

## **Education as Transcultural Education: A Global Challenge**

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*In all European countries, education has been related to nation building. It has contributed to the building of national identity, national consciousness and the development of a nation state. Since the Second World War and above all since the fall of the Berlin Wall, education in the European Union has also included a consideration of European and cultural diversity. Culture does not designate a self-contained, uniquely definable ensemble of practices, values, symbolizations and imaginations. The borders between cultures are dynamic and change according to context. Globalization must be understood as a process in which two global developmental tendencies that define the present are advancing reciprocally in a manner that is not without conflict. One tendency is toward universal standardization of the world; the other tendency is toward provision of room for cultural diversity in the process. Both tendencies also create new forms of globalization. The mission of transcultural education is contact with the other and with alterity in a manner that is free of violence. Within the scope of transcultural education, the terms differentiation, transformation and hybrid formation play a central role in dealing with the foreign, the other and alterity. These terms are interrelated. Their interconnectedness is obvious. In education from an transcultural point of view, it is important to make use of these three concepts for the analysis of cultural phenomena and relations. Transcultural learning, which is oriented toward a better understanding of the other and toward a reduction in violence toward other people and future generations, will also have to develop innovative forms of learning. In a radical perspective, a transcultural education for sustainability oriented toward peace and social justice leads to a far-reaching reform of the educational system. In conjunction with the realization of a complex multimodal learning process, four perspectives play an important role: mimetic learning, performativity of learning, inquiry learning, and rituals of learning and communication.*

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This orientation was predominant in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Since the Second World War and above all since the fall of the Berlin Wall, education in the European Union has also included a consideration of European and cultural diversity. If it is now the case that culture, including the culture of the other, is viewed alongside the nation as a central point of reference for education in Europe, then the understanding of culture that underlays my observations must first be defined. I would like to distinguish between two definitions of culture. The first sees culture as including art, music, literature, the performing arts and architecture. The second is broader and thus embraces “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (Art. 2.1 of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003). When speaking of education in the sense of transcultural education in European civic societies, the basis for this understanding is formed by a broader concept of culture that includes the narrower concept of culture that denotes aesthetic education (Imai/Wulf 2007).

This broader concept of culture also forms the basis for the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which was adopted by the overwhelming majority of all countries and to date has been ratified by more than 100 countries. This convention emphasizes the ineluctability of *cultural diversity* in the face of the demands of globalization, which has a standardizing influence. It also makes clear that culture can no longer be equated with national culture, but must instead be understood in the sense of the definition quoted above. This definition places the focus of the convention on cultural identity, rather than national identity. The right of cultural identity is understood as a human right whose realization must be protected and promoted by the international community of countries. All people should have the possibility to develop in dialog with the members of other cultures in a spirit of mutual respect and recognition. In a paragraph of the convention that is extremely important for education, it is stated that one of the convention’s objectives is “to foster interculturality in order to develop cultural interaction in the spirit of building bridges among peoples” (Art. 1.d). Since cultural activities, products and objects are of central importance for the development of cultural identity, we must avoid reducing them to their character as commodities, which occupies center stage within the WTO and its agreements. Like Japan, the countries of the European Union and many other countries, the European Union ratified the convention as a community of 27 states. With this action, the EU committed itself to respecting and promoting cultural diversity in the relationships to its states and externally to other countries.

Culture does not designate a self-contained, uniquely definable ensemble of practices, values, symbolizations and imaginations. The borders between cultures are dynamic and change according to context. They are permeable. They allow themselves to be crossed by many cultural phenomena and prevent other phenomena from crossing. Cultural phenomena overlap, intermix and change within and between cultures. They flow back and forth between the cultures. An exchange occurs in which asymmetries determine the cultural flow. The processes of exchange are the result of many constructive and destructive energies. Mimetic assimilations and translations of the cultural phenomena into new contexts occur in many of these processes of exchange. Economic, political and social processes as well as electronic media play an important role. An overlapping of the global and the local occurs, leading to the creation of “glocal” phenomena whose origins are often difficult to trace. In these processes, new forms of the cultural and social imaginary are created (Huppauf/Wulf 2009).

