School of Humanities and Liberal Arts

GEORGIAN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

EDUCATIONAL RELATIONS

The Case of Georgia

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WES SNYDER

FOREWORD

Georgia, a small and beautiful country, with diverse sets of ancient and invading cultures, sits at the intersection of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, bounded by the Greater and Lesser Caucasus mountains on the sides and the Black sea in the West and Azerbaijan on the East, and has a rich and varied history, but not as well-known as it deserves. Home to some of the oldest wine cultivars, regional inspiration to poets, artists like Pirosmani (primitivist said to have influenced European art), and writers like Ilya Chavchavadze (founder of Georgia's national identity narrative) and luminary visitors like Dumas, Pushkin, and Lermontov, safe haven for artists and musicians during European wars, birth place of Joseph Dzhughashvili (later known as Stalin), and land of myths such as Noah's Arks' location, Jason and the Argonauts founding of the Golden Fleece, the feared deity Armazi, and Prometheus chained to one of the mountain peaks by God for giving fire to mortals, central point for many of the Silk Roads to China, and cite of ancient skeletons dating back 1.8 million years, indicating Georgia as a cradle for the first Europeans out of Africa.

This amazing gem of culture, ancient gold, music, literature, and myth has been blanketed in early modern times by Ottoman and Iranian dominance in the area for many centuries, and finally, Russian and Soviet influences in the 19th Century to present day. Independence from the Soviet Union was part of the union's demise in 1991, but Russian influence remained until the Rose Revolution in 2003, formally, but still looms over areas of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The Rose Revolution had raised many hopes and expectations, some of which were realized and some in education begun as part of stated intentions for decentralization and improved finance and resources, plus training, throughout the Georgian education system. The rural education system, outside the urban areas of Tbilisi, was largely neglected over Georgia's history and even the competitive programs of Tbilisi remained heavily influenced in Russian teacher-centered, central authority, and state authorized curriculum. Various efforts have been introduced since 2004 by the National Movement – Democrats (NMD) until 2012 and the Georgian Dream party currently to improve the national education program.

Professor Gigi Tevzadze, former Rector of the Ilia State University and a significant reformer in education following the Rose Revolution, has gathered together several colleagues

to examine "educational relations" in current and projected education practices and innovations in Georgian education. Educational relations are fundamental to effective education, both to support formal learning and engender socialization. Student-teacher relations, teacher-principal, parents-teacher, school-community, school-regional authorities, school - Ministry, and others – the strength of these relations determines the education experience.

The collection of papers begins with Professor Tevzadze's look at the origin and importance of educational relations, and his chapter emphasizes our inherent organic reliance on connections and their importance to the effectiveness of the education journey. In fact, he goes further to say that the character of educational relations will be reflected throughout the entire society. What happens in the educational experience becomes the basis for and reflects what happens throughout life, "starting with families and ending with economic and political ties."

He eschews the macro sociological view of globally influenced conceptions that determine local meanings and expectations and intentions, and focuses on a micro view of biological origins of our need for relations that lead to the successful implementation of an educational program. He maintains that the micro biological need for relationships is more important than the "glance" phenomenology that characterizes explanations for the similarities of schooling notions around the world. While it seems that Tbilisi schools (the largest urban center of Georgia) have similar structural and functional features to Georgia's rural schools (many remote and in mountainous regions), and even strive under similar intentions for effective schooling, they have little resemblance in performance or even activities, and the rural schools only approach the effective operational performance of Tbilisi schools if their educational relations are meaningful and strong. The enormous differentiation between Tbilisi and rural schools is determined by their transactions and exchanges within their educational programs. As noted by the Education Trust (2021)[1]:

> *...Strong relationships with teachers and school staff can dramatically enhance students' level of motivation and therefore promote learning. Students who have access to more strong relationships are more academically engaged, have stronger social skills, and experience more positive behavior. Unfortunately, too many students do not have this experience. A survey of 25,400 sixth to 12th graders in a large diverse district [in the USA], found that less than a third of middle schoolers had a strong relationship with their teachers, and that number dropped to 16% by the time students reached 12th grade. Students from low-income backgrounds report even fewer strong relationships with their teachers.*

[1] Cited from https://edtrust.org/resource/the-importance-of-strong-relationships/

So, despite apparent similarities in schools, their operational and functional effectiveness ultimately is based on their educational relations. He posits: it is of greater importance to understand the underlying features of relationships that make schools look and perform differently, and their similarities are less interesting. And he takes this notion of educational relations and projects it as a major feature in the characterization of the whole society. How schools, teachers, parents, Ministries, and students interact is fundamental to understanding schooling, and even the society. The question going forward in this collection is what is the status of educational relations in Georgia.

Nino Lomidze then examines the relationships of students and teachers with the curriculum and texts of the Georgian education program, and places this examination in the context of various arguments for and against Georgian classic literature as required in the curriculum. The hopes are pinned on constructivism in current Georgian thinking about education quality – in literature this means using the classics as the "ore" for new thinking and broadening thought and possibilities. There is a presumed need also to understand modern literature but to place it in the context of the classics. The teacher is thus conveying the societal meanings and understandings through the historic development of literature and the modern rendition of newer writings, and the student is experiencing this connection, bonding both to the old and new cultural values and depictions. The relationship is intended to expand cognitive skills, and thus attend to the "managing" of the complexity of learning through curriculum and teaching reform. Lomidze argues for balance. The classics introduce eternal topics, historic/national/religious values, epochs, and cultural features of past society and are intellectually challenging for mental development. But, the modern texts also impart important information and values, and may provide greater interest in current contexts, and are less challenging to foster greater engagement and sustained literary awareness. Even full texts are not necessary to engage the qualities of literature. As pointed out by Maya Menabde (2017) in "Extensive Texts in School" cited by Lomidze:

> *Maintaining the interest of adults is a very difficult task, and it becomes much more difficult when a teacher is forced to focus their attention for a long time on one work, no matter how interesting and useful it is. Children love dynamics, constant changes and news, new themes, new characters and new faces.*

The adopted Literary Law in Georgia, according to Lomidze, is to use literature to transfer traditional knowledge and values to preserve them, and she worries this turns literature into a "museum." She favors the construction of knowledge rather than the accumulation

of literary knowledge. The emphasis is on the creation of something new by applying acquired knowledge to practical activities. This approach is advocated in the Georgia's New School Model (NSM) but there is still a heavy dose of required literature and textbooks in the new curriculum (the "core program"). Inconsistency between the content and intentions in the NSM compromise the constructivist approach. The question posed is, will this result in freedom for the teacher to explore constructivist activities to build independent confidence and intellectual skills or become "freedom on a short leash"? In this regard, Lomidze's chapter explores the relationships between different literature eras and their educational values, the relationship between the teacher and prescribed literature readings in the pursuit of student intellectual development, and the prospects for student engagement and lasting interests in literature and their understanding and preservation of the national, cultural, and religious basis of society. These relationships are not well defined or operationalized at the moment in the NSM.

Mari Gabunia explicitly reviews the New School Model and its intentions and its hopes to build a person-oriented environment for learning in the future. The NSM aims to instill a constructivist curriculum to create a democratic school culture. She characterizes the search for ways to improve the schooling environment such as seeking solutions in the form of "various universal gods" (that is attempting to find the one true solution for diverse problems). The universal metaphor characterizes well the consistent attempt at taming of wicked problems, a common band-aid approach in donor projects. The idea is to take a complex problem and break it down and then address some facet of it or combination and believe that it will address the complexity. Usually it causes other problems, called "strange loops" – which mean you have to keep taming with no resolution of the complex conundrum. You can picture this as in an Escher drawing of infinity, where water or monks travel in infinite circularity when he distorts the three-dimensions of the reality into two. The simplification of the complex dimensionality distorts the view of the situation. "Universal Gods" is a colorful way of what donors and projects do all the time and then, even, within limited time spans. She places NSM within this context and explores other metaphors to express concerns about the NSM potential to address the complex problems in Georgian education. These include the "Methods Fetish Politics" that yields to that which is technically feasible quickly, the "Fake Carnival Politics" that yields to political interests that profit the incumbent group, and the "Politics of Progressiveness" that yields to that which international organizations want and will fund. Found wanting in the NSM simplification of the issues being dealt with, Gubina encourages the reconsideration of the

main assumptions and their operationalization in the NSM, "so that future reforms do not end up in the collection of Universal Gods that failed to help."

Nestan Ratiani also appeals to the Gods, and looks at the transformations or metamorphosis possible with better relationships in the creation of the "right" education system. She examines the relationships between teachers and students as seen through the International Baccalaureate Program (IB) and uses the IB program as such an environment that encompasses the changes she believes needed in a good education program. Nestan Ratiani offers a detailed and personal account of the differences between the past and current Georgian teaching and learning approaches as compared with a particular international model that has been adopted in many countries (more than 150 countries), called the International Baccalaureate (IB). The IB offers four programs for students aged 3-19, Primary, Middle, Diploma, and Career-Related, that continue the philosophy of active learning and student participation in their own search for knowledge. The Mission is to enhance self-learning and learning to learn skills to enable students to adapt to a changing world:

> **Mission: The IB develops inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through education that builds intercultural understanding and respect.**

IB programs are not implemented nationally in any system but have been adopted as an alternative model of education across the world for over 50 years. Its demanding approach and increased pace and intensity has had success world-wide for those students who are willing to undertake the rigor and who can afford the high financial cost of participation.

The comparison Nestan Ratiani undertakes in actuality is comparing the advantages in relationships found in a well-resourced and challenging education approach, the IB, with a constrained Soviet influenced, assessment corrupt, and under-resourced, pedagogically under-developed, emerging, diversely-implemented education program, the historical Georgian education system. IB has its own Theory of Knowledge that is implemented throughout a student-centered model of education. Its participation costs result from heavy investment in teacher education and professional development in the IB approach to educational relations with the student.

Very few national education programs would compare well with the IB on many dimensions even if they had similar aspirations for the education of their youth. Participating students in IB are self-selected to undertake the rigor and have the financial backing as well, and many educators would counter that the IB is not a flexible education model that can deal with the diverse talent, economic, and personality factors found in national systems. Many ideas from IB are attempted in regular schools, e.g., questioning techniques to elicit conceptual knowledge with real world situations and enhance the range of knowledge accordingly. This is not particularly the style of Soviet-based approaches and is not well practiced in Georgian schools.

Ratiani's comparison is between a kind of ideal education for highly motivated students and a largely deficient education system searching for ways to reform. The point may be that when things are as ineffective and insufficient as they have been implied in Georgian education, the deficiencies provide an opportunity to undertake major reforms that more closely match the practices of IB. This combines well with Nino Lomidze's commentary on the New School Model that aspires to be a radical modification but comes up empty on implementation. And Ratiani agrees that nothing is happening in needed ways and blames that on poor management and leadership at all levels. They both believe the NSM is poorly conceptualized, under-funded, and questionably implemented at all. Ratiani presents the possibilities. So, in true IB fashion, how can this better model or any better model be realized in the actual context of Georgian education:

> *Now you know why I keep saying the core of the problem in our education lies in the Soviet Union. It was the USSR that killed the initiative, that feared we would, at some point, defy the established route, the conventional ideology. And so it feared us and mistrusted us, calling any attempt to speak up and think contrary an act of rudeness. Not all people who have emerged from the system are able to see they are victims. They get on with their lives along the well-trodden track, taking the younger generation with them, making them victims of the victims of the Soviet system. What is truly tragic is that metamorphosis is resisted by the teacher as well – the teacher cannot see a need for one and thinks anyone who insists transformation is essential is an enemy. My observation is, a metamorphosis is not entirely appealing to the majority of parents either – they are still interested in their grades, not the skills to be acquired by their offspring to use in any situation. Habit is a great deadener! While lack of trust is sad, rejecting trust in one's volition is beyond any definition of misery" (Ratiani).*

The implied solution is aimed at changing mindsets and building trust rather than technical solutions that are not implemented and resisted. The metamorphosis is psychological and sociological and not operational and technical. This appeals to a "Change Management" approach and Gabunia suggests some of the concerns that need attention to provide a better model for Georgian education.

Instead of the IB approach, Zakharia Tavberidze looks into the possibilities of decentralized education and the development of a "Learning City." As Tevzadze emphasized in his chapter on educational relations, the contextual society affects and is affected by the qualities of its schools. Tavberidze examines the possible relationship between a city, Telavi (a historically important region of early Georgia and home of Chavchavadze and the major wine area), and the local education system, and envisions this relationship as a decentralized Learning City that possesses and practices all the most effective ways to promote teaching and learning.

