation som e of the ideas expressed by von H um boldt about tw o hundred years ago gain new im portance despite the valid criticism against them . Education m ust not be instrum entalised for trade and com m erce.

Secondly it is problem atic that this understanding of education and training, w hich is of course a w estem approach, m eanw hile has becom e the m odel for m ost of the developing countries. The m odel of econom ic grow th for developm ent has shaped educational system s

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and pedagogical thought and thus contributes to the dependency of developing countries on w estem ideologies of grow th and m odernisation w hich are incom patible to the idea of fair distribution of chances in life. It seem s that the claim that education as such is the key for developm ent is false, at least w ith regard to the m odern w estem type of education w hich seem s to aim at a kind of developm ent w hich w ill not

be sustainable.

Development

Development - a W estem Concept

D evelopm ent is also a w estem , a European concept. This is especially true in the philosophical sense. In the 19. century in Europe the concept of developm ent began to play an im portant role in the philosophy of history, nature and culture. The term denotes a purposeful sequence of different stages w hich follow each other w ith inner necessity and w hich can be perceived as the unfolding of a given potential. The term developm ent also contains the idea of a goal w hich is inherent to the developm ental process. Therefore especially in the G erm an idealism the term developm ent acquired the character of a value: D evelopm ent as such w as developm ent tow ards a higher stage, tow ards perfection and progress.

Development and Underdevelopment

The phenom ena w hich usually are described by the term s developm ent and underdevelopm ent exist since Europe conquered the w orld geographically, m ilitarily and econom ically in the age of discoveries and colonialism and parallel to this also conquered and subdued the w orld scientifically and technologically .D evelopm ent on the one hand and underdevelopm ent on the other hand are problem s of the m odern age, they are the tw o sides of the sam e coin. For Europe the m odern age undoubtedly m eant progress, but at the sam e tim e it during the recent 500 years m eant underdevelopm ent for the rest of the w orld w hich w as caused by the oppression and/or destruction of highly developed civilisations and w hich w as accom panied by the econom ic exploitation and by m ilitary conquest.

Europe a Model for Development?

The Success of Europe

Europe, this successful and at tim es also brutal and barbaric civilisation , becam e the m odel for developm ent forcing its concepts of econom y, science and education upon other civilisations. European form s of institutionalised education for exam ple in the form of schools and universities today are in operation w orld-w ide

and what is taught in these institutions largely also is influenced by European patterns. Schools, universities and educational systems almost everywhere are the heritage of the colonial time. This is evident in the fact that

- the language of education in many countries up to date is the language of the former colonial powers.
- Science and technology as they have been developed in Europe triumphed all over the world.
- the European mode of industrial mass-production is the economic and industrial standard which many countries try to achieve.
- the democratic traditions and ideals of human rights which have been developed in Europe have become models for democratic movements in all parts of the world.

Without participation in modernity transformation of social conditions and overcoming of mass poverty and political dependency will not be possible.

On this background, and not only from the European perspective, development often is seen as aiming at and reaching the European standards. The goals of development - according the theories of modernisation - are oriented towards the development of democratic western capitalist industrial societies.

European Guilt

But there is a dark side to the positive picture of Europe and its influence to the rest of the world. The development of Europe took place not only at the expense of those countries which today in a mixture of paternalism and euphemism are called developing countries, but also

on the expense of nature and finally humankind itself. The development which has been successful in Europe therefore has been called a process towards barbarism. Comprehensive education, scientific progress and economic success did not prevent social crisis nor eruptions of terrible destruction in numerous European wars of the modern age up to now.

Development therefore can not simply consist in the adoption of the successful European model of modernisation, but it in first place must be the overcoming of the state of dependency of most of the countries of this world.

Critique of the Concept of Development

Against the background which has been sketched above it has to be questioned whether the western, arrogant concept of development is valid for an analysis of the present situation of the world and whether this concept can be guiding for political and social action which aims at improvement of the conditions of the majority of humankind as well as at the preservation of the environment. The idea of development through education has become questionable because the concept of development does not only absolutise western standards, but presently development is also the result of underdevelopment of the majority of countries mainly caused through Europe and North America. It has been suggested therefore to replace the term development by the term social change or social transformation (R. M. Shana). And then the question is of course: What is the direction of change and transformation?

Whatever we understand by development, whether we see development as satisfaction of basic needs or combat of poverty or liberation from political and economic dependency or as industrialisation and modernisation, whether we continue to use the term development or not, without participation in modernity transformation of social conditions and overcoming of mass poverty and political dependency will not be possible.

There will be no future if the European model is uncritically continued. The style of life, the economy and the usage of natural resources as

practiced in Europe and the industrialised world are not sustainable. A change is therefore urgently needed. Yet, there will be also no future if the ambivalent success story of Europe is ignored or denied. The present and future problems of our earth will not be solved if we fall back to a pre-modern stage. The way out is before us, not behind us. And we must find it together.

Tertiary Education and Development Critique

Should the Churches engage in tertiary education? This question in fact has been answered already. The churches are engaged in tertiary education. There are Christian colleges and universities in many countries and churches run scholarship programmes to sponsor tertiary education. Yet, the question remains whether tertiary education contributes to development? There are critical voices disputing the contribution of tertiary education to development.

One of the arguments is that Tertiary education serves only a privileged minority. It is more important, the critics would say, to improve the basic education of the underprivileged masses. People directly profit from basic education whereas tertiary education does not have an immediate impact on the situation of the poor. In short, tertiary education is not related to the proverbial grassroots. This argument is not entirely wrong. However, despite the grain of truth in it, this critique is short-sighted. It was right if the engagement in tertiary education was the only approach of the churches with regard to

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education and development. But, in fact, tertiary education is in principle complementary to other endeavours and it only constitutes a small part of the activities of the churches.

