Utopian planning of education and development

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The concept of development has been used in economics and education under different ideological labels and for a variety of planning purposes. However, the main reason for singling out education as instrumental in development is its role in producing the skilled manpower required to meet a country's socio-economic needs. Thus education has come to be regarded, in our view wrongly, as a supplier of 'human resources'; it has been turned into a formal institution concerned in practice with the immediate provision of trained skills and aptitudes, in which human beings are perceived as agents of production, their social, cultural and civic roles being relegated to the background.

Education has thus ceased to be a permanent lifelong process, and has become a system for awarding certificates, promoting social values and attitudes founded solely on paper qualifications and competition. It produces students whose aim is the prestige of a diploma or degree, not the genuine search for knowledge and its furtherance even after school and university.

In addition, the economic theory of development has now become obsessed with the attainment of economic indices of expansion in as short a time as possible, without pausing to analyse the effect of these changes on the lives of men and women. Greater emphasis is set on the production of goods than on the creators and users of these goods, on the assumption that production will indirectly benefit society.

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This development process is reflected in the theory and practice of planners, who try to predict foreseeable changes by applying to reality the measures they consider suitable to bring about such changes. Seen in this light, planning marks a departure from the search for an ideal world, and becomes merely a forecasting technique.

The Utopia/reality dilemma is the epistemological representation of the divide between the desirable and the possible, between a world which does not exist and a temporarily established order, between planning the future and planning the present. Utopia and reality are terms commonly used, in our view wrongly, to portray idealism and pragmatism as incompatible ways of life. Added to this is the idea, deeply rooted in today's money-dominated society that Utopia is a matter for idle speculation and fanciful imagination, leading nowhere.

Without entering into the philosophical discussion of Utopian and anti-Utopian thought, which began in the early seventeenth century, following the work of Sir Thomas More, and has continued up to the present day with the analytical study by Monclús (1981), we must establish the relationship between an ideal world and the learning process by defining what in practice is meant by Utopia. The Greek etymology *ou* (no) and *topos* (place), in other words a place or world that does not exist, does not necessarily mean that this world could not exist, and it was precisely in Thomas More's *Utopia* that the concept came to mean a plan or idea that is desirable but unrealizable in the established order of the present.

The notion of Utopia has developed in two clearly defined ways. The first, according to the 'phalanx' theory of Fourier, takes unreality and constructs an imaginary reality or another unreality, and the second takes existing reality as the starting-point for representing a different and better world on the basis of another possible future reality. We consider the second view to be essential to any strategy of future social planning and we take issue with the 'anti-climax' of the theory of contemporary planning.

Planning and natural growth

This 'anti-climax' is constantly in evidence in writings on social, economic and educational planning. In most cases, the objectives set by planners do not differ in any way from the objectives inherent in the natural and irreversible growth of any society. An existing reality is taken in order to prepare, or rather organize, strategies to attain a foreseeable reality, frequently the product of economic growth or development, according to Robert L. Heilbroner's theory. This

concept of development aims at producing a take-off point at which wealth, defined as productivity plus finance, exceeds domestic consumption; this explains the effort to expand gross national product (GNP). As a rule, take-off is achieved by increasing agricultural production and industrialization, accompanied by new institutions to manage the planned expanding economy. The result is that the development-oriented system brings with it an expansion in formal education in order to produce trained manpower, or human resources, constitue a professional class and modernize a country.

This purely expansionist planning model typifies today's society, in both capitalist and socialist countries, and causes an anti-climax in planning, turning it into a simple matter of forecasting, systematic organization and the subordination of desirable human goals to foreseeable economic development. Planning tends to identify objectives rather than create them, to maintain reality rather than transform it, and to match needs rather than expectations to resources.

We shall call this type of planning 'realistic' because it pairs reality with reality, aggregates and allocates resources, and is based on a possible pre-established perspective. This is modern planning, devoid of creative imagination, not designed to change the course of society, amounting to no more than a programming technique. Decisions are taken, but there is no thought. Decision is simply a matter of attributing to objects logical patterns of existence, and this is typical of contemporary rational planning. However, we must go beyond the mere analysis of a situation in order to see how its components interrelate and can be projected into the future. Figure 1 illustrates both strategies.