The Learning City is described by UNESCO as a city that mobilizes its resources in every sector to holistically promote inclusive learning beyond that offered in the formal systems of basic to higher education to foster the possibility and incentives for lifelong learning. If the community creates a widespread and all-encompassing attitude of the importance for individual learning and establishes learning systems that go beyond schooling, it then promotes active involvement and capable contribution of all citizens to develop a prosperous and sustainable urban community through continuous education. The city or local government goes beyond merely providing the means of education for its population and instead, actively promotes the importance of learning for positive change and development through community engagement and encourages everyone to take advantage of learning opportunities in establishing a culture of learning for all citizens. Tavberidze outlines the characteristics of Telavi that run counter to the creation of a learning city and its perceived continuing demise as a "cultural town." He discusses the limiting factors that have contributed to the "hopelessness" foreboding that represents current feeling about the town. He points to the alienation created by centralized systems, the isolation of actors due to a lack of intersectoral coordination, the lack of interest of the private sector in learning programs, the fragmented spaces and lack of a center or good transportation to connect areas, and little information and miscommunication characterize the environment and inhibit both interaction and social and ethnic mingling and interaction. Telavi remains dependent and linked to Tbilisi as the center of activity. It has to develop its

own agency and identity once again, and overcome the constraints of centralization, deal with the fragmentation of sectors and institutions, coordinate and integrate decoupled resources for better utilization and promote lifelong learning opportunities, and deal with poor communication. Despite the difficulties, Tavberidze believes the concept of "learning city" is worth consideration for Telavi and perhaps Georgia to create and invigorate sustainable development.

Tsira Barbakadze sees the current schooling experience as focused on fear, the "fear of errors," rather than the joy and enlightenment of knowledge, and this results in a culture based on suffering in a limited reality. Schools emphasize the preservation of the status quo and silence or constrain any deviation from the prescribed path. Students are not encouraged to explore the unknown, "the devil you don't know," and the constraints yield mentally inactive and passive individuals incapable of full self-actualization. They search for the "right answer," absorb the canned knowledge, and focus on narrowly defined results that may have few implications for knowledge application or intellectual growth, as if enslaved by the educational process rather than enabled to learn and expand their intellectual capabilities. As she says:

> *The contemporary Georgia's education system reminds me of running on a simulated treadmill; The modern school should realize that simply learning facts and events, and even acquiring certain skills, is nothing if you do not know where you are going.*

Barbakadze's conceptualization of schooling is considerably different from the inherited Soviet-style teacher-centered, prescribed texts and knowledge, and standardization that ignores individualization in development. Again, she advocates the "destateization" of educational institutions to enable communities to identify their learning needs and fulfill them. Decentralization and constructivism are continuing themes throughout these presentations and all characterize the Georgian education program as poorly conceived for modern needs, with Barbakadze questioning the very foundations of the schooling design.

Gigi Tevzadze continues the critique of the current educational program, arguing that no education system should be arranged, no program should be loaded with prescribed content, no program should be oriented to emphasize memorization, and none should be based on the authoritarianism by teachers. He focuses on the development of basic skills necessary for self-actualization and success. Featured within an education system that emphasizes discovery and the skills necessary for those intellectual and social challenges, he articulates the required foundational components to consider in building

optimal educational relations for a quality education program: *Self-expression:* ability to present oneself that is consistent with self-understanding; *Communication:* ability to relate accurately with others to share ideas, needs, and hopes to build relationships; *Cooperation:* dealing with others to achieve mutual self-interests to enhance relationships; and Exchange: self-reflection that enable exchanges what can be offered to reach individual happiness that could not be achieved without such sustained transaction. Most schooling programs teach self-expression, fewer communication, still fewer cooperation, and none seem to explicitly develop self-reflection and exchange. All four relational skills are essential for happiness and success, and they should be the focus of the individualized educational program.

Based on a review of brain and general physiology, Tevzadze points out the interconnectedness of the four relational and transactional skills. Self-expression specifies and enables the desired rewards, communication exchanges intents, possibilities, and progress, and cooperation yields relational results that are not individually attainable, and all skills are part of exchange. But, exchange, knowing for what and what real price the individual will pay, is not explicitly taught in education. In exchanges, self-reflection sets the cost for the fulfillment of needs and hopes in the exchange. The teaching of self-reflection and exchange are important contributions to the learning goals of education.

Tevzadze's relational skills complement the various relational themes of these authors, including decentralization (relation between state and school), individualization (relation between education intents, teaching approach, and student), constructivism (relation between student and intellectual challenges in the educational experience), creative curriculum (relation between teacher and freedom from a prescribed program), trust and positive attitudinal development (relationship between teachers and students and community in the educational experience to ensure its contribution to learning), lifelong learning (relationship between the agencies of formal and informal education, as well as the local government, and all learners), need for meaningful and intellectually challenging educational content (relationship between classical literature, modern literature, and teaching methods to student interests and engagement), and others. At times we fail to appreciate the complexity of education and the important roles the many inherent and intended educational relations play in thinking about education, critiquing it, and designing it. Often, they are implicit, but they deserve a more explicit and central role in planning and evaluating education as we seek ways to improve our education systems and programs.

GIGI TEVZADZE

EDUCATIONAL RELATIONS: INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is widely believed that something economical is the basis of any human society[2]. As if this is indeed the case: economics is in everything, it enlivens us, enables us to exist, gives us possibilities to achieve goals as well as not-achieve them, measures us, sets us indicators of success, and so on.

The first glance at human society shows that economics and the laws of economics explain and make tangible the rules of society, in the same way as mathematics - the rules of nature. If not for mathematics, we would not know how the force of gravity works, how to build a house, how to make a car. According to this logic, mathematics allows us to arrange our lives in the world the way we want and not to fail. And so it does. But, does mathematics tell us anything about the universe itself? Even when mathematical computation has experimental or practical proof, the result indicates its own usefulness, not a property of the universe. Mathematics tells us nothing about the world and only tells us how to behave in this world. This is exactly what economics means for society: economics and economic laws tell us nothing about society but how we should behave in society[3].

Unlike nature, the living and non-living world, whose cognition is restricted by our sensibility organs and by the rules established by these sensibility organs over millions of years of evolution, it is possible to understand human society fully, as it is made up of us, humans, and relationships between us create society.

[2] Including corruption and other so-called Shadow economic relations too.

[3] This idea is obviously Marxist. This very idea, and not that, that the development of economic relations leads to a classless society. There is almost no theory after Marx that does not place any kind of "capital" (cultural, informational, etc.) in the ground fabric of society or community. And, at the same time, so far, the only operational idea in social theory how to make a profound impact on the lives of people and societies. Although Marx and Marxism have been revised / developed throughout the twentieth century, despite attempts to introduce "social capital", "habitus", "human capital theory" and other concepts, post-Marx social theories are neither clear, nor operational (i.e., do not provide a clear answer to the question e.g. "How to help the society become free from totalitarianism?"). Twentieth-century social theory and philosophy enriched the description of society, but it did not add much to the operational scheme established by Marx. "Operational" here and below refers to what can be considered at the same time as the axis of action of the society and the main actor of change.

This means that unlike the physical world, we can understand and describe what lies behind economic rules, that is, we can understand not only the rules of a successful life in society, but also what underlies society, what creates and what changes it.

The result of such an approach can be utilitarian: can understanding the rules of society help us better understand how to live successfully in society ?! Obviously, it will help us, but, unlike economic laws, we should not think that this understanding would be of direct benefit: it is the same connection as the knowledge of exactly the smallest elements of the universe (that we can not even but imagine) is not directly tied to the knowledge of building a fast car: first, this knowledge has to be translated into mathematical language, then tested experimentally, and only then should the building of a begin.

Exactly the same holds true for society: Knowing what the basic relations of any society are can not be supposed to help in economic growth, but it is really useful in managing these economic relations in such a way that all members of society benefit as much as possible.

Economic relations are not a society-building relationship: it is true that it tells us how to live successfully (in all senses) in this society, but it does not tell us about other relations which, if economic relations are main, should be derived from it: e.g. The relationship between a parent and a child, when a child is taking the first steps of socialization, can in no way be reduced to economic relations.
What, then, is the basic relation of society, not relative but its solid, integral element?

Let's start from "the beginning":
When a person begins to socialize, he is taught what and how is allowed / accepted / not-allowed / forbidden in a particular society. This learning lasts a lifetime. Sometimes he teaches, but mostly he learns, that is, gets experience.

It turns out that the main relation of the society, the main element is education and educational relations. We learn everything and always. If we do not learn, then we are marginalized and we take the place in a particular society according to how we learn.
As for economic relations, their basis is also education, but with a negative sign: we buy what we can not make, simply because we have no social time to learn to make everything we desire. In economic relations, money is not so much power as the equivalent

of experience: with money you buy the result of someone else's experience that you do not have. Consequently, money accumulates experience and ultimately defines power as the accumulation of experience.

From an evolutionary perspective, growing in the diversity of desires gives birth to economic relationships, and knowledge of this diversity comes to us through formal and informal education systems.

The story of how we began to buy what we could not learn to make begins with an exchange - members of the community exchange with each other whatever each of them knows better. For example, in some predatory mammal communities, those who have learned to hunt better, exchange the result of hunting for the results of upbringing of an offspring with those members of community who have learned upbringing better. We can describe this process as an exchange of resources, but the learning and teaching factor takes us far out from the notion of simple resource exchange.

Consequently, any society based on experience consists of educational relations. It depends on the complexity of the society whether economic relations would be built on educational relations.

This is how the difference between complex and simple societies is revealed: where experience is exchanged, there is a more complex society than where it is not. However, the difference between humans and other predators is that in the human world, during the exchange, due to the complexity of human society, those areas of making things of desire are multiplying where high level of specialization is needed in order to be successful. Because of that coplexity, in the exchange the symbolic mediator - the money - is included. Money abstracts the exchange, whether it is based on the real value of the monetary unit or on the consensus of the society: Money determines the value that becomes the basis of any exchange and thus eliminates the impossibility of educational relations.

The exchange begins where there is a demand for a specific education product, when existing universal training can no longer provide everything that everyone needs. Economic relations become the language in which human society is translated. Consequently, this language provides us with information how to act in order to have access to any product

in this or that society that can be exchanged, i.e. is the result of specific educational relations. It is possible, of course, to call this act the commercialization of education, but, the basis of commercialization is the objectification of desire, which is the result of educational relations.

Consequently, money becomes the equivalent of experience, its calculator: when you have money, it means that you can own the objective result (the thing) of a particular experience. That is, by having money you own the equivalent of experience, which calculates the amount of experience of things and relationships in your world.

Without learning-teaching any relation is unthinkable: when you get to any new place, you start learning the rules of that new place. Teaching-learning is so ingrained in our daily lives that we do not even notice its comprehensiveness. However, the sceptical approach will say, that even if it is so, it does not matter, since economic relations are still important. What gives us the knowledge that the smallest/solid/integral part of society (in the same way as the sentence to the language) constitutes the educational relations?

The point is, if this is indeed the case, in a particular society economic relations are formed and exist based on the educational relations: if educational relations are centralized-corrupt, so are economics, not only due to the transfer of centralized-corrupt social capital to students, but also because of political-social system, that underpins the centralized-corrupt education system.

Educational relations arrange a system of dependence and hierarchy, both physically and mentally; the way the educational relations are arranged, so is the rest of society. If the education system is centralized, if there is no place for freedom, initiative, local enthusiasm in it, the whole society has similar strucutre and so are economic relations. In the case of a centralized education system, we should expect an oligarchic and semi-oligarchic economic system in society. Conversely, if the education system is decentralized, there are many opportunities for local initiatives, schools are in the hands of the local community, the economic system is decentralized, innovation-based, with multiple operational agents.

Accordingly, if we want to influence society and the people who live in it, where should we intervene, where should we find a grip that is likely to affect all members of society? The answer is clear, in educational relations.

Begin to study what kind of the education system of a country is and you will get a picture of the whole country, starting with families and ending with economic and political ties.

To illustrate how you can move from the study of educational relationships to the arrangement of society as a whole, the following passage gives a schematic description of the path:

If educational relations are decentralized, i.e. individual citizens have a great opportunity to plan and implement their own and their children's educational relations, it is expected that the governance of these places is as independent as possible from the political centre and economic activity depends on local decisions and initiatives: Otherwise there can be no free and independent implementation of the educational relations: if the theatre, the forest, the land, the buildings that surround the school and the home, the school itself are not owned by locals, how is it possible to plan and implement their educational activities independently? How, if any step should be agreed upon by a distant political government? On the other hand, if economic activity is strictly regulated, how should one plan one's educational activities as independent and free?

Therefore, any freedom is impossible if the educational relations are not based on the principles of freedom. And economic freedom is impossible if the educational relations are not based on freedom.

NINO LOMIDZE

MANDATORY WORKS AT THE BASIC AND INTERMEDIATE LEVEL - PUPIL FACE TO FACE WITH TEXTS

- **What is the purpose of the school literature course at basic/intermediate levels?**
- **What should beginner/intermediate pupils learn in literature classes?**
- **Which texts of studying and processing help teachers to achieve goals?**

Answers to these questions are gathered in the basic and intermediate level standard, which is clearly a guiding document for current teachers.