In an era of globalization, whether violence and war can be avoided and sustainability can be achieved as a political objective depends in no small part on how cultural diversity is handled. The mission of transcultural education is contact with the other and with alterity in a manner that is free of violence. Sensibility for the alterity of nature and its resources includes the integration of sustainability into the cultural exchange and the associated reduction in violent treatment of nature. From the perspective of UNESCO, in order to promote better *handling of cultural diversity* (Wulf 2006), education must be supplemented to include *education for peace* (Wulf 2008, 1974, 1973; Frieters-Reermann 2009) and *education for sustainable development* (Wulf/Newton 2006). If this is successful, the educational system will have made an indispensable contribution to meeting the great challenges of humankind. In Germany, this realization has gained greater acceptance in recent years. Hence, education for handling cultural differences and education for sustainability have made their way into the recommendations of the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the framework plans for education in schools (curricula), where they supplement the objectives and implementations of education for peace that have long existed (Georgi 2008; Nohl 2006; Krüger-Potratz 2005; Stevenson 2003).

### **One-World Mentality vs. Cultural Diversity**

Today, globalization can no longer be understood as a process involving the creation of a one-world mentality on the basis of the European-American model of globalization. Rather, globalization must be understood as a process in which two global developmental tendencies that define the present are advancing reciprocally in a manner that is not without conflict. One tendency is toward universal standardization of the world; the other tendency is toward provision of room for cultural diversity in the process. Both tendencies also create new forms of globalization. In order to comprehend the complexity of these processes, I will first outline the central structural characteristics of the first tendency, i.e., the standardizing influence of globalization. After that, I will present in detail several central characteristics of cultural diversity that cause differences in globalization in the various regions of the world. This becomes clear in the differences between the Chinese and Indian forms of globalization. No matter how these processes occur in particular, they lead to people from different cultures communicating and interacting with each other intensively. As a result, they must learn to handle cultural diversity with caution and in a productive manner.

Let us now envision several characteristics of a globalization process that is oriented toward standardization, characteristics that have a profound influence on the lifestyles and self concepts of most Europeans. Globalization is now all-pervasive in almost all areas of life, with the result that the effects of crisis situations such as the current crisis of the financial markets and banks are exerted not only nationally, but worldwide. Among many other aspects, the following six characteristics are of constitutive importance for a globalization process with standardization as its objective (Wulf/Merkel 2002):

- international financial and capital markets, the mobility of capital and the increasing influence of neoliberal economic theory;
- company strategies and markets with global strategies of production, distribution and cost minimization by means of outsourcing;

- transnational political bodies and the declining influence of the nation state;
- patterns of consumption, lifestyles and cultural styles and their tendency towards uniformity;
- the new media and tourism;
- research, development and technology;
- the one-world mentality.

To these characteristics we must also add the *globalization of poverty, suffering, war, terror, exploitation and destruction of nature*, which are related to colonialism and capitalism and have long been ignored. These developments are leading to a separation of the political from the economic spheres, to a globalization of lifestyles and to a rise in the importance of new communication media. These are no linear processes. They are disrupted in many places and produce contradictory results. They have different objectives and decision-making structures and are organized in networks, like rhizomes. They do not run parallel in space or time and they are subject to a wide variety of different dynamic forces. They are multi-dimensional and multi-regional and deeply rooted in the centers of neoliberal capitalism. The dominance of a globalized economy over political life and the globalization of lifestyles by means of the increasing presentation of experience as images in the new media help to bring about changes in the way we work. All this has been accompanied by a decline in the influence of the individual nation states, while cultures have become increasingly permeable and heterogeneous, resulting in the development of new ways and spheres of life.

Directed against this tendency is another tendency that attempts to improve the regional appropriateness of the globalization processes and that points out that these processes cannot be successful without the integration of cultural diversity. Those taking this position proceed on the assumption that cultural diversity is a universal condition of humanity and that allowance for it must therefore be an integral part of globalization. The diversity of human cultures is created by the uniqueness and plurality of forms of expression of people and societies. It enables exchange between members of the various cultures that have long been impossible to clearly distinguish from each other, ensuring the vitality of the cultures. Cultural diversity protects creativity and requires respect for differences and alterity. However, the right to cultural diversity can only claim validity insofar as other human rights are not violated.

The white paper on intercultural dialog developed by the Council of Europe, an association of *all* European countries, including Turkey and Russia, has the same objective, asking for support for the following strategies for the promotion of European and global interculturality:

- democratic governance and cultural diversity;
- democratic citizenship and participation;
- learning and teaching intercultural competences;
- spaces for intercultural dialogue;
- intercultural dialogue in international relations.