The concept of so-called Utopian planning as thinking towards a climax gives scope for reasoning, reflection, imagination, even dreams,

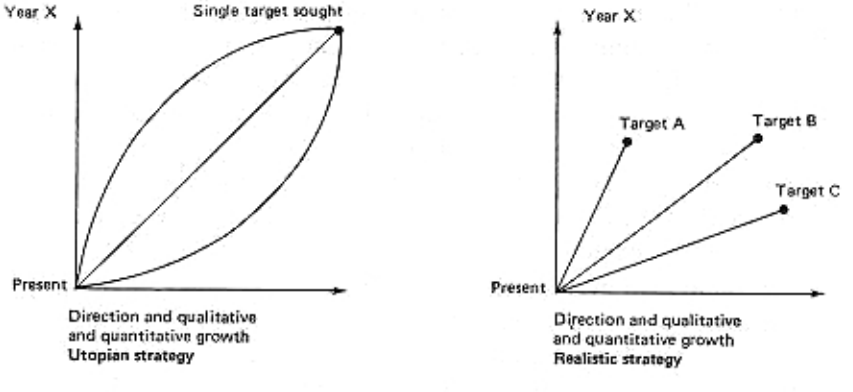

FIG. 1. The two strategies.

and provides the first link in the chain of human revolution. It is the historic and social heir of brute force.

The diagram on the right of Figure 1 represents the realistic planning model, with various development objectives, attained by using the resources available to maximum capacity. With this model, the most commonly used procedures are forecasting and regression, and at no point are the results integrated into a single objective. This explains the constant variability of the products of development. Inflation and re-evaluation may produce the same results. The system is adjusted daily, and there is no long-term vision. The great danger with this planning strategy is that, since the future direction of change is unknown, trends believed to be positive can actually defeat development. The clearest example of this is the failure to plan ecological conservation, which we have realized only now that the damage is evident.

The strategy we are proposing is shown on the left of Figure 1. We shall call this the model of Utopian planning, or the planning of alternatives converging on a single parameter. Here a single objective is sought, and only the paths leading to it change; these are planned in the light of available resources. Progress may be slow at the outset, rapid or steady, coming up against many or few obstacles, but never losing sight of the contours of the desired future society.

Utopian planning combines the desirable and the possible, not the possible and reality. The objective must always be desirable, perhaps impossible in today's estimation, but possible at a future date. The methodology of planning is organized in reverse order; starting from the Utopian goal, it comes back to present reality. Society sets its course in the direction of Utopia, and even when it does not reach it, it continues on that course. This ideological strategy differs a great deal from the development-oriented concept, which selects only short-term objectives, without setting its sights on the lives of our children and grandchildren. Incapable of portraying the man of the future, it makes him a slave of his own creations. The development-oriented model, shot through with contradictions due to its lack of long-term aims, is unable to maintain the ecological equilibrium that is crucial to the survival of the human race.

Conclusive proof of the failure of 'realistic' planning is the fact that more problems than solutions have arisen in the field of education. Here are some examples:

1. The model assumes that development of the economy (the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors) requires skilled human resources, and that the formal education system adequately satisfies these needs. Paradoxically there is a decline in the quality of education, compounded by the great demand for it from society, which

assumes that the higher the level of education, the better the job prospects. What the system promotes is not education but the acquisition of certificates and diplomas; the individual is motivated by the acquisition of qualifications, not by the search for knowledge, which alone genuinely inspires high educational standards. Diplomas are prized more than learning itself.