As a complementary effort tertiary education in the context of the churches' development activities is indispensable. In a highly complex world coined by natural science and technology with its strong tendency towards globalisation it seems to be impossible to improve the situation of the underprivileged and poor masses without experts who are trained on a high scientific level. Likewise, it might be impossible for the countries of the so called Third World to liberate themselves from dependency in which they are caught up even in post-colonial time if they do not have a well educated elite of their own.

Support of tertiary education, and this refers to job oriented scientific and practical training as well as to pure research and high level academic formation, is an indispensable part of a strategy to improve the conditions of life of the poor and underprivileged masses. Experience shows that in many cases highly qualified people have initiated and carried movements which combat poverty and that they have worked for marginalised minorities and for justice and peace, thus contributing to the construction of a just, free and equal civil society.



Tertiary Education and the Churches

Christian Higher Education

The churches are engaged in tertiary education. However, this engagement is justified only if it is a distinctively Christian engagement. What makes an institution of higher education a Christian institution? If there is no specifically Christian mathematics, physics, biology, history, linguistics or any other science, why then do churches run colleges, universities and scholarship programmes?

A first and preliminary answer could be: Churches run colleges, universities and scholarship programmes because they want to equip young people with the necessary skills and knowledge that they may become able to responsibly run the public affairs in a rather complex world. This answer is close to Luther's argument when he tried to convince the magistrates to set up schools. But this was an argument directed to the worldly authorities not to the church. If the churches engage in education and particularly in tertiary education then there must be more to it.

Christian higher education ought to include in the teaching of the subject matter the reflection of question like the following: For what purpose

does a person study a particular subject? What are the aims and objectives for which a person intends to use the acquired knowledge and his or her talents? Is for example somebody willing to serve as a medical doctor in a district hospital in a rural area even if the working conditions are professionally not satisfying? Is someone willing to serve in a development project or a church, even if his salary is much less than in the private sector? Is someone willing to reflect his or her scientific work ethically and to draw consequences if necessary? The ethical reflection must be included in the curriculum of the various subjects. Ethics is not a matter which can be treated as an appendix.

Subject Areas

Another question which we have to put with regard to Christian higher education is which kind of studies, which subject areas and which science should be taught. In this connection complex questions of ethics of science have to be carefully thought about as well the question of relevance of specific types of research for the respective context.

I should like to suggest that in principle studies in all subject areas are possible in Christian institutions of higher learning as long as they



fit in with the conciliar process for justice, peace and integrity of creation. Studies which fulfil this criterion are a contribution to sustainable development towards a just and peaceful society.

Conclusion

Education as such does not serve development in the sense of improvement of conditions of life of the underprivileged masses, but development is not possible without education. Education including tertiary education serves development if it assumes a serving role: Research and studies are no ends in themselves, but they have a task which is related to society at large. The task is to contribute to a human and just society. The critical yardstick against which tertiary education has to be measured therefore is not exclusively a scientific one but a social one. Do tertiary education and scientific work serve justice, peace and integrity of creation? The church has, as I said above, the task to preach the Gospel, to teach and to counsel. Within this general objective the church indeed has a specific mission for education and devel-

opment. It is the mission of the church to set examples also in the field of higher education for a type of scholarly work which contributes to reconciliation in society, between nations and also between humans and nature. The specific mission of the church is to advance higher education which serves this purpose not only by equipping young people with scientific knowledge and skill but also by forming their personality in such a way that they are able to use their knowledge and skills as peacemakers, defenders of the poor and keepers of the earth.

Tertiary education in this sense will play a serving role for and in the process of sustainable development. It is therefore a continuous responsibility of the churches to critically examine their own institutions of higher education whether they really serve this purpose or whether they are simply following the general pattern of science. Christian colleges, universities and scholarship programmes are only justified as endeavours of the churches if they are distinct in the above described way. Being distinct does not exclude co-operation with others wherever possible and it certainly does not mean to claim that only Christian institutions of higher learning can contribute to justice peace and the integrity of nature through their teaching and research. It therefore belongs to the mission of the church to dialogue with and to encourage others who are moving in similar directions.

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References

- 1 Joh 20:21
- 2 cp. the Declaration on Mission - Ecumene - Partnership of the General Synod of the Reformed Churches in Bavaria and North-West Germany of 26.4.1996: Die Kirche Jesu Christi verdankt sich der Zuwendung und Sendung (Mission) Gottes, und sie ist in der Kraft des Heiligen Geistes zugleich Teil dieser fortwährenden Mission ihres Herrn. (I,1)
- 3 Acts 1:8
- 4 An die Ratsherrn aller Städte deutschen Landes, daß sie christliche Schulen aufrichten und halten sollen (1524): K. Bornkamm u. G. Ebeling (Hrsg.) Martin Luther ausgewählte Schriften, Bd. 5 Kirche, Gottesdienst, Schule: Insel Verlag, Frankfurt am Main (1982) 40-72; WA 15; 27-53; Eine Predigt Martin Luthers, daß man Kinder zur Schulen halten solle (1530): ibid. 90-139; WA 30,2;517-588
- 5 An die Ratsherrn aller Städte p. 48
- 6 Eine Predigt Martin Luthers, daß man Kinder zur Schulen halten solle p. 138
- 7 An die Ratsherrn aller Städte pp. 52ff; pp. 98ff
- 8 Eine Predigt Martin Luthers p. 106
- 9 Eine Predigt Martin Luthers p. 118
- 10 s. Joachim H. Knoll; Horst Siebert, Wilhelm von Humboldt. Politik und Bildung: Heidelberg (1969) 62