(Council of Europe 2008, 37–50)

The challenges of globalization have made it necessary to conduct a thorough investigation into the conditions of human life as they stand today. This is the task of a contemporary anthropology that can no longer be reduced to ethnology, philosophical anthropology or anthropological

issues in history, but must be reformulated as *historical and cultural anthropology* (Wulf 2005–2008, 2009, 2010; Wulf/Kamper 2002). Thus defined, anthropology must set itself the task of elaborating a body of knowledge that makes a contribution to improving human beings' understanding of themselves and the world and takes cultural diversity into account. This anthropological knowledge must include a reflection of its historicity and culturality, thus providing a frame of reference for education in such a way that the anthropological perspective is included. If we are to grasp the situation of human beings adequately today, we also need, for example, to understand the historical and cultural coordinates of globalization. For this purpose anthropological studies are needed that make a contribution to the development of an anthropology of education that does justice to the conditions of the globalized world (Wulf 2002; Wulf, 2003).

### **Alterity and Heterological Thinking**

In a globalization process that not only accepts cultural diversity as a condition of globalization but also promotes it, the focus is on the question of how dealing with the other of a foreign culture can be shaped and how the skills required for this can be taught as a part of the educational process. Two points of view must be taken into account here. Cultures are not self-containing entities that are clearly differentiated from each other and precisely defined. It is rather the case that most contain influences from other cultures, from which several elements have been assimilated in one form or another. Hence, we must understand cultures as dynamic and changing continuously. On the basis of migratory movements that are strong throughout the world, many people no longer belong to just one, but instead to two cultures or even more, so that it is no longer possible to speak of an unambiguous cultural identity. Accordingly, the other is also not a self-containing static entity. The way in which it is perceived depends on context and the relationship that exists between the perceiver and the perceived. The perception of the other is relational and is subject to contextual changes. The importance of the relational character of our relationships to the foreign and the other cannot be overemphasized. What is experienced as alterity always depends on us and is relational for this reason.

In the light of the one-world mentality which still dominates large parts of the discussion on globalization, it is imperative to highlight historical and cultural differences, even where appearances may be deceptively similar. It is this that makes it possible to communicate with the other. If human beings were aware of the otherness in themselves and their own cultures, this would open up new possibilities for understanding the otherness of other people and other cultures and of developing a way of thinking from the point of view of the other. With the increasing awareness of differences and alterity and the recognition of cultural diversity, it is increasingly becoming possible to identify common aspects of different cultures and to break down barriers between them. The ability to perceive and accept differences is essential and can even help to prevent violent conflict. However, even acceptance of cultural diversity has its limits; it has to be related to issues of human rights and global ethics. It must be accepted that disagreements will arise with members of other cultures in this context. Wherever possible, such disputes must be conducted without recourse to the use of force.

Living conditions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are strongly influenced by the struggle between the uniformity of globalization and movements which emphasize cultural difference and diversity. These include the conflicts between the global and the local, the universal and the singular, tradi-

tion and modernity, the spiritual and the material, necessary competition and equal opportunities, short-term and long-term reflections, the rapid spread of knowledge and the limitations of our human capacity to cope with this (Delors 1996; VENRO 2009).

In order to be able to deal competently with cultural diversity, we need to experience the other. Neither people nor cultures can develop satisfactorily if they cannot mirror themselves in others, if they do not engage and influence each other. Both cultures and individuals are formed through exchange with others. Reciprocal exchange processes allow relationships to develop between people and their alterities and broaden the horizons of their lives and experience in the process.

In education, it is important to create an awareness of the fact that European cultures have developed three strategies to reduce alterity to the known and trusted. One of these is European rationality—*logocentrism*—which has led to foreign cultures and people being judged according to their adherence to logocentric norms. Whenever other cultures fail to live up to this expectation, they are degraded and not regarded as being of equal value. The second strategy centers on European individuality and the *egocentrism* that goes with it. This egocentrism led to the development of a high esteem for the individual and an increase in individualist self-assertion at the cost of community. The third strategy employed to reduce alterity to European standards is *ethnocentrism*, which has also led to an overvaluation of European culture and a corresponding undervaluation of other cultures. The effects of these strategies are still apparent in the dynamics of globalization today and constitute an obstacle to dealing with cultural diversity productively (Wulf/Merkel 2002; Wulf 2006). If students become aware of these mechanisms, they might gain the ability to reduce their impact on the perception of the other.