2. The 'realistic' model stresses the training of human resources to meet the needs of the economy, yet never before have there been more trained people out of work than in today's society, quite apart from those in occupations for which they have not been trained. This also happens in the non-capitalist development-oriented model, where vocational training is not related to the individual but to a productive system which perpetuates a dominating social structure, the aim being to increase production rather than modify the social relations inherent in the productive system. The only difference between the two kinds of social and political organization lies in efficiency and bureaucracy. The capitalist system is not so efficient in absorbing human capital but is more selective in the jobs offered, while the socialist system employs surplus trained manpower and creates a bureaucracy.
3. The 'realistic' planning model, whether at institutional or national level, is based on existing needs and devises a comprehensive strategy to meet them. This is called a short- or medium-term plan. However, bearing in mind that the formal education system takes a minimum of eighteen years to complete its product, it will be seen that at the end of that period a new generation will have been trained to meet needs and objectives which are two decades out of date. When a group of planners get together to draw up a teacher-training programme, for example, they take as their basis current trends, on the assumptions obtaining for a teacher today; nobody dares admit that the new curriculum should train a teacher for the coming five years, especially in view of the fact that we are living in a world flooded with new knowledge, with an extremely mobile population and (especially in the poorest countries) alarming population growth rates. Peñalver (1975) compares education to the planting and harvesting of fruit. It is not only a matter of time, but also of the type of seed, soil, treatment and ripening before the harvest is gathered. What happens during the planting and ripening stages will depend on the efforts we are prepared to make.

These three problems produced by the development-oriented model are closely linked components of a wider problem. The world does not know where it is going; every day, man loses slightly more control of his destiny, or obsessed with surviving from day to day,

lets it slip from his grasp. Our only hope lies in planning Utopia and aiming for it with single-minded determination.

The planning of Utopia is a permanent feature of society, since Utopia changes when it is attained or, rather, when it is within our grasp we see that our Utopia has become a reality and that a new one has taken shape.

Short-, medium- and long-term plans are prepared in the context of a master plan designed to ensure that emergency or ad hoc plans fit into the overall direction of change sought. Utopian planning is based on an ideological analysis which establishes a theory of development centred on man and reflecting the limits of his capacity for self-improvement.

Thus by 'development' is meant integral and harmonious development which makes it possible to promote human creativity by providing the basic means of subsistence that are essential to the achievement of democracy. With this school of thought, man becomes the focus of all planning in a democratic system which seeks a radical reform of existing social and educational structures. The foundations of democracy, assumed from the Utopian point of view to be perfectible will become unshakeable provided that education responds to the very highest possible ideal in its task of forming minds: creating in men and women a sense of critical awareness and responsibility in respect of both themselves and their physical and social environment, so that they can work together to build their own future. Needless to say, this means an education system in which fundamental policies or principles bridge the gap between the master plan and operational plans, between Utopia and reality, between ideology and practice.

The students of the year 2000

The time-scale shortens with the speed of technological invention. In the fifteenth century, a three-month voyage between two continents was considered very short. Today, an eight-hour flight to cover the same distance seems a long journey. Time is a man-related variable that depends on the kind of person and the tempo of his life. Anthropological studies show that in primitive societies, where life expectancies are half those of contemporary Western man, time passes more slowly, at half the speed of the life of a modern city-dweller. We point this out because, though the twenty-first century might seem a long way off, it is not even fifteen years away, less than the time required by the present system to educate someone for a vocation.

TABLE 1. Student statistics between 1950 and the twenty-first century (in millions)

Geographical area	1950		1975		2000	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Africa	*219*	*8.7*	*406*	*10.1*	*828*	*13.4*
America	*330*	*13.1*	*559*	*13.9*	*897*	*14.5*
Latin America	164	6.5	323	8.0	608	9.8
North America	166	6.6	236	5.9	289	4.7
Asia	*1,379*	*54.9*	*2,318*	*57.4*	*3,612*	*58.2*
East Asia	673	26.8	1,063	26.3	1,406	22.7
South Asia	706	28.1	1,255	31.1	2,206	35.5
Europe	*572*	*22.8*	*728*	*18.1*	*832*	*13.4*
Oceania	*13*	*0.5*	*22*	*0.5*	*30*	*0.5*
World Total	*2,513*	*100.0*	*4,033*	*100.0*	*6,199*	*100.0*
Most developed countries	832	33.1	1,093	27.1	1,272	20.5
Least developed countries	1,681	66.9	2,940	72.9	4,927	79.5

Source: Author's calculations based on a United Nations requirements study of 1978.