The document describes in detail goals of teaching-learning the subject, results and content of the standard, guidelines, assessment. A list of mandatory works and an appendix are also provided, where references to extracts and fragments from the mandatory literature are provided.

Issues listed in the introduction are so interrelated that reasoning without considering all three aspects of the study of the issue seems to me impossible.

My thinking as the practicing teacher this time is the mandatory literature, which is strictly defined by the standard. These texts are a kind of pillar, a tool, one of the means of achieving goals contained in the document. The main focus of this letter will be on this aspect as well.
If a teacher has a specific goal - to "pull" the pupil to specific outcomes, he/she needs the plan that describes in detail - what text he/she teaches, what methods he/she uses and to what extent the selected text and method will help to achieve the goal.

As we know, some changes have been made in the national curriculum of the basic level for the 2018-2024 academic year. A lot has been changed in the new school model. This time the subject of observation is the part of standard where the mandatory works are listed. These texts are the "supporting texts" in the process of developing competencies provided by the literature course, and by processing them, where it is possible to achieve goals described in the introductory part.

BASIC LEVEL

LIST OF MANDATORY WORKS:

1. Leonti Mroveli - "Life and Citizenship of the worthy and equal-to-Apostles blissful Nino": Mirian hunting and solar eclipse (adapted);
2. Shota Rustaveli – "The Knight in the Panther's Skin": "Story of Rostevan, King of the Arabians", "How the King of the Arabians saw the Knight in the Panther's skin", "The testament of Avtandil" (as indicated) "The story of Nuradin P'hridon", "The council of Avtandil", "The council of Tariel";
3. Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani – "The Book of Wisdom and Lies": Separate fables, selected according to the three main thematic blocks (adapted version);
4. Davit Guramishvili - "Davitiani": 3 Chapters (Captured by Leqs; The dream seen in captivity; Escape from captivity) (as indicated);
5. Nikoloz Baratashvili - "The Fate of Kartli" ("Bedi Kartlisa"), "Thinking on the bank of the Mtkvari", "Orphan Soul";
6. Ilia Chavchavadze - "The Lake Bazaleti", "On the Sarchobela", "What can I tell you? How can I make you happy?"(as indicated)," Speech at the opening of Tsinamdzgvriantkari economic School " (As indicated);
7. Akaki Tsereteli - "Gantiadi", "Tornike Eristavi", "Bashi-Achuki";
8. Vazha-Pshavela - "My imploring", "Good serf", "Dried Beech";
9. Mikheil Javakhishvili - "Devil's Stone";
10. Galaktion Tabidze - "Wind is blowing", "Do you remember or not?", "Lead me to Bethany", "Homeland";
11. Konstantine Gamsakhurdia - "Kidnapping the Moon": fragment (indicated);
12. Giorge Leonidze - "Wish tree": Marita;
13. Kolau Nadiradze - "February 25";
14. Ana Kalandadze - "Vaja, the ray of the morning sun ...";
15. Chabua Amirejibi - "Data Tutashkhia": the story of Mose Zamtaradze.

The first eight on the list are texts from the 20th century. The rest are written in the 20th century. *Texts of contemporary authors are not included in the mandatory list.*

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

A modified version of the National Intermediate Curriculum has not yet been published. The National Curriculum for 2011-2016 - subject standards, program content, the list of mandatory literature, remains as a guiding document for intermediate level.

Teachers and pupils have to cover a fair amount of material over three years. In the 10th grade, for example, pupils are introduced to the monuments of ancient Georgian literature ("Martyrdom of Shushanik" - 5th century, "Martyrdom of Abo" - 8th century, " The Life of Grigol Khandzteli " - 10th century). Most of the classified textbooks follow the chronological principle and, consequently, the 10th grade pupil faces a big challenge - Georgian language and literature course "obliges" him to get acquainted with the old Georgian texts throughout the year.

Most of the mandatory works distributed in the 11th and 12th grades were written in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The last of mandatory texts is Jemal Karchkhadze's "It".

None of the contemporary authors' works are included in the list of mandatory works.

In general, the selection and listing of the mandatory program texts is one of the main preconditions for the successful implementation of a literature course.

Literary Law, mandatory literature, mandatory program texts, Curriculum and Syllabus mandatory Appendix / List of Books - In special literature and studies, referred to as the "Core Program". In this article, I will use the term that is established in documents we have, but when reviewing foreign experience, quoting and expressing opinions of authors, I may also use the term "Literary Law".

> *Georgian literature is the core of reading literature for elementary school pupils. A separate group of them forms mandatory works - those experienced in the time of the classics of Georgian literature, which have firmly established a place in the history of Georgian literature and are supporting texts in the study of individual topics"*[4] *- says the Standard of the Basic Level.*

[4] National Curriculum Portal, Georgian Language and Literature - Basic Level Standard http://ncp.ge/files/

In general, the preference for classic texts when compiling a mandatory list and the list being "overloaded" by both experienced classics of the time has both proponents and opponents. I will discuss arguments of both parties. The review is based on personal observation and on a survey conducted on a social network. Opinions of the colleagues (without identification and accurate citation) are quoted. The question asked during the survey is as follows:

Why should classical / old texts be taught / not taught at the basic level?

Arguments - why should they be taught?

1. This is a highly artistic prose. The gallery of classic characters is immortal. In classical / ancient texts, eternal topics are discussed outside the time frame;
2. These texts have an invariable historical, national and religious value. Our ancestors bring true faith to us. The didactic goal is also irreplaceable;
3. Pupils are introduced to other epochs, historical, social, cultural data of the past, which differs from their epoch;
4. Lexically, linguistically, the language of texts created in previous centuries is different in terms of grammatical norms. Pupils observe language changes. They work with the help of a teacher to understand the text.
5. Knowledge of classic texts and characters is important to understand modern discourse. The knowledge acquired from the books read is one of the necessary factors to understand, process and comprehend information. Literary allusions are an important part of discourse. Working on classical texts is an intellectual challenge. Accordingly – it is a useful work for the mind.
6. Teachers have developed plans over years, have compiled teaching materials, have developed criteria for effective teaching and achievement outcomes.
7. What is taught must be taught. The first Georgian literary monument "Martyrdom of Shushanik", "Martyrdom of Abo" - the first work, which for the first time sounded the alarm bell of the threat of national degeneration and reflected the lives of worthy fathers who endured unbearable treatment, and hence, protected, strengthened and brought true faith to the present day.

Arguments - why shouldn't they be taught?

1. There are contemporary texts written by contemporary authors that echo important, actual topics for adults and are also of artistic value. Overloading a literature course with classic texts will backfire and alienate a teenager from the book. At the lexical level, texts that are difficult to understand do not arouse interest.
2. The question should be asked - are themes and values of classical texts relevant and contemporary? Do they reflect the discourse of the era in which teenagers are now living? Literary law includes texts in which the social, cultural norms or data are different.
3. How much time do adults spend "solving-understanding-comprehending" archaic texts and is it worth the time? What specific methods are used to understand texts (at the lexical level) and to comprehend (to develop high thinking skills) them?
4. What attitudes do pupils display when processing classical / old texts? How high is their motivation to explore the texts? Answers to these questions are to be given to pupils themselves, and for a modern teenager learning this dosage of texts created in previous centuries, and learing in this form, is a tedious process. Proof of this is the experience of teachers and student's feedback.
5. Possessing literacy skills is vital for the modern adolescent, namely, applying acquired knowledge, reading, listening, speaking, visual, printed, comprehension, interpretation skills of digital texts. Lots of other competencies are also important. Under these conditions, a lot of time and resources are spent on "deciphering" and understanding the ancient texts, the archaic language. Specific excerpts also allow observation of language and language development.

The arguments are noteworthy

There are opinions in both directions, which are undoubtedly to be considered.
Here is an important question to discuss:

- **How can two positions be reconciled to take into account the interests of the pupil?**
- **How should a pupil-centered process be conducted so that neither state interests nor the pupils are harmed? (Achievable goals envisaged by the National Curriculum, as well as - developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards the mother tongue and literature and towards Georgian culture in general - to the 5th goal gathered in the standard point).**

There are several factors to consider when searching for answers, which I will outline below:

1. When discussing Literary Law, the focus is usually on composition and listing. No less important is the discussion of how, what methods do pupils use to process texts, how do teachers plan the process. Without studying these two aspects, the problem cannot be solved and the proposed ways or approaches will be biased.

   For example, those for whom it is important to have a specific author, a specific work, in the list of mandatory works of curricula, should definitely be interested in how this text is taught in school, in the classroom. What tasks do pupils complete? What results do they achieve? What fundamental ideas remain in their long-term memory? To what extent is the process directed to the accumulatioin of procedural and/or conditional knowledge?

   In this regard, the study conducted in 2016 within the framework of the secondary school subject's basic and intermediate level teacher Master's Program at Ilia State University is interesting, which included a focus group of pupils (Ilona Akobia, Mariam Dvali, Lia Narimanidze, practice of teaching hagiographic texts in the 10th Grade, 2016). The discussed issue was the pupils' moods and attitudes after studying the hagiographic texts - how diverse, from a methodological point of view, are the literature lessons? What makes them easy and what is especially difficult when studying these texts?

   Conclusions and recommendations developed as a result of the study are interesting and should be considered, because along with many other studies, they show that their attitude towards the study material directly affects the motivation of the pupil and the quality of the acquired knowledge.

In the report published in the online newspaper http://mastsavlebeli.ge/ **we read:**

> *According to the pupils, they spend a lot of time explaining words and paraphrasing the content, but they forget their meanings very quickly. "What is the use of knowing meanings of these words (i.e. archaisms)? I still do not remember any of them today," said one of them. Pupils find it difficult to perceive problems that are foreign to their modern era. Another point stands out here, even in the modern era, cases of persecution of people for religious reasons are not alien, but it seems that in the process of education, parallels of this type are not drawn.*
>
> *When asked after what time they were able to paraphrase the text independently, we were told that a certain part of the text was given to them as homework and they did this task, although they added that today (focus group was held in April) they no longer remember words learned. The lesson process is mainly devoted to paraphrasing the text. The pupil notes: " If we had some free time, we started talking about what and how...".*
>
> *When asked what was interesting to them (for the 21st century pupil) in these texts, they said -"If we don't go a little beyond the text, it's not interesting that someone is a hero just because he was tortured"*[5].

2. Debates and discussions should take place between decision-makers and direct performers of the process - both teachers and pupils should be involved in the process. It's interesting, how intensive is the communication in the team of the Ministry, which works on programs and lists mandatory works, with teachers, and how much the experience of teachers is taken into comsideration. In parallel with the survey on the social network, many teachers expressed a desire to engage in discussion and share experiences gained in the process of teaching certain texts (in particular, Akaki Tsereteli's "Bashi-Achuki" was discussed).

3. Reflection on the material covered by teachers is important for change and development. Teachers should be able to boldly and openly discuss the existence of this or that text in the list of mandatory works. No one knows better than them how, as a result of what efforts and by what methods, the set goals will be achieved or not achieved.

Let's go back to the list of mandatory works developed for basic and intermediate levels.

[5] Online newspaper http://mastsavlebeli.ge/

Questions that come to mind when I think about this list and the teaching-learning process are the following:

- **Is there a systematic approach to reviewing the existing programs? Who participates in this? Who makes the decisions?**
- **How often do practicing teachers get involved in discussing program texts - do they share experiences with decision makers? Do they have critical views?**
- **Proper processing of the existing program list in the given time - Is the issue researched? On what is the process more focused - on content, skills or goals?**
- **Do students, in general, develop literacy skills under the influence of given program texts? Are they interested in contemporary and/or classic texts? books? reading?**
- **How well equipped are pupils with skills and knowledge needed for modernity when, for example, half of the list of mandatory works are monuments of old literature and no text by a contemporary author (written in the 21st century) is included in it?**
- **Does the teacher have a free choice and can the teacher select the reading material tailored to the interests of pupils under the existing Literary Law?**

I became interested in the experience of other countries and read several studies and articles on the subject. Literary law is being actively debated. I will not review all works of various authors and researchers in this article. I mention only two authors whose articles have aroused interesting thoughts in me:

In his article on Literary Law, American scholar Emily Chiariello notes:

> *Let's say the goal is to introduce students to the dystopian genre and engage them in thinking about related themes. Traditionally, you may turn to Fahrenheit 451, 1984, or Brave New World, but with a critical lens you would notice that these were all written more than 60 years ago and have white, male protagonists {...} Diverse Energies, for example, is an anthology of dystopian short stories that present projections of a future in which the world's diversity is reflected through protagonists of different ages, ethnicities, and sexual orientations"*[6].