In education from a transcultural perspective, students have to become aware that in many areas, processes of contact, encounter and exchange are determined by the circulation of capital, products, the workforce and symbolic goods. The dynamics of these processes lead to meetings between people and cultures and engender both material and immaterial relationships. They occur within the framework of global power structures and are intrinsically unequal, being determined by consolidated power relationships that have their roots in history. Despite the fact that many such processes are influenced by capitalist market movements and therefore fuel inequality, they also promote encounters with the alterity of other people and cultures.

Societies and cultures are constituted by contact with alterity. To experience other people and cultures is central to the development of children and adolescents. People can only understand themselves as reflected by and through the reactions of other human beings and cultures. This implies that knowing ourselves means that we must be aware that there are limits to our understanding of alterity. How is it possible to accept one's experiences of other people without triggering mechanisms that reduce them to the known and trusted? There are several answers to this question that differ depending on context. One way to bear the alterity of strangers is based on the experience of one's own foreignness, i.e., feeling surprised by one's own feelings and actions. Such events can promote flexibility and curiosity about the alterity of other people and cultures.

Thus, in order to be able to understand and engage with alterity, we need to experience our own foreignness. This experience constitutes a basis for developing the ability to think and feel from the perspective of the other, in the context of which the engagement with the non-identical is of central importance. Such experiences can be expected to increase sensitivity and the readiness to be open to what is new and unknown. In turn, this results in a better ability to bear com-

plex situations emotionally and mentally without acting out stereotypes. Obviously, these options for human development can also be subverted into their opposites. In such cases, the encounter with cultural variation is met by violent action aimed at reducing difference to sameness. Because such efforts mostly fail, a vicious circle of constantly escalating violent action ensues, which results from mimetic processes of mutual imitation (Wulf 2005).

To avoid encounters with cultural diversity and alterity ending in rivalry and violence, we need normative rules. These have been formulated in the Charter of Human Rights, which has come to command authority far beyond the boundaries of the European culture from which it emerged.

A consciousness of the *non-identity of the subject* constitutes an important prerequisite for openness toward the other. In the confrontation with foreign cultures, with the other in one's own culture and with the foreign in oneself, the capability is to be developed to perceive and think from the perspective of the other. This change in perspective makes it imperative to avoid the reduction of the foreign to the own. An attempt is to be made at suspending the own and experiencing it from the perspective of the other. The objective is the development of *heterological thinking*. Its focus is on the relationship of the familiar and the foreign, of knowing and not knowing, and of certainty and uncertainty. As a consequence of de-traditionalization and individualization as well as differentiation and globalization, many things taken for granted in daily life are called into question and require individual reflection and judgment. Nevertheless, the liberty accrued to the individual as a consequence of these developments does not represent a real gain in freedom. The individual often only has decision-making leeway in situations in which he or she has no control over the preconditions of the situation in which the decision is made. In the realm of the environment, for example, the individual is able to make environmentally-conscious decisions, but he or she has little influence on the societal macrostructures that really determine the quality of the environment.

The increase in the *inscrutability of the world* leads to an increase in the *uncertainty of the individual*, who must tolerate the difference between him- or herself and the other. In this situation, uncertainty and insecurity become central characteristics of life in society. On the one hand, they have their origin in the world that is exterior to the person; on the other hand, their origin lies in the interior of the person and ultimately in the interrelationship between the interior and exterior. In the face of this situation, there is no lack of attempts to make this uncertainty bearable through ostensive certainties. However, these certainties do not help to regain the lost security. Their validity is relative and arises primarily from the exclusion of alternatives. What is excluded is determined on the one hand by the psychological and social constitution of the individual and, on the other hand, by the societal power structures and processes of setting and excluding values, norms, ideologies and discourses. These processes often lead to the otherness of the other not being perceived and the closing of the mind to the possibilities of perceiving and thinking from the perspective of the other.