In the year 2000, taking formal education alone, learning requirements will not only be more diverse but also greater in quantitative terms. Table 1 shows the number of students at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The increase in the world's population over the last fifty years, combined with greater life expectancy, is producing unprecedented figures. It took some 5 million years up to A.D. 1800 for the total world population to reach the one-billion mark. In barely 130 years, by 1930, the population had grown to 2 billion, and by 1960 it had reached a total of 3 billion. By 1975 we had outstripped the 4 billion mark, and in the year 2000 there will be 6 billion human beings on earth. In the same year, the developing countries will be inhabited by 80 per cent of the world's population, with almost 5 billion potential students.

The population of Latin America will have doubled in barely twenty years, reaching some 608 million. This student population explosion must be tackled at once. Since it is barely possible to cater for half the current population with the development-oriented model, what will happen when in less than two decades there will be twice the demand and a system quite incapable of satisfying it? Tables 2 and 3 show world school enrolment trends. The most industrialized, or least poor, countries will have fewer school enrolments in the year 2000 than in 1981, while the others will increase their figures by more than 80 per cent; Latin America will have a relative increase of 84 per cent and an actual enrolment increase of 132 per cent. These figures may rise still higher if health programmes prove more effective in combating infant mortality. The situation appears all the more serious if it is borne in mind that this world population explosion will

TABLE 2. School age population trends (in millions)

Socio-economic area	1960	1980	2000
Developed countries 6–23	*286.5*	*331.2*	*321.9*
Age 6–11	107.8	104.8	109.4
Age 12–17	91.1	110.8	108.9
Age 18–23	87.6	115.6	103.6
Developing countries 6–23	*783.0*	*1,329.2*	*1,830.3*
Age 6–11	316.6	495.0	664.4
Age 12–17	249.2	445.3	615.5
Age 18–23	217.2	388.9	550.4
World total (6–23)	*1,069.5*	*1,660.4*	*2,152.2*
Age 6–11	424.4	599.8	773.8
Age 12–17	340.3	556.1	724.4
Age 18–23	304.8	504.5	654.0

Source: Authors' calculations based on a United Nations requirements study of 1978.

TABLE 3. Estimated increase in population and school enrolment in Latin America in the last quarter of the twentieth century (1975–2000) (percentages)

School age-group	Relative population increase (1975–2000)	Relative school enrolment increase (1975–2000)
6–11	76.3	111.4
12–17	84.4	133.0
18–23	93.0	246.3
Total (6–23)	*83.6*	*132.3*

Source: Unesco, Quantitative Education and Projections, 1979.

reverse the pupil-teacher ratio. Given today's teacher-training growth rate it will be impossible for the existing system to cater for a population of 600 million, of which more than 60 per cent will be under 25 years old. It is estimated that by the end of the century no Third World country will be able to provide primary education for the entire primary-school age-group, and that the illiteracy rate will be higher than in 1980. Despite efforts to reverse the trend, the world illiteracy rate will increase from 820 million to 1 billion in the year 2000, which means that a quarter of the world's population will have no access to the rudiments of education, namely reading and writing.

The students of the twenty-first century

It would be wrong to suggest that no progress has been made over the last twenty-five years in improving and extending school education throughout the world. But judging from the quantitative and qualitative results, school enrolments fall short even of real demand, not to mention Utopian requirements.