[6] Literacyworldwide.org, May/June 2017, Emily Chiariello, a classic debate https://static1.squarespace.com/static/

I would like to add that the study of voluminous texts is problematic at the basic level as well and remains one of the challenges at the intermediate level. Another important question is - **How big is the place of texts in the list of mandatory works?**

In my experience, processing excerpts from large texts, episodes is quite enough. Using a well-chosen episode as a teaching material will be just as beneficial to the teacher and pupil as processing the full text. For example, Bashi-Achuki story which is studied in the 8th grade consists of 15 chapters, and in one of the textbooks it is 224-259 pages long (including questions and assignments).

As the teacher of the Georgian Language and Literature, 2019 finalist of the National Teacher Award, Maia Menabde writes in the following article "Extensive Texts at School": "Maintaining the interest of adults is a very difficult task, and it becomes much more difficult when a teacher is forced to focus their attention for a long time on one work, no matter how interesting and useful it is. Children love dynamics, constant changes and news, new themes, new characters and new faces.[7]

Mike Fleming, the British scientist and Emeritus Professor at the University of Durham, explores aspects of Literary Law and shares some interesting observations. According to him, Literary Law is based on "Normative Claims"[8] - this means that the compiler is guided by the historical value of specific texts. Preserving and transmitting such texts is a leading motive for future generations (in our case, "If they don't study at school, then after school they will not read them at all" is one of the most common arguments).

Literary Law is seen as a desire to transfer traditional knowledge, values (Fleming uses the word "instinct") as a kind of guarantee that the "glorious past" will not be left without proper attention. To prove his words, the researcher quotes Kennedy (2001:105):

> *Canon formation is a 'natural human instinct' which is an attempt 'to impose order on variety by choosing what is best for preservation over time".*[9]
>
> The passion for this *"what is best for preservation over time"* is fraught with the danger of turning literature into a museum piece ...

[7] Online newspaper http://mastsavlebeli.ge/
[8] The Literary Canon: implications for the teaching of language as subject, Mike Fleming, University of Durham, United Kingdom, https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/
[9] ibid. p.3

It should be noted that the new third generation national curriculum, which is valid for 2017-2023, involves planning the learning process according to constructivist approaches. This means (at least, declared in such way) that the pupil instead of "accumulating knowledge" in different subjects, will learn how to use previous knowledge to create something new, he/she will learn to construct the acquired knowledge, to apply it to practical activities. Prior knowledge, in this case, is not a "dead" concept or memorable fact (which will soon be forgotten), but an important "ore" to be used to create something new. In terms of teaching literature there are indeed many beneficial changes envisaged by the reform. However, in this case it is important to what extent it will be possible to implement concepts written on a paper in the classroom. Will textbooks, mandatory curriculum materials, and other resources enable a teacher to conduct the process qualitatively? It has been repeatedly stated that the new school model gives a teacher more freedom, but the question is – will freedom in the context of the existing mandatory curriculum and textbooks (in which the so-called "core program" should be completely covered) become similar to "freedom on a short leash"? Does the teacher actually have the freedom to choose reading material tailored to the age interests of the pupils instead of the compulsory curriculum, or in parallel with it, so that educator doesn't have a "fear of falling behind the program"?

MARI GABUNIA

THE NEW SCHOOL MODEL: GODS WHO FAIL TO HELP

> *"The mission of the New School Model is to establish a person-oriented educational environment that will provide each and every adolescent with an opportunity to fully implement their potential and equip them with essential knowledge to face the 21st century challenges"*
>
> *Support of General Education Reform, 2019*

Over the course of last 30 years, the general education system has been seeking solutions in the form of various universal gods[10], such as self-governing councils, CAT examinations, school policing service, national examinations, teachers' professional development Scheme, etc.

In 2019, the mission of General Education System improvement was imposed on `The New School Model`. The reform is progressing with the support of the World Bank and by 2024, it should cover all schools within the country of Georgia. The New School Model aims to instill a constructivist curriculum that will encourage the establishment of democratic school culture. Additionally, the reform entails the development of teachers' ICT skills, student assessment and support of school management systems.

This reform would be fairly attractive, if there were no doubts about the existence of universal gods. The New School Model creates an illusion that a change is taking place and this change is improving the education system. In the created epistemological fog, it is quite complex to find the starting point of education system enhancement and to rid oneself from the simulation labyrinth.

In other words, the system that is characterized by fragmented, unstructured and non-consecutive decisions often puts irrelevant matters under the umbrella of changes. Therefore, the central question arises with regard to making the issues problematic - Which existing problems in the general education system are put in the focus of changes and who makes them problematic? It is interesting to observe the focus of changes. Firstly, if the problem is posed in a politically correct manner, the orientation within the complex system might be simplified. Secondly, if we closely and realistically describe, "What is", it will help us define "What might be".

[10] Universal gods are used as a metaphor for universal narratives, which attempt to find one solution for diverse problems.

The determinants of politics, while planning reforms, often concentrate around the following questions: what is technically feasible? What is politically profitable? What is progressive? The questions that will be emphasized within the frame of change focus depend on several factors, including the logical paradigm where the discussion is taking place. In the case of the New School Model, it is possible to recognize all three focus questions, the materialization of which makes the ministry of education implement the following policies:

1. It repeats the Methods Fetish politics, i.e, focuses on a question - what is technically feasible?
2. It repeats the Fake Carnival politics, i.e. focuses on a question - what is politically profitable?
3. It repeats the politics of Progressiveness , therefore focuses on a question - what do international organizations want?

The Methods Fetish: What is technically feasible?

> *A complex assignment is a central word for an educational reform"*
>
> *Post from the New School Model Facebook Page, May 2020*

One of the co-authors of the reform, in her article, published in `School Governance`, critically evaluates the mistakes made by the education system and points to decontextualized and unified instruments that neglect the importance of specific contexts. The author's critique mainly focuses on an assumption that previous reforms were not oriented toward a person and the reformers did not fully realize the importance of this idea (Jakeli, 2020).

The author develops the second important discussion regarding the necessity of a paradigm shift of education by quoting a French sociologist, Edgar Morin. He describes how the Western Cartesian paradigm established the 'Simplification Paradigm' in a person's consciousness. 'The Simplification Paradigm' is presented as a fragmented thinking, which disclaims the importance and multi-dimensionality of the context. The author assumes that the mechanistic vision derived from the simplification paradigm laid grounds for educational reforms. In response to this, according to Morin, it was necessary to replace the 'simplification paradigm' with the 'complexity paradigm'.

> *The new school model is the very paradigm reform - it is based on visions and theories that arose from the 'complexity paradigm' and precisely by this it represents the turning point for our education system, which has to incorporate qualitative changes into classrooms' (Jakeli, 2020, page 30).*

It is not clearly evident in the article, although the name of the 'complex assignment' might also be related to the 'complexity paradigm. In this case both the finding and the vision are interesting, however, it is arguable how correctly the complexity idea was interpreted in the New School Model and in its central word- complex assignment. The complex assignment is only a type of assignment, in which the quality of student involvement is increased. It can be either individual or in-group. It involves the components of research, creation, discussion and presentation. Complex assignments are written in matrix forms, which in the end create the school curriculum.

The curriculum of the New School Model is a combination of 'methods fetishes'. Methods fetish can be characterized by all reforms, initiatives and visions, that seek solutions of structural problems in specific teaching methods and are less interested in the social, cultural and economic dimensions of education. In reality, every teaching method is solely a reflection of existing discourses and if we claim that school is one of the leading institutions involved in the reproduction of social order, it means that teaching methods only repeat values and norms already existing in this system (Bartolome, 1994). In this case, it does not actually matter which dominant or non-dominant discourse the methods reflect. We solely assume that if any of these discourses and social structures create an issue in schools, it cannot be solved and managed by a complex assignment.

The main rhetoric of the New School Model is based on the idea that problem solving starts in a classroom - the curriculum becomes constructivist and student-oriented, while teaching methods become more progressive and interactive. At a glance, one might have nothing against these assumptions. However, believing that systemic problems can solely be dealt with on a classroom level is quite naive, and according to this assumption, the New School Model fights only the symptoms of problems existing in the general education system and not their root causes. The article in no way attempts to undermine the importance of methods in pedagogy. It simply aims to expand the big picture, where methods fetishes do not leave space for other variables. Let us list a few issues that schools face: academic underachievement, faulty infrastructure, teacher professional development

scheme, shadow education. Each of the listed, in and of itself, consists of several variables, while methods fetishes restrain the solution of these issues to specific teaching methods.

The idea of a person-oriented curriculum is also debatable. If the reform is based on Morin's philosophy, then what is implied by person-oriented curriculum should be specified. Edgar Morin is a planetary thinker, his philosophy is more post-humanist, rather than human-centered and anthropo-centric. Within the education context, Morin's idea of complexity is related to interdisciplinarity. He critically regards the teaching of specialized subjects, viewing it as removed from the whole and presented as a separate object. In his opinion, one of the important issues that the education reform should emphasize is loyalty towards uncertainty and indefiniteness. In addition, he advocated the idea of a curriculum that `produces` students with anthropologic consciousness - the idea of wholeness and diversity, planetary and ecological consciousness (Morin, 2002).

Such insightful, technological and interdisciplinary turning points have not taken place in the New School Model curriculum, thus, it is debatable to what extent it is possible to name the reform as a paradigm shift. The changes were mostly reflected in the methodic part, i.e "the methods fetish". The New School Model can only achieve a few improvements. In this case, we return to the question: which existing problems in the general education system are put in the focus of changes and who makes them problematic? In addition, there seems to be no reflection on the question – 'which problem is more important?' . The authors' expectation, that change will start in a classroom from bottom to top, needs much more rationalization. It is less likely that complex assignment will increase the quality of students' academic development to the point that it improves the general education system, along with societal development. This, furthermore, raises a few more questions: How many years will this change take? What will be the scale of its impact? Will this impact correspond the financial and time input?

The reform is also inadequate in terms of its cost-effectiveness. The budget of programs in 2019 was GEL 19,354,000,00, which will increase annually in parallel with the increase in number of schools involved in the reform. The only validated expense in the budget might be the component of partial technological equipment of schools, through which schools will be provided with: laptops, projectors and Wi-Fi equipment.
To conclude, methodic solution of problems is less related to strategic planning and it fails to provide solutions for problems existent in the general education system. In turn,

would it not be better to direct these resources to popularizing a teacher's profession and improving the teacher training programs in academia?

The Fake Carnival: What is politically profitable?

> *"Within the New School Model, every Georgian school will create and develop its own curriculum that will be ... an opportunity to decentralize the education system"*
>
> *School Curriculum, p.40, 2020*

The second important rhetoric of the reform regarding the decentralization of curriculum is also attractive. However, in this case, we are dealing with a fake carnival. The reform rhetoric is monologic, we only hear the ministry's voice, that seems somewhat final. This ultimate voice, as the voice in and of itself, does not allow the intersection of contradicting voices (Bakhtin, 1981).

The universal monologic voices no longer leave space for polyphony and in turn we get: the imitation of polyphony, imitation of decentralization and imitation of deviation from the norm, which finally creates a fake carnival, where the feast is temporary and false.

In other words, the New School Model has little to do with the decentralized curriculum. In order to introduce a school curriculum the ministry selects a group of experts who over a period collaborate with schoolteachers and school management.

In the part of creating a school curriculum, the sequence of this process looks as follows:

While consulting with international organizations, the ministry of education creates the concept of the New School Model (A);

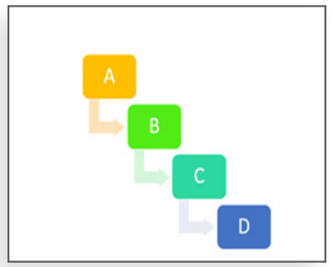
The ministry selects a group of experts and trains them according to the concept of the New School Model (B);

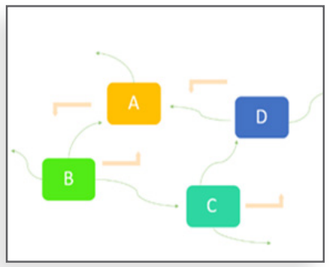
The group of experts are divided into different schools where they support teachers and school management (C);

Together with school teachers, and based on the concept of the New School Model, the groups of experts and teachers create school curriculums.

Considering the derivation principles, it is not hard to see connection between statements A and D. The reform is completely centralized and the rhetoric about decentralization lacks foundation. For more clarity, we may have a look at several levels of the introduction of curriculum: Supra - the introduction takes place at a transnational and international level, Macro - on a national level, Mezzo - on a level of organizations working on curriculum development, publishers and experts of specific subjects, Micro - on a level of high and low ring management in schools, Nano - on teachers and students level (Priestley, Alvunger and Soini, 2021). In the case of the New School Model, the curriculum introduction process descends vertically from Supra to Nano level. However, as the ministry claims, this process takes place at nano and micro levels. The fact that teachers write complex assignments together with experts does not make the curriculum decentralized.