## **Differentiation, Transgression, Hybridity**

Within the scope of transcultural education, the terms differentiation, transformation and hybrid formation play a central role in dealing with the foreign, the other and alterity. These terms are interrelated. Their interconnectedness is obvious (Audehm/Velten 2007). In education from an transcultural point of view, it is important to make use of these three concepts for the analysis of

cultural phenomena and relations:

1) The concept of *difference* is important for creating boundaries and making a contribution to rendering them dynamic. It is not possible to form a national, cultural or European identity without differences. Thus, for example, in the processes of inclusion and exclusion that take place in rituals, differences are created which are crucial for the performative character of the rituals (Wulf et al. 2010). The category of difference also takes on a special importance for understanding alterity. The ways in which heterogeneity and alterity are dealt with are crucial to this cultural diversity, which is created by acts of differentiation (Wulf 2006).

2) For the analysis of social and cultural developments, it is important to understand *processes of transgression*. Transgression consists of overstepping the limits set by rules, norms and laws on the one hand, and overstepping historically created boundaries on the other. These acts of transgression can be non-violent, but they frequently also involve manifest structural or symbolic violence. In dealing with cultural diversity, boundaries are often transgressed, leading to the creation of something new. Transgressions change norms and rules, ways of life and practices. They change and shift borders and create new cultural relations and constellations in the process. In order to understand these processes, we need to make a thorough analysis of their contexts, focusing on the origin of the change or innovation in question.

3) To understand our own time, the analysis of new *hybrid cultural forms* by means of difference and transgression is a crucial issue. As communication and interaction between different countries become ever closer and faster, and economic, political, social and cultural exchange becomes more intensive, more and more hybrid cultural forms come into being. Homi Bhabha (2004) first used the term hybridization to define cultural contacts in a non-dualistic and non-essentialist way by describing them in terms of their function of creating identity by means of a “third space.” The third space is liminal; it is a space in-between which emphasizes its own in-betweenness. In this liminal space, borders are subject to subversion and restructuring and hierarchies and power relationships are changed. The crucial questions are to what extent these processes result from performative practices and *how* these new forms of hybridization are created. They are mixed forms in which elements belonging to different systems and contexts change their character in a mimetic process, leading to a new cultural identity. This identity is no longer constituted by distinguishing oneself from another, but in mimetically assimilating oneself to the other.

These thoughts make it clear: Only if the handling of cultural diversity is successful will it be possible to prevent wars and reduce violence between people. Avoiding war and violent conflicts, i.e., the creation and maintenance of living conditions that are relatively free of violence, is the decisive prerequisite for successful human life. This is why education for peace is a central requirement of global transcultural learning.

## Education for Peace

Violence between people of different societies and cultures is unavoidable if images of the other, which help communicate perspectives of historical and cultural diversity as conditions of Europeanization and globalization, do not become an integral part of education. This was shown in the violent history of Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The critical examination of the different forms of violence and the possibilities for peace are therefore a central task of education. Due to the exis-

tence of modern weapons of mass destruction, human beings still face an unprecedented threat of war and violence. Peace has become the prime condition for human life. Its production and preservation is key not only to the survival of individuals, generations and nations, but also to the survival of humanity as a whole. In the context of education, it is therefore imperative that curricula both cover the conditions that lead to war, violence and destruction and search for ways of rendering them less harmful or even overcoming them.

Education for peace is the contribution of education to overcoming these conditions. It recognizes that they are often due to systemic problems rooted in the macrostructure and can only be reduced in part by education. Education concerning peace is based on the idea that a constructive manner of dealing with the major problems currently facing humanity must be part of a lifelong learning process that begins in childhood and continues throughout adult life.

In the early 1970s, peace research elaborated on the fact that peace could not be brought about by a change in consciousness alone. The experiences of the peace movement have confirmed these analyses. The absence of peace and the presence of violence are too deeply rooted in social structures to be overcome by human striving for peace alone. Peace requires additional political action directed at reducing the violent structures inherent to the international system and to society at large.

Education for peace must draw on central guiding ideas such as “organized lack of peace,” “structural violence” and “social justice.” These ideas emphasize the social character of peace and guard us from fantasies of omnipotence and naïve problem reductions. According to Galtung’s differentiation, which is still valid today, peace not only denotes the absence of war and direct violence (a negative definition of peace), but also needs to be understood as the reduction of structural violence and the production of social justice (a positive definition of peace). According to this understanding of peace, education must not only tackle war and direct violence between nations and ethnic groups, but also address the violent conditions at the base of society (Wulf 2008, 1973, 1974; Galtung 1973; Senghaas 1995, 2000; Frieters-Reermann 2009).