Carnoy (1974) argues that cognitive ability is closely related to social class, and that achievement is due to the combination of social class and the amount of instruction a pupil receives, rather than to actual cognitive ability. In other words, the demand for knowledge springs from the social hierarchy and not from knowledge as such. Education is organized in such a way as to maintain the hierarchical structure of the development-oriented approach, and the foremost aim of teaching is to train children to compete for a limited number of jobs at the top of the industrial pyramid rather than to work together to improve their common condition. An aggravating factor is a selection of class subjects corresponding neither to the social purpose of schooling nor to the difference drawn between science and technology. For example, progress in physics in the exploration of outer space is described as 'technological' but not the planning and running of a health centre. Bowles and Gintis (1973) also argue that the most pertinent skills learnt by pupils about their future role in society are behavioural or non-cognitive abilities connected with social class, variously developed by different kinds of schools and even among students at the same school.

It must be stated that the strategy of school enrolment has been inadequate in terms of both quantity and content: (a) it caters for only part of the school-age population; (b) survival rates, especially in Latin America, are so low that of every 1,000 children entering the formal education system, it is estimated that only five complete their education; and (c) the subjects taught reflect neither recent advances in knowledge nor the attitude to social reform which is a human duty. Nowadays, education is a tool for the perpetuation and reproduction of existing social structures, rather than for the improvement of individual and collective systems of values and the creation of skills that will give man control over his environment and over decisions affecting his future. In a word, the development-oriented system has allotted to education the sole function of training resources for the machinery of production, rather than perfecting man as an overall biological, psychic, social and cultural entity. Mankind, the real focus of development, has been supplanted by one of development's creatures, the production of goods.

Part of this second problem facing education today is its failure to adapt to the advances in science and technology. Educational institutions and their teaching systems lag far behind when it comes to adapting to new forms of knowledge and learning. While the education system shapes some of the components of society, it is also conditioned by society, and has therefore to adapt to society's many and increasingly varied changes. The requirements of changing ways of thought, scientific discoveries, new technologies, the steady turnover of the school population and the emergence of parallel education in the form of television and radio are only some of the factors which formal education has difficulty in assimilating. The education system itself is reluctant to accept new teaching techniques and aids. In the age of the satellite, schools are still using blackboard and chalk. This is not even realistic planning; it is enslavement to the past.

Distance education is an example of a technology that can bridge the gap between scientific discoveries and their popularization (Escotet, 1980; Peñalver and Escotet, 1981). It would be impossible for a formal education system, based only on the interaction between student and teacher, to keep apace with the breath-taking advances of science and technology. Distance education offers a way to tailor education to present and future technology. The rapid spread of its popularity in almost every country offers hope for new patterns of institutional education. We are in favour of this kind of education, though we have some criticisms of the lines along which it is developing.

Distance education requires a careful approach, since there is no guarantee that an innovating process will produce new results. Even revolutionary systems can produce extreme conservatives, thus reinforcing the development-oriented mentality.

Distance education may be of valuable assistance in educating people for the twenty-first century, but it could also turn into a system which widens the gulf between us and Utopia. The present author has frequently criticized distance-education techniques that consist in generating information (almost always less efficiently than traditional techniques) in order to produce trained manpower. What the world really needs is educated people, capable of understanding the contemporary driving forces in the world, and who can adapt to them and transform them (Escotet, 1976*a*). The trained person produced by distance education will soon see his instruction become obsolete, whereas an educated person will develop or create new abilities when necessary.

Distance education should therefore stress the formative and creative aspect of education, while not excluding instruction; it is simply a matter of tackling both variables. Most distance-education

systems seek uniformity of content and method, and disregard, or even eliminate entirely, the part which can be played by students in the education process. The student becomes merely a receiver of more or less sytematized information; he is isolated in his vertical relationship with the teaching material, on which he is entirely dependent. Comprehensive learning calls for participation as man's natural birthright, stemming from his ability to transform and create anew. According to Freire (1973), dialogue, which is fundamental to participation, does not consist in the student retracing all the past stages of scientific progress, but in challenging knowledge in its relation to, and effect on, current reality, in an attempt to understand, explain and transform it. The significance of scientific discoveries should be discussed, as should the historical and future dimensions of knowledge, its place in time, and its application. According to Freire, the best physics student is not the one with the best memory for formulae, but the one who understands their rationale. The best philosophy student is not the one who can expound the works of Plato, Aristotle, Russell or Hegel, but the one who approaches them all from a critical point of view and dares to think.