The first image depicts the current process of curriculum introduction, while the second image shows the potential decentralized model, where it is possible to draw lines and make several combinations between different levels of curriculum development.





The concept of the New School Model states that there is a solo-taxonomy model of assessment that should be used by teachers. In given circumstances, when a variety of different concepts and models appear in education theories, why should 2309 schools[11] and 62699[12] teachers use the very solo-taxonomy model and not any other model? Why should they use matrix forms of school curriculum and not any of the other forms? Why specifically categorizing three types of knowledge (declarative, procedural and conditional) and not other types of categorization should be used? These questions do not underestimate selected models, although universalization of these approaches is problematic. It might have been more efficient to free teachers' professional development

[11] National Statistics Service of Georgia (2021). Number of general education schools according to type and region
[12] National Statistics Service of Georgia (2021). Number of teachers in general education institutions

from the monopoly of the Teacher's House, which imposes regimes of truth regarding teaching theories and methods. It would be more fair to distribute this function through different agencies of curriculum development and to hand over this choice to teachers.

If we look at this picture from a wider perspective, we can notice the trace of political will in the creation of the fake carnival. The reforms and policy documents do not solely have one author and one source of imposed agendas. One of the leading voices in this process belongs to politicians. It is not new that the general education system represents a seductive election group for the central government. Thus, the answer to a question - what is politically profitable? - is certainly not a decentralized curriculum.

The issue of the political will drag us even further. It is necessary to look at public governance forms. School and curriculum decentralization is linked to the issue of municipal decentralization. In this direction, the country's vision is confusing. On one hand, within the EU association treaty, we have an obligation to increase the quality of municipal autonomy, on the other hand, the government still offers us the fake carnival. The article does not aim to discuss this document in detail, however, public discussions revolving around this document can be summarized as – 'centralization in the name of decentralization' - with a very benign fiscal decentralization component. Even if it weren't so, and if the document in fact took into account the practical implementation of decentralization, it leads us to the following paradox: on one hand, the state announces the strategy of municipal decentralization, or at least, is willing to do so, and on the other hand, the ministry of education implements the centralized reform. These visions are in contradiction and are not in harmony with one another. One of the reasons for this might be the unequal distribution of state power in the process of defining the education policy. The parliament is less involved in defining the process of education policy-making. Different policy documents point out that this function is mainly implemented by the ministry (Machabeli, 2019).

It is important to note, that school decentralization does not mean complete deregulation and will not cause their automatic development. This might solely become a starting point of their development. In the presence of political will, the idea of developing technically feasible supportive models is less problematic. Talking about the corruption risks inherent in decentralization and other governance-related issues might only be the second part of discussion.

The politics of progressiveness: what do international organizations want?

> *During the old curriculum, house building was starting from walls not from the foundation"*
>
> *School curriculum, p. 47, 2020*

For a long time now, the creation of policy documents has gone beyond the nation-state frame and it represents hybrids of different discourses produced by various international and transnational organizations. We can imagine progressive policy documents as regimes of truth, that move from one country to another vertically and that lay foundations in one of the peripheral classrooms. The adaptation of policy documents is a fairly dangerous task, due to hidden and invisible discourse traps existing in them. The New School Model was also unable to escape these invisible traps and consequently led to progressive reform adapted with inertia that does not align with the local context. The dynamics of progressiveness - international organizations vs. developing countries - focuses less on postcolonial critique, that is frequently utilized in explaining the development politics across Post-Soviet countries. Instead, we can direct our focus to those who locally define politics - to what extent are they ready to correctly show partner organizations the local needs, and how capable are they to demand the support of reforms that fit the local context?

Etymological research of the word progressive will take us far away. Two problematic questions arise in its any definition: who defines what is progressive? And Who maintains what is progressive? The importance of progressiveness is different according to time and context, hence, while replacing the traditional with the progressive, one has to define the starting points of replacement. In order to do this, the ministry first and foremost needs basic research that poses the following questions: Are there any data that prove the necessity of specific progressive reform? Are these data reliable and general? etc. The New School Model makes a mistake at the first stage of its implementation, in that there is no research or evidence, which proves we need the New School Model on the national level. Moreover, no evidence shows why the general education system should commence with the creation of complex assignments, when there are more large-scale issues to be found in the general education system.

In the end, the replacement of the traditional with progressive within the New School Model is taking place with inertia and it is becoming totalized, which leads to mechanization and devaluation of the idea of progressiveness. It is also a paradox that on one hand, the progressive-constructivist curriculum comes in conflict with practices existing in schools: the centralized teacher professional development scheme, grade-based assessment, authorized text-books etc. Thus, the concepts and practices of the New School Model, in contradiction to the existing rhetoric, still starts building from the wall and not from the base.

It is possible to identify multiple players while defining the progressiveness rhetoric: politicians, i.e. Think Tank organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, academia and experts, global financial institutions and international institutions. From the actors listed above, western international and transnational organizations are the most influential players that create economic, technological and ideological order. Nation-states repeat this order, although, in formal terms, they do not have an obligation to do so. During this process, it is important to observe how the linear transfer of international policy documents limits the opportunity for incentives. Within this strong field of influences, new knowledge is not being created, in that already existing formulas create conditions for repetition and restrain the opportunity of independent development. In the case of the New School Model, the progressiveness dynamics was translated into declaring the model as the national truth that swallowed all other small initiatives and ideas in the field.

Civil society has the ability either to stop the inert process, or to maintain it. Local NGOs and initiative groups create specific attitudes towards specific policies, hence, their positioning in the external assessment component is vital. Today, the balance between the internal-external assessment of policy- documents is demolished. The external assessments are minimal and they are implemented on behalf of a few initiatives. This only strengthens the positions of universal policy documents. Thus, the question of – 'what do international organizations want?' should be met with locally produced knowledge that will translate the directives of international organizations and financial support into the locally interpreted progress.

And finally,

As Bakhtin says – 'Nothing eternal has ever happened in this world"' (1981, p.166) - therefore, the discussion in the article that is based on limited information, must be supported with data about the external assessment of the reform and of a specific research. The article aims to encourage the reconsideration of the main assumptions around the New School Model, so that future reforms do not end up in the collection of universal gods that failed to help.

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NESTAN RATIANI

APOLOGY TO METAMORPHOSIS

Gods and humans transfigured and defaced thanks to the fact that omnipotence of love was described as far back as 2000 years ago by Publius Ovidius Naso in his Metamorphosis. This letter also deals with transformation, of course with the transformation of one specific human, which, it is true, happened also thanks to love... however, thanks to motherly love.

INTRODUCTION

I have two children, Lizzie and Sandro. Don't make any mistakes – it is not their number or their names that matter in this sentence, but the fact of having children. The thing is that, during my life, whenever I was to make any step, it was this fact that decided how exactly I would behave.

My children, Lizzie and Sandro, were born in the last decade of the previous century in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi. Again, their ages or place of birth wouldn't matter if it were not for the following fact – a sizeable part of the population of Georgia, which included me and all adult members of my family, while employed, continuously failed to receive their lawfully earned pay on the day dutifully stipulated in their contracts. This grievous circumstance was normally referred to using the hopeful phrase "freezing salaries". There were some among those continuously and patiently expecting the belated wages who believed that – we didn't know exactly how, but based on the optimistic sound of the words, hopefully – the salaries we had properly earned through our months-long sweat and toil would somehow thaw. So in those times, it was the only concern of ours to physically survive and stay alive and to finally welcome our unfrozen salaries with open arms. To forecast how the liquified salary would keep up with the reality was way beyond our capabilities in those dire times. Nor could we find time for that occupation. In order to ensure that we continued to live into the future, one frozen-salary-earning job was insufficient. One would have to work at two, three or more jobs to make ends meet. In addition, it was my generation that was responsible for the previous generation as well, both for their well-being and physical survival, notwithstanding their lack of sense

of responsibility for what our present being was. We were also the ones taking care of the future generation, and not only in terms of their health and life either – among other things, we had to think about their education, too. In fact, had we only thought about their physical survival, it would have been the most irresponsible deed on our part, for which their generation would no doubt have hurled most painful reproaches at us. So, you see – we had an unimaginable number of concerns and burdens to carry and think about.

When we had children, ours was a relatively larger family. My husband and I, as well as my children, Lizzie and Sandro first lived with my parents and my grandma and later moved to my husband's parents' place. Again, what matters in this sentence is not the fact that post- and just Soviet Georgia experienced an acute housing shortage and the newly wed could only dream of starting a new life on their own. What is essential here is that this very complication, as a cloud with a silver lining, meant that parents who had to be out earning their daily bread did not have to fret about their kids left unsupervised at home before they reached the kindergarten age. Paradoxically, any one job I had at the time only served to cover Lizzie's kindergarten fee. Every time I got a pay rise, the child care fee would rise too. Indeed, until Lizzie went to school, never did I manage to save anything as I never earned more than was required to pay for one of the kids' preschool education. This went on for many years – each job was designed to fund particular needs of my children's development.[13]

One may ask why all that I have described above matters at all. But the thing is my mainstream curriculum vitae that I would submit during the selection process for a job was fed by the curriculum vitae being written in invisible ink alongside the first one; it was also read between the lines of the official CV. For instance, my biography says I was awarded a three-year 2nd degree presidential scholarship in 1998 and a 1st degree scholarship in 2001. Why did I do all I could to earn that scholarship? Well, because a monthly income of 150 Lari, which later became 200 Lari, meant I could devote more time to

[13] A job is not just a workplace and that is something easily understandable for my generation. For our folks their work was a place you would go in the morning and leave for home at six in the afternoon. Now, things or rather borders that defined the work were quite different in our times and these have been even more blurred by the pandemic. When I refer to 'jobs' in this letter, I do not mean one place of work – my 'jobs' include the texts whose edition had been commissioned by an international organization and university lectures which implied I would be present in different buildings at different hours during the same day. This approach, while making it possible for a person to have several jobs at a time, is a difficult one to implement.

my children and to the job I loved, and hence, would no longer be compelled to do 500-page long editions that bored me to death. I also took up another job in a private school in 2009. Why? Because of my children, again: I was no longer earning the presidential scholarships at the time and some private schools offer discounted tuition to the children of their teachers.

While the cultural context I was surrounded with required me to have children as soon as I got married and, truth be told, I did not defy the conception myself, I can't claim I spent a lot of time thinking if it was the right time to be a mother or if I was ready to undertake their upbringing or, again, I had covered myself sufficiently finances-wise. In other words, I did not view children as what you would call a planned project. When you design a project, you normally take into account the possible risks, think out the expectations, do the budgeting and draw up your assessment criteria; that is to say, there are indicators in place that measure success. I had nothing of the like and notwithstanding my thoughtlessness prior to my pregnancy, as soon as they were born, I felt responsible for their future. Now, the future is a vague concept. I viewed my responsibility not as a duty to clear away this vagueness and picture my children's future life – impossible and hence, totally mad – but rather it was my job to prepare my offspring for any kind of future aka take care to refine their skills and bring out their talents or whatever they had of them. Before I actually undertook to develop the skills that would prove practical both in the future and in the present, first I had to identify the life skills. Ask yourself: what life skills are there? Where do children acquire those skills? Who helps them in the process? I had a great multitude of questions and sought answers in books, in my fellows' experience and in educational institutions too. Unfortunately, the process of search also yielded numerous gaps and blemishes in the same institutions such as kindergartens, schools or universities. I did not mind that: I had my children's back and I would not allow, in fact, I would make all humanly possible effort to ensure that they did not feel left out. I could take care of their education at home, alongside their informal studies at school, and would send them off to an international university abroad too. And with time, the thought started to haunt me: what about the children whose parents were unlike me and unable to support them? What about the children who failed to be at the right place at the right time, i.e. at the very start of their path?

I do believe in innate abilities. But I also have faith in the good of education, let me correct myself: right education. Let me explain myself below.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and Theory of Knowledge

Here I could try to give an exhaustive description of my life and explain what and why I did for living, why I hired tutors for my children in school subjects, why I resolved they should also study the language of a large neighboring country alongside European tongues, why they had to attend music classes and gymnastics trainings, why I had them take up skiing in a sports school or why the decision was made to enroll them in the historic School Number One and how I managed to cover the costs of all the out of school clubs provided by the Students' Palace which my financial means afforded. But this would most certainly bore you. So, allow me to list the problems which I came across when they were in their senior grades and which effectively led me to writing this article.