Education towards peace condemns both organized open violence and structural violence. As an alternative, it promotes processes of non-violent conflict resolution, the realization of social justice and the improvement of co- and self-determination. It is conscious of the fact that this is a process rather than a state and that, despite its apparent unattainability, peace must remain its unconditional objective.

Overcoming apathy and experiences of powerlessness is the precondition for any peace-related learning process that can pave the way for a disposition to act. One way to learn consists of linking one’s own experiences of deficiency with major global problems. The insight that certain macro-structural conflict formations determine and even endanger one’s own life leads to a motivation to champion peace. Thus, beyond imparting relevant insights, education can bring about changes in attitude and promote political commitment, both of which lead to changes in political action.

Education for peace requires the establishment of certain standards if it is to further non-violent learning processes. It will also develop forms of participatory and autonomous learning. These learning processes place great responsibility in the hands of the recipients of the teaching of history. They are encouraged to develop their visions of peace and a consciousness of the historical causes and the general changeability of conflict formations; this contributes to the conception and development of blueprints for changing the world. At the same time, it ensures that education and people’s perception of problems are oriented towards the future.

The unrestrained consumption of non-renewable energy is also an expression of violence toward future generations. Hence, education for sustainable development is also among the great tasks of global education. What is meant by education for sustainable development is—as is also the case for education for peace—a task that is to be specified on a regional basis and that will differ significantly in accordance with the state of development of the region.

## **Education for Sustainable Development**

The analysis of violence and organizational lack of peace with the objective of developing a commitment to forms of conflict resolution that are free of violence must be directed not only at other people, societies and cultures. A task that is no less important for the survival of humankind consists of analyzing violence exercised against nature and future generations through the consumption of non-renewable resources. Reducing this consumption through the development of education for sustainable development is the second part of this task. The aim of sustainable development is to realize a continuous process of all-encompassing social change which is to sustain the quality of life of the current generation while securing the options of future generations to create their own lives. Sustainable development has come to be recognized as a way of improving individual life chances and of promoting social prosperity, economic growth and ecological safety.

Agenda 21, ratified in 1992, led to the implementation of the “world decade for sustainable development” by UNESCO (2005–2014). The aims that were pursued in this decade differed according to world region. In Europe, working towards sustainability means first and foremost effecting an ecologically motivated change in the economic system. In less developed countries, the term is used mainly with reference to efforts to ensure the provision of basic services and education with the aim of catching up with the more developed countries. The goal of education for sustainability is to enable people to actively design an ecologically sane, economically productive and socially just environment, taking global aspects into consideration (Wulf/Newton 2006).

Sustainability is a regulative idea. Like peace, it can never be fully realized. Sustainable education is an important prerequisite for the gradual realization of sustainability/sustainable development. As such, the teaching of history for education for sustainability is directed at the individuals whose sensitivity and responsibility it seeks to promote. To this end, it needs to start with existing structures and, always bearing in mind individual and social conditions, to develop the creative abilities of young people. By this I mean the ability to shape their own lives and their own environments in accordance with the premises of sustainable development. To do so, they need to be able to learn from concrete problems, study their contexts and prepare reflective action. Education for sustainability implies a reflective and critical understanding of education and a readiness to participate in relevant individual and social learning processes. To this end, minimal standards for studies of sustainable development need to be developed that do justice to the multiple perspectives of sustainability.

Education for sustainable development should contribute to the establishment of social justice between nations, cultures, world religions and generations. Alongside the promotion and refashioning of the environment and economic conditions, the central principles of sustainability also include global responsibility and political participation. With these goals, which go far beyond protection of the environment and resources, the teaching of history for education for sustainability takes up ideas that were prepared in the 1970s (Wulf 1973, 1974). However, at that time there was

little recognition of a need for social justice between generations and of the growing importance of the task of conserving non-renewable resources.

### **Multimodality of Learning: New Perspectives of Transcultural Learning**

Transcultural learning, which is oriented toward a better understanding of the other and toward a reduction in violence toward other people and future generations, will also have to develop innovative forms of learning. In a radical perspective, a *transcultural education for sustainability oriented toward peace and social justice* leads to a far-reaching reform of the educational system. If one wants at least partially to realize these objectives which, due to their general and comprehensive nature, cannot be fully achieved, then this goal must also include changes in curricula and teaching methods. In teaching curricular areas that are important for these questions and for interdisciplinary integration of these perspectives into the education of the coming generation, it is not just a matter of mere conveyance of new content and knowledge. The objective is the *empowerment* of children through a fundamental shift in the perspective of education. This shift should not be limited to formal school education. A transcultural education for sustainability oriented toward peace and social justice is a continuous *life-long* task that is part of the formal educational system, professional education and continuing education as well as informal education.