Participation, or two-way education, was typical of the individualized teaching of the past. There is nothing new in it: Plato proved its worth in his *Dialogues*. Today, sheer numbers mean that dialogue remains at the intentional stage. This is the challenge for distance education: converting mass education into two-way formative education with which it will be possible to think about Utopias and to change the course of history.

The quantitative and qualitative challenge to education is increased when we consider that formal education, which takes up a few years of one's life, is no guarantee of the preservation or improvement of the human condition, an ideal which implies the continuing perfectibility of mankind. It is not possible to adopt the 'realistic' plan of making education last twenty-four or even twenty-six years. What is needed is a continuing educational process in which the 'educational community'—in other words the whole of society—adopts a learning attitude throughout life, and can adapt to the future without forever destroying structures and values on which the survival of man and his culture depends.

By contrast with the present limited span of education, continuing education, both formal and informal, is one of the goals of Utopian planning. It confers on school and university a much higher role than the mere transmission of knowledge: that of teaching people how to learn, and how to go on learning even after leaving the formal education system; of granting a certificate or diploma in recognition of the

completion of only one stage in education; and of changing the structures by which society awards qualifications.

Learning in the twenty-first century, assuming that the world is spared Armageddon, will require greater participation by the education system in its own future. Thanks to technology, methods for acquiring information will be increasingly simple, accessible and accurate. The working day will be much shorter, allowing greater time for creative leisure and making education ever less hierarchical and more ongoing throughout people's lives. The education system will rediscover its true role, which is that of serving the individual, helping to train him in mastering cognitive skills and the ability to think, in developing a critical awareness of reality and in co-operating with others around him. Information will no longer take pride of place in this system, since it can be acquired through other institutionalized or informal methods. Information and training will go hand in hand, neither one at the expense of the other.

We shall no longer live in a world of specialists, but of men and women who blend expertise with general knowledge, and who are capable of viewing organic education as designed to create equilibrium without retarding growth, and promote growth without jeopardizing equilibrium. Lewis Mumford wrote (Mumford et al., 1970):

> We have created an industrial order that is closely linked to automatism, in which mental debility, congenital or acquired, is necessary for docile factory production, and in which widespread neurosis is the final gift of an ultimately insipid life. Our lives are governed by specialists who know too little about what happens outside their field to have a sufficient understanding of what happens within it; unbalanced creatures, not with method in their madness but madness in their method. Our life, like medicine, has suffered from the ousting of the general practitioner, who is capable of careful diagnosis and treatment relating to both individual and community health. Has not the time come to ask ourselves what really constitutes a human being, and what changes are required in our outlook in order to create this human being?

Principles for a Utopian plan of education

Principles or policies are the bridge between reality and Utopia. Preparing these policies involves establishing new standards which define the values most in keeping with what is sought for the future. This happens when the objective of planning is to change a system of values in order to align it with present circumstances and the outlook for the future. In this type of normative planning definitions

are obtained from values and expressed in terms of requirements. An education policy should reflect a country's political options, its traditions, values and ideas about its future.

By and large, values generate principles which help to specify the main lines of emphasis of policies. Policies in turn should be backed up by strategies offering various ways of attaining the objectives of the master plan, limited to those that are attainable when optimum use is made of available resources. In this form of progress to Utopia from reality, to the desirable from the possible, *strategies* require operational *programmes* with detailed priorities, activities, schedules, resources, etc. The plan thus acquires the overall coherence required for the various programmes and activities to contribute towards the continuing achievement of objectives, and goals along the Utopian lines originally devised. Utopian planning cannot be limited to an administration or official body; it must be participative, since it is in the community that ideas germinate, successes and failures come to light, and plans are carried out.