Lizzie was destined to take a university course in America. This much we knew. And under 'we' I mean both me and my friends – her American godparents. Anyone wishing to be admitted by an American university and, in addition, to earn a scholarship, will need to prepare years in advance. This does not apply to the savant, sports stars and the musically talented, even though this also implies multiannual planning and groundwork. Moreover, this does not apply to the children who have been victims of political regime, extreme poverty or general injustice, when they are genuinely striving for education. The American Academy in Tbilisi founded by Guivy Zaldastanishvili is exactly what a student needs to properly prepare for university admission or at least I thought so. However, if you want to send your child there, they will have to pass an exam at the end of their eighth grade, and you will have to have a couple of thousand American dollars on your bank account. When Lizzie managed to accomplish item one of these requirements, I really regretted not having applied for teachership when the Academy was first opening. The thing was I found out the school was almost free for teachers' children. Lizzie had just concluded her first year there when a friend told me the European School had an opening for a teacher of theory of knowledge and they were willing to pay well too. So it came to pass that I decided to try. I passed the required test, gave a demonstration lesson in English for the selection jury and negotiated the pay with the school administration. It was thanks to the love for my children and for the sake of a better future I envisioned for them that I became a school teacher. The metamorphosis went beyond my work, however...

If you are not familiar with the IB Diploma Programme or the IBDP for short, you will not be able to understand what subject I taught at the European School, because the theory of knowledge is an exclusive subject of the IBDP. In fact, the theory of knowledge is not a subject. Rather, it is an accumulation of knowledge, reflection on the correlation between various subjects, observation of the ways knowledge is received and transferred and discussion of other interesting topics linked with knowledge. My eight years of experience in the school showed me that teaching the theory of knowledge actually demonstrates the main problem related to teaching in Georgian schools. This problem consists in the obsession of the study with the contents and failure to see beyond facts and events. If a student finds it difficult to find examples from other subjects or struggles with discussion, achieving coherent speech– oral or written, conclusion and demonstration of the thought process in a theory of knowledge class, it normally indicates things are not altogether right in that school. On average, my students' final grades in my subject, which were, by the way, not given by me, were consistent with the general statistics of other schools globally. Specifically, only about five per cent or only one in twenty students would have the highest assessment. The rest were in the medium and lower range. I was happy with that and so were my students. The school administration was really disappointed though, the reason being that they had been accustomed to the same students receiving highest grades for years when they had studied in the Georgian sector of the school. There were numerous occasions I was told not to withhold high grades, why be mean? I tried to explain what we were dealing with.[14] I tried to illustrate why the grades given by Georgian schools lacked validity and what the reason was they were downgraded when converting them by the international scale. Unfortunately, school administrators who grew out of the corrupt Soviet system rarely see the picture. Change is hard to achieve. It takes a thorough, all-round readiness for metamorphosis to occur.[15]

[14] In the IBDP, subject teachers assess their students' year assignments via internal assessment. The works are then sent for external assessment. If the final grade differs from the teacher's score, it means the teacher needs assistance and the school has to fund their training. The biggest share in the subject grade is held by the test grade and tests are scored outside the school. Thus, what conditions the credibility of the programme is how thoroughly an authorized school follows the test procedure and whether the subject teacher turns a blind eye to possible cases of unconscientious academic behaviour when conducting internal assessment. Overall responsibility rests with the school as it is the party interested in upholding the standard, which is a bit hard to achieve in post-Soviet countries and rumor has it, unconscientious behavior has been an issue here every now and then.

[15] The question naturally arises here as to why such a school may want to start an international programme in the first place. It has a simple answer: business and financial gain. Hundreds of Georgian parents try to send children abroad. Hundreds of families residing in Georgia trust an international programme. They do not have an issue with how fair assessment at school is. They will only raise their voice when their child's internal and external grades do not coincide as they were led to believe ('cheated' would be a better word here) by both teachers and school administration that the child deserved a high grade. In reality, the international programme and the standard of our curriculum, grades given by local teachers and even the subject-related knowledge are different as night and day.

The question that is pending is what is going on in the Georgian sector aka Georgian curriculum that would drive me to see the fault in the process so clearly? You ask any teacher and they will readily tell that your students must be given an opportunity to speak out, that the teacher must be a moderator and that the teacher must also have the students achieve the higher-order thinking. Do you want to know what really happens during lessons? The teacher asks questions and if students answer them, the teacher thinks the students are speaking and stating opinions; whereas the questions asked normally either concern facts or the kind that guide the student to the one 'correct' answer. Learners rarely ask any questions and when they do, they either inquire about a term or a fact.[16] How can one moderate such a lesson? Another extremity is that some teachers are actually afraid of free-thinkers among their students and when the latter try to speak, the instructors shy away from opposing them or contradicting what they say and end up nodding to everything being said. How can this lead to development of either – first or second – type of student? From the very primary school such students believe that they are right in whatever they say and they do not have to justify, illustrate, suppose and try to prove or even respect their opponents' views. By doing nothing about such practices, we have ended up with a situation when some people who have a modicum of knowledge, having listened to such unrefined students coming out of school, start to lament the past, the Soviet system of education. In their eyes, the only fault lies with the curriculum. The fault, however, lies with the universities and not with schools. It is the university that produces certified teachers, furnishing them with diploma. If you ask me, the teacher is, if not a victim of the Soviet education (sc. Soviet university), a victim of the Soviet education's victim at least. As soon as such Soviet-educated individual sniffs out that the change is near, he starts to rumble – shouting how certain change-oriented individuals are ruining a smoothly running system, how reformers are leading the country to disaster... Such pseudo-patriotic rumblings oftentimes sound so convincing that the parent is lost too and does not know who to believe. As for the teachers, to their majority change is a threat to well-being, not an opportunity. So, instead of viewing development as a priority and facing the challenge, such teachers constantly look for the guilty party, and in a wrong place too, just to cover up their own feebleness.

Several more observations: in our internet age, when students have access to ample information, their fraidy teachers, attempting to hide their own ignorance, become mateys with their students. This leads to a change in their speech. Such would-be crony teachers use student-slang at the lessons, thus, impoverishing their students' vocabulary too. Look around, listen to journalists and politicians. You will soon discover this is another reason for the meager language we have heard for years – teachers who express themselves in street language. Out of all the skills acquired at school, the ability to communicate verbally is essential. Verbal communication can be oral or written. In order to be able to express our thoughts orally, we need to have both – the thought and the language. If the teacher does not constantly enrich their own and the student's subject-related vocabulary and academic terminology, does not strive to enable the student to communicate ideas to the audience in a clear and concise manner, that teacher does not belong in the school. As for writing, it is a true Achille's heel for literally each Georgian student. Why? Because unlike what is believed in Georgia, writing should not only be taught by teachers of language and literature. People also think that the more lofty vocabulary a student uses, the better their written piece becomes. In addition, many tend to forget that writing is a form of communication and coherence and clarity of the idea to be expressed must be the utmost priority of the educator who teaches students how to write. One of the things that strikes me when I review the works of both my school and university students is that they are never able to round up the introduction, which only has the role of outlining and emphasizing the applicability of what is to follow. Sometimes an essay ends up having two or even three introductions and the author is not even aware that it will not damage the text to get rid of it. I keep telling them to delete one of the introductory paragraphs, as they have already posed the study question and told the reader it is a problem, it is merely wasting the reader's time. Meanwhile, many students find it hard to give up even a part of the introduction and end up having no room for the discussion. In the end, the problem remains unresolved and the work fails to meet the assessment criteria. (It is true, I have devoted plenty of time to my own introduction here and I, as anybody else, like lengthy starters, which allow me to explain from the start why I am writing and why it will be worth reading the piece. However, I strictly demand from my students to define the problem in the first sentence and in general, forget about introductions altogether until they feel they are skilled at writing and laconically approaching the subject). Another problem that I often encounter in early writings of my upper class and university students is that oftentimes their conclusion does proceed from their discussion. Rather, it often rephrases the introduction or raises an entirely different problem. My students find it so hard to see this error they make while writing their conclusion that I frequently dedicate a few lessons to practicing syllogisms.[17] This way learners realize that the conclusion that does not follow from a well-structured discussion is a wrong one. It gradually dawns on them that it is not about how acceptable the opinions expressed in the essay are for the examiner, but

[16] I have been an external observer for some time and witnessed a number of lessons in the Georgian language and literature in various regions in our country and my reflections are based on real facts.

[17] I have written two articles - Two Deadly Mistakes and Maths in Literature Class - on the subject for a teachers' internet journal.

about how well the applicant was able to justify his ideas. Even when they are altogether unable to prove their point, it is not an issue at all. Failure to prove the original proposition does not necessarily mean the proposition was no good. What matters is for us to try our best to prove it, to admit the fact, because this is exactly what is appreciated. The student must realize that such a frustration of effort is not a lost battle, but a road to a new order of thought. One more problem my students' writings often demonstrate is unclarity of thoughts. This is when I have to ask questions to specify what they meant. When they have answered those, I normally say: Are you going to accompany your essay to the examiner? What is the reader supposed to do if you are not beside them? How are they supposed to know what you wanted to say? Why should they spend time racking their brains about what on earth you meant? Why don't you just write down what you have just told me and that will be it. Finally, it is also a challenge that not infrequently, students fail to take into account the audience of their composition. In other words, who is going to read the work? The examiner? And what does the examiner know about the student? Nothing. The examiner is not aware that the writer is bright, that the writer spent twelve years working hard at school. The only window the examiner has to look into the writer is the composition. This is how the examiner forms an opinion. And having someone form a good opinion of you is not an easy thing to do. Thus, in order to make an impression, the student must also take care of the style.

Anyway, when I realized that by teaching the theory of knowledge, I was helping other kids more than my own children, who had induced me to start a teacher's career in the first place, I offered them to change their school for mine. Lizzie refused to leave the American Academy and I gave up provided she would at least read the books in my curriculum of the subject. As for Sandro, I got him into the IB Middle Years Programme. This is how I, a teacher of the Diploma Programme, started to feel my way through the Middle Years subject guides and specifics of the curriculum. Truly, a mother's love is omnipotent!

IB MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME AND PERSONAL PROJECT

The IB Middle Years Programme starts from the sixth grade and enables learners to get their Middle Years diploma in two years. I had had a notion of how the programme works before Sandro took it up: the programme concludes in a personal project, which I had been coordinating for some time. It would not be me if I failed to see faults here too. Jokes aside, before I actually proceed to describe them as seen through the eyes of the personal projects' coordinator, let me diverge a bit. I had been hearing Middle Years teachers complain about how flawed their programme was, because they had no regular textbooks and they – the teachers – had to make use of the ones normally covered in the Georgian sector, for instance in mathematics and Georgian language and literature. The thing is we do not have one single coursebook in the theory of knowledge either and teachers at the diploma programme choose the books to use to teach the curriculum. Theoretically, it is a very good practice, because unfortunately, the school will choose the coursebook without asking the teacher because they have a deal with the publisher or the author. Truth be told, one of the reasons I admired the American Academy was that I had discovered two tankas by my father in their literature textbook. When I asked how the two poems had ended up there, I was told that the teacher had drawn up the curriculum herself and required a Georgian tanka as an illustration of various forms of poetry. This was the first instance in my practice when I realized what luxury it was when the teacher could afford to prepare their own curriculum and choose the textbook to teach it with. The guide for the theory of knowledge says that the teacher has the right to choose whether to use the recommended and approved textbooks or forego the existing materials and create the resources on their own. What matters is if the teacher manages to have the student achieve the objective. What way the teacher chooses to do this is entirely the teacher's responsibility. As I listened to the teachers' complain about the Middle Years Programme, I had a nagging feeling they failed to realize how satisfying it is when the Programme trusts them with the choice of the resources or with structuring the curriculum in a way that results in effective transfer of the necessary skills to their students while taking into account global contexts.

The personal project envisaged by the Middle Years Programme at the final stage and prepared by the student in the tenth grade under the guidance of a teacher is the best measure of the progress the student has made in developing various skills. Preparation takes several months, during which the student maintains a log journal. Here the student notes the plan and changes to the plan, deadlines, possible obstacles and ways to overcome them. Here the student ponders, explores and searches. The log journal makes it easy to justify the project is authentic. The project concludes with a final outcome which may come in different forms – anything from a blog to a film may do, likewise it can be a cause rally or crafting an object or anything else. However, what makes the project a perfect tool for assessment is that what the teacher assesses is not the final outcome, but the 3,000-word report. In this report the student discusses the goals, the reasons for choosing the subject,

the challenges, any weaknesses that became apparent during the work and whether they were detected and rectified, as well as the skills that were boosted as a result. The report must also include examples that will illustrate everything that is being discussed. This actually means that it is not sufficient to have the student hone his, say, cooperation skills. The student must demonstrate how exactly they achieved that development. Likewise, it is not enough to say or show how good the student's creative or critical thinking is, unless there are examples that reinforce this demonstration.[18]

Some teachers, when I chose them as project leaders for students, often said they did not have any experience needed to complete the project and I found it very hard to persuade them that the subject-related knowledge had little, if anything, to do with project leadership. In fact, the implementation and the scope of work was entirely the student's responsibility and the teacher only had to assist through brainstorming and asking questions around the work. The teacher was also responsible for approving the project for its authenticity. This is not difficult to do when you have met the students several times and talked to them, asking questions that will assure you if they are really working on it or will show up with somebody else's work in a couple of months' time.

