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## E. MORIN'S ANTHROPO-ETHICS AND ITS METHODOLOGICAL POTENTIAL FOR EDUCATION

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АНТРОПОЕТИКА Е. МОРИНА ТА ЇЇ МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНИЙ ПОТЕНЦІАЛ ДЛЯ ОСВІТИ

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У статті аналізуються методологічні можливості парадигми складності для розуміння сучасної освіти. Відповідно до парадигми складності людська істота розглядається як багатовимірне та багаторівневе явище. Homo Complexus має фізичні, біологічні, психологічні, культурні, соціальні, історичні та інші виміри. Авторка підкреслює, що навчальний план, побудований відповідно до парадигми складності, повинен бути зорієнтований на багатовимірну природу людини, оскільки сама освіта покликана стимулювати внутрішній потенціал людини.

**Ключові слова:** Homo Complexus, освіта, парадигма складності, багатовимірність, знання, трансдисциплінарність, антропоетика.

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The paper analyses the methodological possibilities of complexity paradigm for understanding contemporary education. According to the paradigm of complexity the human being is viewed as a multidimensional and multileveled phenomenon. Homo Complexus has physical, biological, psychological, cultural, social, historical, and other dimensions. The author underlines that the complexity-based curriculum should be oriented to multi-dimensional nature of a human being, because education is declared to stimulate the inner potential of a human.

**Key words:** Homo Complexus, education, complexity paradigm, multidimensionality, knowledge, transdisciplinary, anthropo-ethics.

A complexity turn in social sciences began in the late 1990s. The increasing complexity of products, processes and organizations is determined by globalization, the increase of social dynamism, proliferation of computerized networks that are self-produced around the globe, forming and reforming themselves in new ways, connecting and presenting all parts of the world as a whole.

The complexity theory, enriched by the works of Edgar Morin<sup>1</sup> is perceived today as a paradigm in the field of philosophy of education. The main ideas were presented in E. Morin's work *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future* (1999). This work was published as UNESCO's document dedicated to the modernization of education at all levels, and translated into different languages. F. Mayor, the Director-General of UNESCO in the preface to this edition underlined the significance and role of education in the contemporary world: "Education is the "force for the future" because it is one of the most powerful instruments of change. One of the greatest problems we face is how to adjust our way of think-

ing to meet the challenge of an increasingly complex, rapidly changing, unpredictable world. We must rethink our way of organizing knowledge. This means breaking down the traditional barriers between disciplines and conceiving new ways to reconnect that which has been torn apart. We have to redesign our educational policies and programs" [5, p. I].

A set of scholars actively use complexity paradigm in their researches, for example: M. Mason (*Complexity Theory and the Philosophy of Education*), K. Morrison (*Educational Philosophy and the Challenge of Complexity Theory*), J. Horn (*Human Research and Complexity Theory*), M. Alnadeff-Jones (*Revisiting Educational Research Through Morin's Paradigm of Complexity*) and others.

Educational theory throughout the intellectual history of the humanity was closely related with philosophy as pedagogical system is based on the certain philosophical and anthropological system and the philosophical system is realized through the ethical principles and pedagogical practice. Anthropoethics is Morin's philosophical and anthropological position, which determines his educational views.

This paper analyses the methodological possibilities of complexity paradigm for understanding contemporary education. Its main theoretical bases are impact to review the anthropological, epistemological foundations of the contemporary education. To

<sup>1</sup> Edgar Morin is a French philosopher, sociologist, developer of complexity theory, the concept of complex thinking. He was director of the CNRS (Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique). His six volumes work *La Méthode* develops a new weltanschauung, based upon insights in systemics, cybernetics and informatics, ending up in ethics.

my mind, methodological reorientation is an important precondition of educational changes.

Morin's anthropo-ethics is based on the following grounds. One of them is connected with "dearth of modernity" [5, p. 35]. E. Morin (2007) writes in his *Towards the Abyss? ("Vers l'abime?")* about "crisis of modernity", a catastrophic future which is derived from the idea of progress: "Any idea of human power over the universe collapses" [6, p. 28]; "the crisis reached our major myths: progress, happiness, mastery of the world... Now, the future itself is in crisis: there is more than possible prediction, otherwise assumptions, and scenarios" [6, p. 27]. Morin added: "The antagonism of modernity has reached a paroxysmal degree. Everything happens as if there was an agony, in the original sense of the word; that is to say, a struggle between the forces of life and the forces of death" [6, p. 30]. The crisis of modernity is discovered itself as the crisis of culture, the crisis of science, the crisis of reason, the crisis of the soul, mind, and even mode of life. This unprecedented crisis in the West is reflected in consciousness the idea that progress, inevitable law of history, guided by reason, can no longer be seen as a step towards better: "Anyway, progress as certainty is death. One can even say that we are facing a lot of uncertainty" [6, p. 42]. The crisis of modernity is connected with an ambivalence of progress results: from one side, progress is a source of freedom and undeniable physical and intellectual, technological emancipation of a man. But from the other side, progress is practical servitude of an ethical man. So, in this crisis of modernity's values Morin proposes only one alternative: involution, that is to say, means a metamorphic re-generation as a "return to potential generic human..." [6, p. 157]. Basing on these ideas he formulates the challenges to education. It must take into consideration the planetary situation of the 21st century. It means to develop the earth identity, "to show how all human beings now face the same life and death problems and share the same fate" [5, p. 2]. The point is that modern education should develop the person's responsibility for her/his actions. So, Morin's anthropo-ethics "calls for world citizenship in the 21st century" [5, p. 3].

