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Małgorzata PIASECKA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8578-1488>

Uniwersytet Humanistyczno-Przyrodniczy im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie

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Foreword of the Editor: Fundamentals of Education. What essential questions are we trying to answer nowadays?

Each epoch has its essential questions that we ask in the face of successes, victories, defeats, crises, unrest, challenges, excesses and shortcomings about the existing and anticipated realness. When we say realness, we mean a complex, dynamic and changing construct organically co-created by nature, culture, society and man. The educational realness, immersed in these broad contexts, brings together the macro-world problems like a lens. It is its reflection, a screen of culture (Witkowski, 2007), but it is also a tremendous life-giving potential at any time and in any place.

The present-day world is becoming more and more complicated, chaotic and unpredictable. Moreover, the progressive alienation of man and loneliness in the crowd leads to the lack of responsibility for actions that are often schematic, stereotypical, externally controlled, including politically, forced by things, situational systems, and clocks. Living in such densities, a person may feel lost, caught up in pointlessness and condemned to existence in the age of irresponsibility (Kozielecki, 1995). But, on the other hand, his enormous intellectual resources and potential for sensitivity are awakened by his aspirations for autonomous, community-responsible, innovative and reflective activities that favour the happiness of individuals and entire societies. However, this requires constant, con-

scious “crossing” the chaos, noise, and dizzying pace of everyday life to calm down, slow down, focus life energy to regenerate physical and spiritual resources, and enjoy what is given now (Bocheński, 1993).

Meanwhile, the world puts a man to a great test of enjoying what it offers. In addition to still growing global problems, e.g. ecology, hunger, armaments, conflicts, terrorism, refugees, social, cultural ghettos, we are experiencing a civilizational “shock in the form of the COVID-19 pandemics and related various forms of social lockdown” (Gara, 2021, p. 7). Time seems to have stopped its momentum, favouring, perhaps, reflection, which is necessary because we live in a world affected by the “furious wrath of civilization (Attali, 2017, p. 11). And although we are trying to get out of this confrontation invincible, it seems that “[...] the sense of defeat persists and continues – it is even the only progress we are making, we passers-by tired of the path lost in the labyrinth of life” (Nancy, 2016, p. 11). Therefore, we share the opinion that: “The world that has been walking on its head begins to come to its senses” (Serreau, <https://www.afccc.fr/le-monde-qui-marchait-sur-la-tete/>; access: 31.01.2022).

We encourage the authors to consider (studies, dissertations, polemics) to be accompanied by meta-reflection concerning their research questions. For example: Why are these questions important, and for whom?; Who are the questions addressed to?; What areas and problems do they concern?; What do they illustrate, explain, interpret, decentralize, demystify? How practical, helpful, efficient they are?; What, whom, and how do they change?; what is their significance in the individual and community dimension?; what is their range and impact (local/global) ? etc.

We propose a reflexive approach to your research questions in a triple dimension: to understand, evaluate, question, and suggest.

Firstly, to understand

The research questions we ask do not come out of anywhere. Their genesis is often complex and entangled because they are instigated by various actors/participants of social realness, framed by scientific paradigms, marked by personal preferences and free choices. The two coupled contexts, the social and the scientific ones, evolve, producing tensions within them individually and between them. Regarding the social space, the researcher reflexively looks at these tensions between different actors for different reasons, trying to intervene, negotiate, resonate, improve, refine, and redirect towards currently essential questions. In terms of scientific research, it is evident that the research questions also change due to internationalization, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approach, standardization, the competitiveness of science, commercialization of knowledge, etc. Re-

search questions are defined in the optics of paradigms, and their changing causes tensions, cognitive dissonances or even “wars” between paradigms (Kuhn, 2020). They influence the type of questions, the way they are asked and their prioritization. Yet, essential questions are not always preeminent questions.

Secondly, to evaluate and challenge

Considering self-reflection concerning one's research questions allows one to evaluate and perhaps even question the favoured relations with the social world under study, the ways of describing, interpreting and explaining them, the select type of social actors, society, and man. When defining the space for this dimension of reflections, the following exemplary questions may be helpful: does the researcher construct essential questions and seek answers to them? Do the researchers consider social evolutions/revolutions in their evaluation or allow themselves to be enclosed in a tradition of thinking, research that is losing social significance today? Are the researchers overwhelmed by the dominant paradigm aware that they may abandon some research and contribute to creating abandoned research fields withdrawn from the social actors' lives? To what extent does insufficient funding of science induce/force researchers to neglect essential research questions? Does the trend of internationalization in science have/can have (un)desired influence on the research questions posed? Finally, is the (self)development, biographical path and the researcher's internal transformation efficient enough to question the questions not yet argued?

Thirdly, to suggest

Apart from the two abovementioned aspects of reflection on one's research questions, aimed at understanding and evaluation, one should also indicate a third area, i.e. suggestions. Therefore, to suggest answers to essential questions, the researchers should prepare themselves and avoid dead ends, eliminate controversy, specify undefined details, and set a clear path of problematization. The following sample questions may prove helpful in this area of reflective discussion: How to adjust and clarify the links between research questions and broad problem areas? How to concretize research questions in the face of cross-sectional/marginal questions of various social actors? How should the traditional research directions be articulated in new problems and challenges? How, based on preliminary research in multiple disciplines, to interpret a complex social/educational phenomenon? Finally, how to equiponderate the researcher's freedom to ask questions and the compulsion of demands from various social actors?

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