The project report that is assessed by the teacher (seeing how teachers with Georgian university background struggled with applying assessment criteria on a just basis, I took to establishing a fresh committee for that purpose every year[19]) and is sent in for external assessment to confirm the grade. Such a procedure makes it impossible for the assessment to be unfair if the coordinator puts the foot down, defying the principal and administration's effort to meddle in their affairs. This can be hard to achieve in a private school, especially when the coordinator has to risk the salary and their own children's future. As a personal project coordinator, I did not have any chance to know the student before the start of the project work, but got to know them so thoroughly during the supervision that I cannot recall an instance when my personal grade was not confirmed by external assessment.

[18] I have written several articles on personal projects for the internet journal, such as "Working on a Project", "How to Write Out Project Goals", "A Belated Apology", "Folklore Revived" and "On a Personal Project".

[19] Those from the former Soviet Union would not be surprised to find a student of theirs to be "somebody's child"; to be called to the principal's office for that "somebody's child" and reprimanded to have sent in the project without giving it a good edition if it was apparent it would not be eligible for a higher grade.

What surprised me most when working as a project coordinator was that 10th grade examiners grumbled when starting their project, viewing it as a duty, a debt to discharge. I always suspected that the reason had to be traced to the basic level, and I did indeed trace it: lack of confidence. The teacher did not trust herself or her professionalism – the teacher wanted to have a coursebook and a curriculum approved by some center out there. The teacher preferred to be told, even ordered, by the school administration what to do. And such a teacher was sure to kill the spirit of the student, because such a freedom was dangerous. The teacher also thought that freedom and strife for freedom must be dealt with and suppressed. The students' initiative was not encouraged at any stage; it was eradicated at its root. This is why the student, in his tenth grade, was unable to grasp what "personal" meant and asked for help in choosing the subject to work on, the subject that was supposed to represent an interest of his. You will all agree that it is somewhat of a paradox to work on a personal project that has been chosen by somebody else. In a certain sense, it is even an oxymoron.

IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME AND EXTENDED ESSAY

Four non-Georgians managed the IB programme of the European School for eight years. However, they were subordinated to a Georgian principal and the founders. All the foreign managers complained that their word meant nothing to either their superiors or their subordinates. In response to each comment that was supposed to help them to develop, teachers would run to the principal and grumble against this 'fearful foreigner, who was without kith or kin and did not appreciate Georgian hospitality, meddling with professional teachers' authority and making it difficult to teach'. In reality, assemblies that were designed to share knowledge and experience were a nice tradition. But how could teachers who had private students waiting for them in the afternoon waste time on useful workshops?! I have to admit that at the beginning I did not quite understand what it was all about either. But I got on so well with the third non-Georgian manager that I do not regret the least that I spent time on learning so much, opening my eyes to so many things through his impartial perspective. At this point, I would only like to quote the four phrases I learned from my foreign IBDP leaders:

1. It will take you five years to be a good teacher;
2. All your degrees and dissertations are not worth the paper they are written on;
3. A content student equals a content parent; a content parent equals a content administration; a content administration equals a content teacher. In other words,

if the parent is happy, the administration is happy too and if the administration is happy, then so is the teacher;

4. A fish begins to stink from the head – meaning no change is possible when an organization is headed by people who are unable to realize the good changes bring about. I will forego the fourth phrase, but let me stop to explain the first three in detail.

When I first heard I would need five years to become a good teacher I was at a loss. Why would it take me five years to become one or why would it be so in case of my colleagues, who, unlike me, had experience of many years of working at a school. Things started to dawn on me in exactly five years. The Diploma Programme is a two-year course, so I spent the first two years finding out about the structure and contents of the course curriculum. The first grades arrived as the first course ended and turned out to be unexpected for the teacher who is not used to impartial external assessment. For us, who came from the Soviet background, the first-year results were the hardest, as we lagged behind in both criteria-based assessment and academic honesty. It was easier for the Language A Literature teacher – the results in their subject coincided with their expectations they were graded by a Georgian examiner or a person with a similar background and way of thinking. So, the morally boosted Language A Literature teacher remained as ignorant at the passing of those five years as they were before the IBDP, being unable to see the mistakes thanks to the unfair assessment. The other teachers, on the other hand, were disgusted by the 'unfairness' of the examiners when the first year's score was received. Those who had been overly involved in their students' work, or in other words, wrote them themselves, felt the most humiliated. How could they admit their failure?! Could they lose their face by saying the work they had written had been under-graded? In the IBDP each student is required to write a research paper. I trust you could imagine how the paper is written in a school in which the administration requires the teacher to give a high grade to a student and in which, if the teachers fail to do so, they will be unable to withstand psychological pressure and just choose to leave the school. Each year a couple of teachers were certain to resign from the school, both from the Diploma or the Middle Years programmes. It is generally extremely hard to find a teacher who will be, at the same time, a professional teacher, able to teach in English and capable of abiding with direct and hinted directions of the administration. This is why, knowing that they are risking their salary, teachers meddle with the paper preparation process so much so that in the end it is often unclear whose work is being sent out for

assessment, the student's or the teacher's. Now imagine getting a low grade for such a paper. Picture the humiliation of the teacher! Now also think what happened when a teacher stayed true to their principles, to the dignity of the programme and their own self and refrained from directly involving with the writing of the paper. The teacher was bound to feel disappointed when their student received an average score and the student of a teacher who turned a blind eye to a work that had been commissioned received a high mark! The next graduation year was the time smart teachers learned what their mistakes were, while the foolish ones kept on running to the administration badmouthing the IBDP programme: the course is for brainiacs, wouldn't it be better for a student to finish the Georgian course, they can also go to a foreign university so why suffer so much?! The third and fourth years were the years smart teachers rectified the identified mistakes. And the fifth year was they felt they had become established teachers and were ready to share their experience with others, to appreciate the programme. They also realized how faulty post-Soviet education is, what flaws there are in our country at the school and university levels, what mistakes teachers applying the national curriculum make and what they have to correct, what they have to view with a fresh look, in what way they should improve themselves if they want to be truly good teachers and be able to help their students. Unfortunately, a teacher with a five-year teaching experience is like a prisoner who, having escaped from Plato's Cave, is now going back and neither understands nor is understood by the other prisoners. It is practically impossible for such a teacher to go back to their previous state and, unfortunately, it is also unimaginable to find any appreciation of any attempt to improve the flawed system. Why? Because those mentally still residing in the USSR perceive the threat, as they are afraid that the system that has been founded on lies, will collapse over their heads. A teacher who is like an escapee from Plato's cave is an enemy and is not wanted by the administration – the same administration who paved the way for the teacher to escape from imprisonment.

The second non-Georgian head of the IBDP, who uttered the 'All your degrees and dissertations are not worth the paper they are written on' phrase became so detested by us, the diploma programme teachers, that we did everything to hound him out of the school. Students at the Diploma Programme, apart from preparing a paper in each subject, are also required to write a 4000 word research paper or an extended essay.[20] When the principal decided to train us in academic honesty, formulating the study question, structure, appropriateness of the conclusion and the formal aspect of the work, we, in other words, the Language A teachers who had been left satisfied with the first years'

[20] I have dedicated several articles to my students' observations they made in their graduate theses in a teachers' online newspaper. Observations by My Students relates to the theses prepared by several students of mine.

grades and had been carrying our noses in the air ever since, felt humiliated: how dare he teach us when each student of ours had received a top mark. Let me also add this: Georgia is a small country and we who represent the Georgian philology school know each other well. Thus, names of the examiners did not remain confidential for long – the examiners were in fact first to give the good news that they were the ones reading our students' works. I, for instance, had worked alongside the wife of one of the examiners in the same department at the institute. Hence, I had known even before the grades arrived that he was so excited by those 4000-word research papers he had even referred to one as more like a doctoral thesis than a school paper. That 'doctoral thesis' had been, in fact, written by a famous Georgian researcher and probably contained no more than one hundred original words by the student. I still find it difficult to explain why the examiners failed to see some works were so good they could not have been written by a 17-year-old. What surprises me even more is how they did not recognize the obvious plagiarism of the works, their modifications sent on and on in the following years for assessment. However, why should I be surprised when the European School managed to even cheat the IB programme, having appointed their own Language A Literature teacher as an examiner without disclosing there was no way Georgians would remain impartial in such circumstances.

When the next foreign manager uttered the third phrase, the one that dealt with the happy parents and happy teachers, he probably believed we would feel... no, had to feel delighted hearing it. He failed to realize one thing, though – a parent born in the Soviet Union, with a Soviet mentality is a phenomenon he did not know. It's not the case that those parents want their children to remain bogged down in the Soviet Union just like they had been. No, it's just nobody has ever offered them to think otherwise. The school administration is confident that by dishonest grading they are genuinely helping their students to study abroad. The parent wants to send the child abroad and instead of thinking how to prepare the boy or the girl, how to bring out an independent learner in them, how to develop the skills the youth will need in a foreign environment, such a parent genuinely feels what matters is for the student to leave the country and adaptation will happen by itself. As for the school, its only concern is to appease the parent and it is not interested even if their former student is expelled from the very first year. Do you have any idea how many students I have seen in such a state? Roaming university after university, country after country year after expulsion, they come up with

all sorts of excuses. The truth is generally bitter and is not easy to face. Why are these young people to study properly abroad? Because knowledge was chewed for them here, because their moms and dads thought what mattered was the grade, not the way the grade was achieved. We managed to corrupt a system of education that tells you: come with me and I will make you modern, I will make you the citizen of the world. We managed to corrupt our students to an extent, when even their personal essays or motivation letters for university admission are written by university consultants. Can you imagine this? They do not even know why they want to go to a particular university; their motivation is being created by somebody else; and the parent pays money for all this. These very consultants, oftentimes hired by the school itself to wipe away the embarrassment, would package a student's biography so skillfully, had I not known the student myself, I would have thought he or she was from another planet, not from the European School. Each of those students had earned at least one gold medal at school competitions, their portfolios contained certificates from national school olympiads and prizes awarded at school conferences. And if, by mere chance, any of the olympiads and conferences had had trustworthy organizers, little did the gullible juries know whose work they actually assessed. A school principal's daughter, who had probably been to school less than fifty times during the four years, came back sporting a gold medal from the States. Her work in biology had been an abridged version of her teacher's international project. It goes without saying that both administration and parents were happy. And so was the teacher for making both parties so and not risking the next year's salary at least.

All in all, I think I justified the prophecy of one of my non-Georgian managers, becoming a really good teacher in five years' time. How? By calling a spade a spade and by realizing I could no longer stay in that school. As soon as my children completed their studies in their respective universities abroad, I would abandon the glossy school campus and not even look back at the salary or the conditions I had been personally provided with by the school.

Meanwhile, eight years passed and both of my children graduated from university. What did I take from the school? Was it just a negative experience? Of course, not. I learned to view the Georgian education from a new angle and realized what is wrong, why it is so and what we should do if we want to be better.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME AND OUR LITERATURE CLASS

During my final year with the European School, I also took up teaching literature as part of the Diploma Programme and I can proudly state each of my lessons were free, bold, lively and thoughtful. This is why no student of mine had been as happy with any other subject and neither have been so excited about teaching any as we all were during that year. I was doing the job that fascinated me and taught what I had been researching. I was not bound by any curriculum and all the texts I selected for my students had been included in the two-year curriculum by me alone. The only boundary I had to observe was that I was supposed to teach thirteen texts of various genres, various epochs and written in different countries. In the first term the students had to write a 1500-word essay, in the second term they had to prepare an oral presentation, and use the texts learned in the second year in their test paper. I also trained my students in text analysis – mainly using Georgian poems – because the test consists of two parts and students are also required to do analysis of an unfamiliar text alongside the familiar works they have covered.

Those who are used to the standard curriculum may be confused – how are the test papers graded if the examiner does not know the texts a teacher includes in the curriculum. There are a lot of literature teachers and each of them has a different curriculum. No examiner is obliged to be infinitely educated and have read everything. But this is not the right way of looking at things.

I could never imagine that IB, whose properly chosen approaches continuously proved it was a programme caring for the student and the teacher, would surprise me one more time. The programme updates its teaching approaches and the curriculum in each subject once every five years. The changes are based on teachers' feedback – what worked, where they saw room for improvement, what the students found hard and what they found easy. Because I viewed the literature curriculum as one approximating to the ideal, I could not even assume it would undergo a serious change at the appointed time. In a few years after I left the European School I felt such a craving for teaching that I jumped at the opportunity offered by the Newton School, which was planning to start their IBDP. After the programme was authorized, I went back to my former role and now I teach the theory of knowledge and literature in our native tongue once again. But then again, unlike the old programme, my students have more... no, I am wrong – they have full freedom now.