The next Morin's anthropo-ethics ground is derived from his conclusion according to which we must abandon the abstract idea of humanity that is in humanism, because it reduces the human nature to one of its dimensions (Homo sapiens, Homo faber, Homo economicus etc.) E. Morin argues that a human being is also sapiens and faber, economicus and ludens, prosaic and poetic, natural and meta-natural [6, p. 45], that humans are, by nature, *Homo Complexus*, that embraces physical, biological, psychological, cultural, social, historical, and other dimensions.

His paradigm of Homo Complexus based on the concept of the human trinity (individual-society-species) places a person in a situation which allows at

the same time vast diversity and yet specificity. Humans are complex and being together both unity and diversity. Unity and diversity are understood as the notions that complete each other sooner than compete. At the same time they are not devoid of the diversity that contains the elements of antagonisticity. Human identity is carried in the form of plural and polymorphic human conditions. This Morin's philosophical and anthropological position deepens our understanding of humanity, helps to rethink the human place and role in the modern world, and therefore, formulates certain challenges to education.

The complexity paradigm without denying universality adopts the complementary principle that the individual and the local features are intelligible. It integrates elements into their ensembles, searches for principles of causal interrelations, places the object back into interaction with its environment or context, considers autonomy in terms of self-organization and self-production, self-reflection, thinks dialogically and so relates contrary concepts in a complementary manner [3, p. 132]. According to this paradigm's positions a person develops himself/herself in a dialogue with others, as well as in a dialogue with himself/herself.

In addition to understanding Morin's anthropo-ethics in terms of complexity paradigm it is important to remember about the notion of multidimensionality as a key one in this paradigm. The given notion is widespread in contemporary social philosophy [8]. A society is a multidimensional phenomenon. That's why I suggest that a new concept should be introduced, namely the "multidimensional space of possible socio-cultural shifts", the purpose of which is to examine the Ukrainian society as a transitional one. This space consists of many planes, in which different displacements take place [7, p. 269]. A societal transformation can be regarded as the simultaneous drift in all parts of these planes. The complexity of a human being could be perceived in the context of the society's multi-dimensionality.

A human being as well as the society is viewed as a multidimensional phenomenon. According to the paradigm of complexity the human being nature is multidimensional and multileveled, so education "must recognize this multidimensionality and insert its data within it. Not only should a part not be isolated from the whole, the parts should not be isolated from each other. The economic dimension, for example, is in permanent interretroaction with all other human dimensions; moreover, human passions, needs, and desires that go beyond solely economic interests are carried hologrammatically within the economic" [5, p. 14].

Morin's anthropo-ethics led him to a very important conclusion. The education is faced with the universal problems as the complex ones, so it is necessary to reform thinking by educational means: "To articulate and organize and thereby recognize and

understand the problems of the world, we need a reform in thinking. And this reform is paradigmatic, not programmatic. It is the fundamental question for education because it concerns our ability to organize knowledge” [5, p. 13].

According to the complexity paradigm, education has to redefine its main didactic principles from a controlled and controlling discipline-based education, predicted targets towards a discovered, transdisciplinary, emergent curriculum as a sum of proposed courses of study, as a core of the educational process. The complexity-based curriculum would be dynamic, relational, autocatalytic, self-organized, open, existentially realized by the participants, connected and recursive. Brent Davis analyzes how complexity theory might be appropriate to the concerns of educators and educational researchers. He addresses this question by exploring several ‘simultaneities’ offered by complexity thinking: “Knower and Knowledge, Transphenomenality, Transdisciplinarity, Interdiscursivity, Descriptive and Pragmatic Insights, Representation and Presentation, Affect and Effect, and Education and Research” [1, p. 47].

Following his ideas I consider that the curriculum could be presented as a multidimensional space of possible educational interactions and meta-communications, based on such concepts as:

- transphenomenality as an attribute of an educational space and human being that offers through the lens of the complexity paradigm such approach to cognitive activity that can be possible only due to the simultaneous consideration of the factors, events associated with quite different phenomenal levels of explanation;

- transdisciplinarity as a means of the scientific cognition that presupposes the simultaneous consideration of the facts connected with quite different disciplinary perspectives;

- transdiscursivity as a communicative and cognitive practice that presupposes the simultaneous consideration of the facts connected with quite different discursive perspectives;

- transculturality as a situation in the present-day culture (including the process of unification and differentiation) that offers in the context of the complexity paradigm insights that can be possible only due to the simultaneous consideration of the facts belonged to quite different cultural traditions and value orientations.