Transcultural learning is multimodal (Kress 2010) and takes into account the following dimensions of learning (Delors 1996): *learning to know, learning to do, learning to live with others, learning to be*. The concept of *multimodality* makes it clear that learning takes place in many modes that must be taken into account. Only when this is successful does learning have lasting effects. Learning is synaesthetic, meaning that it occurs not just through one sense, but through several senses. Images, sounds and touch play a central role. When development of language and imagination is at the center of learning, its foundation in the senses takes on great significance. When this occurs, concepts are filled with perception and imagination can deal with material from the senses in a creative manner (Huppau/Wulf 2009).

In conjunction with the realization of a complex multimodal learning process, four perspectives play an important role: *mimetic learning, performativity of learning, inquiry learning, and rituals of learning and communication*.

#### **Mimetic Learning**

Mimetic learning is a basic form of cultural and transcultural learning that is multimodal. Mimetic learning involves the body and the senses. In transcultural learning, mimetic processes are directed at people, objects and facts of foreign cultures. In these processes, a “similarization” to the alterity of these non-self-containing cultures takes place. It occurs due to the fact that children take an impression, so to speak, from the representations of foreign cultures and integrate it into their imaginary (Huppau/Wulf 2009). Through mimetic processes, both an individual and a collective imaginary are created. Without mimetic representations, learning remains inanimate and does not enrich children’s imaginaries (Wulf 2007; Gebauer/Wulf 1995). The students’ mimetic learning relates to a foreign culture and to a teacher, whose method for examining, analyzing and interpreting foreign objects is imitated. In this process, these students do not just copy the teacher’s interest and the way that he or she deals with representations of a foreign culture. When children relate to the teacher mimetically, they develop their own approach to foreign cultures, to the other

and to alterity using the teacher's behavior as a guide. The teacher's model of behavior is of major significance for the initiation and facilitation of the children's mimetic learning processes. Mimetic learning processes are not merely processes of copying; rather, they are creative processes of imitation in which an expansion of the everyday-environment takes place by having children relate to foreign people and the foreign world or other cultures in an autonomous manner. Mimetic processes not only refer to other people in *face to face* situations, but also to imaginary actions, scenes and themes. Without reference to the other and to foreign cultures, children would not be able to develop adequately, neither into social beings nor into individuals.

The fact that humankind differs from all other forms of life through its distinct mimetic abilities was already recognized by Plato and Aristotle. This fact was studied in an extensive anthropological study on the conception and history of mimesis (Gebauer/Wulf 1995) and on the significance of mimetic processes in the acquisition of culture (Gebauer/Wulf 1998, 2003). More recent studies in primate research have proven that infants of eight months already command mimetic competencies that are more developed than those that can ever be attained by primates (Tomasello 1999). Other recent studies on "mirror neurons" have shown that the cognition of situations related to action display the same processes that can be observed during action itself (Rizzolatti/Craighero 2004; Iacoboni 2008). Last but not least, the "Berlin Study on Rituals" was able to prove for all of the four central fields of socialization studied that mimetic processes are of central significance for pedagogy, education and learning (Wulf 2005; Wulf et al. 2004, 2007, 2010, 2010a).

### **Transcultural Learning as a Performative Process**

When one speaks about the performativity of transcultural learning processes, the emphasis is on their enactment, their performance and their reality-constituting character. The relationship between physical and symbolic action is investigated. Research has focused on education and learning as processes of dramatic interaction, in which bodily and vocal action overlap, and where social scenarios and mimetic processes of circulation are of prime importance; these can be investigated by way of ethnographic methods. The focus on the performative nature of these processes implies an understanding of pedagogy as knowledge of action and therefore an interest in generating practical knowledge as a condition of pedagogic action.