In applying this kind of thinking to a developing and changing democratic society, we might single out various educational principles or policies as the main guidelines for a country's education programmes and activities (Escotet, 1976*b*). Briefly, we can single out three basic policies.

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

This policy is founded on democracy as a type of society, and is opposed to any kind of totalitarianism, personality cult or reversal of participation. All members of a society should: (a) be educated as democratic citizens for a democratic society; (b) be effectively entitled to a minimum basic education which will make possible their self-fulfilment both as individuals and as active members of society today and in a future of rapid change; (c) enjoy real opportunities of continuing to learn after completion of compulsory or basic education, in the light of their interests, aptitudes and skills and in accordance with the ideals of a 'learning society'; (d) enjoy compensatory benefits to offset any possible social, cultural or economic disadvantages; and (e) be given real opportunities to run their own affairs and participate actively in basic community organizations.

The aim is not only to democratize education through equality of opportunity and access, but also to make every member of society a genuine democrat capable of enjoying freedom while respecting the freedom of others, in a spirit of co-operation rather than competition.

EDUCATION FOR INNOVATION

The education system requires a new impetus for processes of change of all kinds. These changes should affect all the parts of the system which are instrumental in maximizing the capacity for innovation, as regards both participants and management processes. The education system should thus be geared to the continuing achievement of the dynamic renewal and transformation of society. For this a three-pronged approach is required:

The transformation of élite education into mass education, which implies new methods, structures, curricula, attitudes and values.

The ability to adapt the education process continuously to future social conditions and to advances and discoveries in the fields of theory, methods and technology.

The provision of a type of education which is centred on the student, in tune with his environment, needs and aspirations, and with those of society, which will stimulate his creative ability and encourage him to generate science and technology.

This necessarily means orienting individuals towards innovation, making them students for life who are capable of foreseeing the future and the new needs arising from new ways of thinking.

EDUCATION FOR AUTONOMOUS DEVELOPMENT

The basic aim of this development policy is to secure the well-being and improve the standard of living of a society. Under it the education system should be geared to serving man and his environment so that by using the creative potential of society man will be able effectively to influence his own destiny. This policy is therefore based on the principle that the purpose of education is not only to cater to demand (the development-oriented position), but also to adapt demand to the development goals that are desirable for man and his culture. Education's contribution to the quest for autonomous development will stem from the following:

The development of a country's scientific and technological potential through the creation or activation of scientific, technological and administrative machinery enabling it to make full use of its resources and production, educate its population and provide direction and meaning for economic growth.

The systematic training of manpower in areas which have national priority, including not only the production sectors but also areas concerned with value systems and with social, political, and administrative decisions and their implementation.

An increase in the ability of the education system to identify and transform values by providing support to the health, leisure, nutrition and housing sectors, in addition to that provided to the production and management sectors.

The promotion, diversification and development of genuine forms of popular expression manifesting a cultural commitment to national identity.

The opening-up of national education to international affairs, so that notwithstanding the inevitable interdependence of cultures and nations, a society will increase its ability to survive without losing its identity.

These three policies converge both in their orientation towards the desired social goals and in their crystallization into strategies for change. All three reflect the age-old aspiration for the development of man both individually and as a member of a group. But it is not enough to plan national development without taking account of the variables which can threaten or even block progress towards Utopia. While all societies have their own dynamics, based on the life-styles of their members and the policies adopted by their leaders, unplanned objectives also exist at the international or 'supranational' level, which are related to the specificity of individual members of the community of nations (Escotet, 1982). Planned objectives can be readapted in development plans, but 'supranational' objectives reflect juxtapositions of populations at the international level, and at the same time can determine the future of a given society. Thus the past and the future of a country are conditioned not only by the country itself, but also by the countries which inevitably interact with it.