Thus, from the complexity paradigm perspective the education is transphenomenal by its nature with the transdisciplinary character of cognition, and the transdiscursive essence of educational thoughts. The education strategy based on the transphenomenality, transdisciplinarity, transdiscursivity, transculturality are *sine qua non*, in which students and teachers become border crossers, and knowledge is understood as the result of their transgression. Students and teachers create borderlands in which all diversities are perceived as parts and a whole; socially, historically and culturally constructed limitations are destroyed.

The complexity paradigm regards knowledge as a social construct, created by participants of educational process at a particular socio-historical-geographical context. E. Morin writes: “Knowledge of isolated information or data is not enough. To have meaning, information and data must be placed in their context. To have meaning, a word needs a text which is its own context and the text needs a context within which it is stated” [5, p. 13].

Such education project presupposes that students and teachers create together, share and shape themselves. The teacher, on the one hand, moves from the role as an expert and transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator, co-learner and co-constructor of meaning, co-creator of a new knowledge. Students, on the other hand, have to be prepared to exercise autonomy, responsibility, self-direction and self-reflection. The complexity-based curriculum conceptualizes difference, context, processes, multi-factor causality, presupposes the different ways of thinking about context. The present-day curriculum would create the educational conditions for complexity thinking becoming.

Complex thinking is one of the main concepts in Morin’s complexity paradigm. In recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of complexity thinking, the Bertalanffy Center has awarded a prize to Edgar Morin. The award ceremony took place at the European Meeting on Cybernetics and Systems Research, on 10th of April 2012, in Vienna, where E. Morin held a keynote on “*Complex thinking for a complex world — About reductionism, disjunction and systemism*”. His ideas were discussed during this Meeting and the *Symposium A* was called “*Physical and Metaphysical Aspects of Systems after Morin*”.

Russian researcher and translator of Morin’s first volume of *Method H*. Knyazeva considers that French thinker in his new book *Towards the Abyss?* (mentioned above) has made new important accents in understanding complex thinking: “According to Morin, the complex thinking is a) radical thinking which gets at the root of problems; b) multidimensional thinking; c) organizational or system thinking which analysis the correlation of the whole and parts; d) ecological thinking which doesn’t isolate an object under study but considers its interrelations and its self-regulating ecological connections with the cultural, social, economic, political, natural environment; e) thinking which creates ecology of action and dialectics of action, i.e. thinking which is able to build a strategy which allows to modify or even to cancel the action undertaken by a subject; e) thinking which recognizes its own imperfection, carries on negotiations with doubt, but namely in action because there is no action without doubt” [4].

Ukrainian researcher of complex thinking L. Gorbunova underlines that this concept as a transversal one has considerable heuristic potential in the present conditions of different positions existence. It helps to avoid despotism and repression of thought, and anarchy, because thinking in the mode of trans-

versality overcomes the positions of absolute heterogeneity and incommensurability. The complex thinking helps to overcome the closed limits, ensuring the transition from one system to another, the simultaneous consideration of multidirectional efforts, the ability to look across the paradigmatic walls [2].

Education is declared to facilitate the adaptation of an individual to the conditions of multi-dimensional, changing world, searching for new strategies, models of behavior and new outlook of contemporary person etc. According to E. Morin understanding as a means and end of human communication should be the result of education. He considers that the first rate task of the educational sphere is to overcome the dispersion of knowledge, which hinders to clarify the complexity and diversity of the person and the world in which she/he lives and works. The restoration of the unity of the fragmented knowledge, overcoming the fragmentation of knowledge in natural sciences and humanities, combining the parts into a whole will cause the creation of knowledge with new qualities, properties and characteristics in the educational sphere (the creation of the certain gestalt-image, which is in the process of becoming and changing).

The knowledge arises in the educational process, but is not previously given. It is the part of the inner world of those, who study, of their interests, values and goals. The nature of knowledge is subjective. Education should form the vital competencies of a contemporary person, that's why it is closely connected with her/his living world (the practice of everyday life should be involved). The ideas about the methods of acquiring knowledge are in the process of change. The method is considered not as the way defined *a priori*, but as the laying of this way. The configuration of the knowledge is considered as a cycle, a union, which is not reduced to a single meaning, but induces to a new reflection. Education is declared to stimulate the inner potential of a hu-

man. That's why we should use the methods, which are connected with the internal nature of the human — the play method, the dialogue, the research practice etc. Thus we expand the space of human possibilities by exploring the inner multidimensional nature of Homo Complexus.

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