Teaching and learning are not merely cognitive processes; they are also social processes in which the interactions between students play an important role. In learning, bodily processes play a larger role than is generally perceived. An analysis of gestures in the context of interaction during instruction makes clear the extent to which learning and education are managed through facial expressions, gestures and posture (Wulf et al. 2010a). To render knowledge embodied, the staging of the body plays an important role. Three aspects of *performativity* are central in three explicit ways. Firstly, education is a *historical and cultural performance*. This means that depending on the historical and cultural context and the associated traditions of school culture, education differs in different societies and cultures. To a large degree, these traditions determine which performative options exist for transcultural learning. Secondly, in education and learning, *language is often performative* and a mode of action. John Austin (1979) made this clear when he proved how important the performative character of speech is for communication and interaction. Hence, it is important to pay attention to this dimension in education. And thirdly, the performativity of education has a *sensuous or aesthetic dimension* that needs to be considered in the process of teaching and learning (Suzuki/Wulf 2007; Wulf/Zirfas 2007).

### **Inquiry Learning**

A modern understanding of education that is open toward the other does not only mean learning facts, but also learning how to learn, how to live together, how to act and how to be (Delors 1996). Transcultural learning can make an important contribution to the implementation in the school of an interdisciplinary mission that does not just convey subject-specific interrelationships of knowledge. For example, *social life* and the associated extracurricular experiences play an important role in the education of young people. In these processes, young people can learn to be independent and operate in a self-reliant manner with others in the community. Using the rituals of cooperative learning, students learn to rely on themselves to manage their learning processes. Ritual arrangements help here in the acquisition of practical knowledge regarding how to learn independently. Inquiry learning is of particular importance here. This form of learning strives to learn how one learns. Inquiry learning requires time and a thorough examination of material that needs to be discovered, structured and interpreted. This means integrating mimetic, performative and poietic modes of learning in order to create intensive learning experiences (Wulf 2003; Wulf et al. 2001, 2004, 2004a, 2007, 2010, 2010a; Werler/Wulf 2006; Suzuki/Wulf 2007).

### **Rituals of Learning and Communication**

To a great extent, schools are ritually organized institutions. School rituals, therefore, also play an important role in transcultural learning. They range from singular celebrations to repetitive school macro rituals such as annual enrollment, graduation ceremonies and pre-Christmas events, to the numerous rituals in class that mark the passage between breaks and lessons and to the design, structure and sequence of the various learning cultures in class. Rituals constitute social structures and functions and create communities in which children have their place. Apart from the symbolic content of their interaction and communication, the creation of community works by way of performative ritual practices that perform and enact community. Power relationships play an important role in the emergence of the order that these practices create. Through regularity and repetition, the relationships between children and between children and adults are confirmed as well as modified. Rituals and ritualizations have a beginning and an end. They are characterized by their dynamics, which cause adaptations and changes in child behavior. Their corporal practices create forms of action, images and schemata which children identify with, which they remember, and whose performance and enactment bring forth new forms of actions.

For the development of multimodal learning cultures in schools, rituals and ritualization play a central role. Learning as well as transcultural learning is understood as ritual action and accomplished as a collective task. With the aid of ritual arrangements, poietic and performative learning processes are initiated and support is provided for students' independence and self-control. Learning in school is understood as a social activity whose transcultural and gender-specific dimension receives particular attention. Ritual increases in flexibility can serve to transition from mere transfer of knowledge to poietic learning. In the open work situation of project teaching and in standardized situations of group conversations and lecture, the teaching and learning forms of traditional school rituals can be made more flexible. Methodologically, instruction can shift its main concern in this way from knowledge transfer to active learning. Softer and more flexible ritualizations that increase individual territorial, temporal, content-related and methodological latitude appear to make sense for this form of learning culture. Ritualizations of this kind support the socially oriented individual and advance the social semiotic approach to learning.

## Outlook

Today, education can no longer be understood as national education only. Being part of different cultures, it makes a contribution to the development of cultural identity. In view of the diversity of cultures, this is a complex task. As a result of the standardizing tendency of globalization, recognition of cultural diversity and its competent handling are increasing in significance. Hence, members of coming generations are encouraged to develop heterological thinking and a transcultural competence in dealing with the other. In this way, education becomes transcultural education. For the creation and maintenance of living conditions free of violence and for an orientation of education toward the values of peace and sustainability, this is indispensable. Transcultural education is multimodal education, in the context of which mimetic convergence on the other plays a central role. Transcultural education is performative, attempts to promote forms of inquiry learning and uses school rituals for the development of practical transcultural knowledge. For the future of humankind, it is imperative to introduce into the educational system perspectives of a transcultural education for sustainability that is oriented toward the values of peace and social justice.

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