This historical dimension is the product of national and international cultural developments whose successive stages reflect change, though not necessarily situations of crisis. Where change produces a crisis it eliminates a system of values and replaces it by another, as noted by Ortega y Gasset in confuting Spengler's theory of the decline of the West. Change is the law governing evolution; crisis means its breakdown. Crises occur because societies are not prepared for change. Here precisely is the target for action by those who plan a Utopian form of education: preparing men and women for continuing change, even if necessary for transient crises. Change permeates every part of a culture: any major change in one part immediately affects the whole. A society should be able to reduce its frontiers without impairing its sovereignty, and to perpetuate values that are considered vital to its culture while continuing to reflect on the future and select the kind of changes it is to undergo.

This does not mean incorporating undesirable external values to replace traditional desirable ones, which in fact is happening at the

moment. The situation in a number of countries is becoming alarming due to the existence of at least two clearly separate cultures: a culture centred on traditional values which reflect national identities, and a culture that imports values modelled on external cultures. A dramatic conflict arises when a society relegates national culture to the background, and brings to the fore the values of a consumer society. Any solution based on the vital Utopian aims of safeguarding fundamental human values, including the lofty ideal of social democracy, and promoting the values which enhance the human and universal dimension of a nation's culture, must necessarily be addressed to national problems in both the national and the international context.

A society should therefore be well informed about what is going on in the world around it, avoiding the self-centredness which risks being a guiding principle of development in the immediate future. Education for Utopian development means not only educating individuals but also imbuing them with a sense of collective awareness leading to a commitment which goes beyond national frontiers and cultures, a humanity which should be the goal of all individual reflection.

Any discussion of the future is incomplete without a study of education, hence of the type of human being sought. This cannot be visualized in realistic planning, committed as it is to an imperialistic society that forces its members to accept positions controlled and defined by an ever-present political or economic ruling group. It is inconceivable that élites should exist to perpetuate themselves: their purpose should be to reorganize society from top to bottom.

This approach to Utopian planning seeks not an egalitarian society, since no human being is equal to another, but a rich and varied one in which no person's occupation gives him or her authority over the life of another, and in which work done is in the interest of all, as opposed to the development-oriented trend in which the individual is trained for a particular job.

Our Utopia places the desired goal between the explored or foreseeable future and the unexplored future. Thus, the suggested planning model is dynamic rather than static, since the closer we get to the objective the clearer it becomes that new guidelines are necessary. Our Utopian concept implies going beyond the possibilities of present social structures, while blending the past and the present, making use of the energies of those who favour a new model of society and of those who wish to see the continuation of the present one. In this way, the path taken by a Utopian strategy may at times lead towards the desired object and at other times retreat or even become reactionary. These fluctuations can be foreseen in Utopian planning by analysing

the clash of opposing strategies; such analysis helps to set these strategies on a more permanent path, since all of them, despite temporary deviations, converge on a single parameter, namely the ideological vision of a coherent structure of objectives or policies of which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

The dynamism of Utopian planning thus consists in establishing alternative paths and in forecasting fluctuations in order to control the movement towards the desired objective. Utopian strategies also explore conflicting options and differing ways of implementing policies and reaching the desired target; thus provisional paths can be chosen which accommodates conflicting strategies. In a nutshell, Utopian planning calls for dialectical analysis, closely attuned to the course of history, the social forces driving it forward and the changes sought through development.

Matus (1972) points out that realistic planning by the state as developed either follows the wrong lines or lacks a precise sense of direction. Constant adjustments or demagogic expediency prevent an overall long-term assessment of development, increase the people's dependence and frustrate their aspirations for a better life.

Our impoverished world is aware of its limited chances of survival. Man's self-inflicted pessimism extends to creating the weapons for his own destruction, and is the monstrous offspring of the sickness that ravages us. A contributory factor to this sickness is the education system. It is incumbent on this system, as both a right and a duty, to rid mankind of this epidemic, which threatens to wipe out the human race.

It may be that we do not yet have all the instruments for change, nor the answers to all the problems of Utopian planning. But we are sure of one thing, and that is the urgent need to get down to work; we must plan by 'reaching for the stars', setting our sights on a picture of hope for the new century. ■

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