They are never told which text to choose for the essay or for the oral presentation. They must decide for themselves which text out of the thirteen offered they want to keep for the test and which to write on in early terms. Can anyone imagine more luxury than that?! The student is solely responsible for the choices they make and adapts the program to suit their interests. It is true, I select those thirteen works, but next, it is the student's turn to plan what to do with each of them. They know the main concepts, are aware of study fields and feel free to search and research. Meanwhile, I as a teacher, have reached a new level of metamorphosis and am content with merely guiding my freer students on the road to the study of literature. This new stage is also a consequence of love – this time the love of my job as a professor of letters.

METAMORPHOSIS – ROADMAPS TO SOLUTION

How many men could claim he had been Socrates' student? Probably a lot. But only one of them ended up being Plato. A teacher can be guilty of a lot of things. But the teacher is not aware of the guilt, having not seen what better is. The guilt primarily lies with the system, starting with universities, which give them degrees and empower them with the feeling of invincibility thanks to those degrees. However good one single teacher may be, they are bound to be lost in the corrupt system that comes in various shapes at different stages of educational hierarchy. The only solution is a reform on the university level. When the university is worthy, the parent will also start to think appropriately and want to involve the child in a proper learning process. When the university is worthy, the teacher will cease to be competent about the subject-matter only. They will also know that instead of repeating the student-aimed knowledge from year to year, they should grant independence to the student to study on their own, while assisting them as a guide in the process. At the beginning of Plato's Symposium, Socrates jokes how he wishes for wisdom to be able to be infused out of the fuller to the emptier man. Both the teacher and the parent must realize this – knowledge is nothing that can be poured into one's hand, it is not transferred by touch. This is why there is no Socrates in the world that could help make a Plato. The student must become a learner on his own volition.

Because of the love I felt for my children, I sacrificed my dream job – it is true, partially – and dedicated most of my time to the European School. It was there that I underwent a metamorphosis and genuinely realized what it was education experts had been teaching – I had to give freedom to my children and they had to turn into true learners. My role was

only a helper's one, and only if they asked for help. All I wish is for the managers of our national education to also put their confidence in our universities, schools and the latter in professors and teachers; for professors and teachers to trust their students and parents – their children! We have spent years in the vicious cycle and keep failing again and again to improve the system. What if we actually tried trusting this time?

Why have I written this letter that is entirely based on my personal experience? Well, I honestly thought it would be another attempt to make people think about the existing problem once again. And if they have not identified the threats embedded in the Soviet system of education, if they do not view the system this way, I could perhaps shed some light on the issue at hand by sharing my own version of metamorphosis, by answering the questions they may have.

Now you know why I keep saying the core of the problem in our education lies in the Soviet Union. It was the USSR that killed the initiative, that feared we would, at some point, defy the established route, the conventional ideology. And so it feared us and mistrusted us, calling any attempt to speak up and think contrary an act of rudeness. Not all people who have emerged from the system are able to see they are victims. They get on their lives along the well-trodden track, taking the younger generation with them, making them victims of the victims of the Soviet system. What is truly tragic is that metarmophosis is resisted by the teacher as well – the teacher cannot see a need for one and thinks anyone who insists transofmation is essential is an enemy. My observation of metamorphosis is not entirely appealing to the majority of parents either – they are still interested in their grades, not the skills to be acquired by their offspring to use in any situation. Habit is a great deadener! While lack of trust is sad, rejecting trust in one's volition is beyond any definition of misery.

My experience shows that the flaw with our system of education is not associated with one level or field. The problem is a wrong management at various levels, accompanied by the Soviet background of students' parents. It is them that must live up to a higher standard and ask for more credibility. But in order for a mother or father to do so, they must realize that the problem lies there. Thirty years have passed since the Soviet Union collapsed and it seems we have had ample time to think through certain things. But parents are unable to find time to think about this, or to demand more. You know why? Because they still think it is somebody else's job to think on their behalf, that it is up to some people residing in their offices to manage their children. The generation emerging from the Soviet Union was replaced by a generation that must, for no apparent reason have anything to do with that country. But what if their mentality is still Soviet? What do I mean by that? Again: conformism with the centralized administration of education and lack of trust, when the parent is unable to envision that it is ok or even sometimes necessary to be involved in the system or an organization; and when the system is unwilling to trust individuals, be it the parent, the teacher or the student.

When Mesopotamian and Greek gods created men, they would often destroy the creation if they were not happy with the product and restart from scratch. We, parents, cannot afford to make mistakes. A child is not a lump of clay to be shaped and reshaped until we are happy with the result...

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ZAKARIA TAVBERIDZE

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH REGARDING THE POSSIBILITIES OF DECENTRALIZED EDUCATION IN TELAVI, GEORGIA: FROM 'DEAD CITY' TOWARDS 'LEARNING CITY'.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1960s, studying the relationship between a city and an education system has become a topical affair, which directly coincides with increased interest in lifelong learning, adult education and continuing education. At this point, it became obvious that formal educational institutions – such as kindergartens, schools, colleges or universities – could not provide enough learning opportunities to citizens: therefore, it was crucial to integrate non-formal and informal education in order to provide lifelong learning opportunities for all - from 'cradle to grave'.

It also became clear that a centralized education system could not cope with new challenges and the role of local actors should be strengthened: municipalities, cities, villages and communities need to be involved in this process (Yang, 2012).

Within these newly emerged discourses, educational specialists, urbanists, architects, cartographers, sociologists, anthropologists and other scholars from related disciplines have developed new visions of education where cities should have a leading role. Scholars came up with the models of education city, learning city, smart city, or slow city. Thanks to that, innovative models of education were implemented in different parts of the world. This is an inclusive network of formal, non-formal and informal education, although its benefits often go beyond the education sector and strengthen economics, healthcare, politics, ecology and contribute to the sustainable development of countries (Brennan, Durazzi, & Séné, 2013; Côté, 2005; English & Mayo, 2012; Juceviciene, 2010; Longworth, 1996, 2006; Osborne, 2014; Schuller, Brassett-Grundy, Green, Hammond, & Preston, 2002; Valdes-Cotera, Longworth, Lunardon, Wang & Crowe, 2015; Wheeler, 2014; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010).

Among the new models of education, the learning city seems to be the most relevant and pragmatic for Georgia, because it does not require the country to be developed, high-tech or rich in resources (Longworth, 2006). At this point, there are more than 1,000 learning cities around the world (Sodiq et al., 2019, p. 977). The learning city models have been already adopted by other post-soviet countries, such as Armenia, Ukraine, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus. Unfortunately, the Georgian education system has lagged behind and cities still follow the centralized model where the role of municipalities in the education sector is minimal: planning and implementing education policies remain to be a prerogative of the central government (CONFINTEA, 2008; Dooley, 2014; Gorgodze, 2016; Santeladze, 2012).

Thus, Georgia needs to investigate opportunities for adapting innovative and decentralized models of education. On this note, the following study is an attempt to look into the potentials of establishing the learning city in Telavi, Georgia.

LEARNING CITY AND ITS FOUNDATIONS

Before we move forward to the research question, I briefly discuss the concept of the learning city. A broad definition of the learning city would be a city that tries effectively to mobilize all available recourses to strengthen formal, non-formal and informal learning processes in the area. UNESCO suggests a more accurate definition of it:

[A] city that effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; revitalizes learning in families and communities; facilitates learning for and in the workplace; extends the use of modern learning technologies; enhances quality and excellence in learning; and fosters a culture of learning throughout life. In doing so, it will enhance individual empowerment, social cohesion, economic and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development (2015a, p. 19).

There are many verbs in the definition that explicitly indicate that the learning city is an action and praxis. Thus, the city needs to generate its own agency to build a learning city (Longworth, 2006, p. 23). However, 'a city' - as any other social aggregates - does not exist as such: cities are not mugs or cats that can be pointed at by the index finger—but 'a city' is a network in formation, translation and becoming (2005, p. 34). The city is just a performative composition of different actors and networks and in this regard, the city is a relationship itself (Amin, 2007; Facer & Buchczyk, 2019). Thus, in order for the city to have an agency to act, its stakeholders should collaborate and its municipalities should be interconnected for the sake of building a learning city.

Now we should define in detail what needs to be done: we have to answer who, what, when and how to act in order to make a learning process more productive and inclusive. In the learning city discourse, there are no universal, ready-made recipes for establishing a learning city, because cities act out of their own needs, resources and experience. The learning city is an international model and is related to global networks, although it is still 'cooked' with local ingredients: each city tries to take its own needs and resources into consideration in order to create a unique composition of the learning networks. Despite the differences, scholars still identify the basic properties of the learning city, which will guide us on the way to building a learning city: we can divide these guidelines into 6 steps.

1. Planning: city leaders and key stakeholders establish a coordination mechanism. The consortium should identify the main challenges and priorities, and the mission of the learning city would be to address these issues. This is the stage when the city should outline short and long-term plans for developing formal and non-formal education. Thus, the city should create the strategy of the learning city. This is why it is recommended to start the process with needs assessment.

2. Coordination: The consortium should include local government, education institutions, NGOs, private sector and citizens. This is the only way to mobilize all the available resources in the city and to implement joint programs for strengthening the learning process in the city.

3. Media coverage: To ensure wide participation and especially involvement on the community level, it is crucial to inform citizens about the learning city. At this stage, the consortium tries to disseminate information about ongoing activities: stakeholders should create formal and non-formal educational projects, safe spaces for dialogue and should bring education close to communities and families. The learning city should take care of those who need it the most: it should cover marginalized groups and people with special needs – including youngsters and aged citizens, men and women, urban or rural population. The learning projects are created both for

geographical and for virtual spaces. This is why it is important for learning cities to work on technological development as well. Again, defining target groups and specific projects should be based on the needs assessment and other empirical data. The learning city should celebrate learning. Therefore, it needs to organize festivals, exhibitions and learning events. Celebration is important for making the learning process pleasant and public. At this stage, the city develops the identity of the learning city: stakeholders work on slogans, billboards, and promotional campaigns – thanks to that learning becomes a calling card of the city.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL): The learning city is a data-driven and sustainable development model. Thus, implementation and MEL system should be developed simultaneously in order to provide the consortium with updated empirical data and necessary information for decision-making. MEL system should support and strengthen the capacities of member and partner organizations of the consortium. The success of the learning city is closely linked with the development of learning organizations. Institutions and organizations need to learn, and therefore, systematic research projects are crucial: after that, organizations should exchange data and experience. Overall, the learning city is a big learning organization that unites its member learning organizations.

5. Sustainability: Finally, it is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the learning city. Essential financial resources should be mobilized to cover the costs of the learning city. The members of the consortium can share the costs through a co-financing mechanism. Also, it is recommended for the consortium to try fundraising from external entities such as donor organizations or the central government.

Overall, there are no academic studies related to learning cities and there is a lack of empirical data related to education in Georgia. Hence, the following research is a baseline study. The research has modest goals and its research question is only concerned with the foundational principles of the learning city. In particular, the research is focused on finding out how different stakeholders collaborate in the educational sector in Telavi? Do they manage to work in coordination or not? What are the obstacles in the way of better cooperation and what kind of potential might the learning city model have in the case of Telavi?

Methodology: In order to answer the main research questions, I applied a qualitative research method – in-depth interviews. At the first stage, I purposefully selected participants who were involved in the education sector in Telavi. Then, I continued the selection of the relevant participants using the snowball sampling method. In total, I contacted 22 respondents, out of which 14 gave me consent to participate. In February-April 2020, I conducted interviews via Skype or Zoom. Among the participants, there were employees of the local government, international and local NGOs, Educational Resource Centre, university, college, library and representatives of other cultural institutions.

After that, I transcribed the interviews, which were later thematically analysed in NVivo. In total, I identified 37 sub-themes and later I grouped them into the seven main themes. At the last stage, I used a mind-map to make sense of the findings and to capture logical linkages or possible connections between these themes. The mind-map helped me to visualize meaningful order between the chapters, which create the main storyline of the report.

Research findings: "Dead city" 'What does it mean to be Telavian?' - This was one of the opening questions during the interviews. The participants emphasized high culture as a distinguishing feature of their identity. They remarked that "it is an intelligent town", "we have the only university in the region", "Vazha-Pshavela [famous Georgian poet] used to study in Telavi", "Telavi is the centre of Georgia and not the periphery".

We will come back to the concepts of the center and periphery. Before that, it is worth noting that the prevalent feeling of the participants is that since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Telavi has been losing the status of the 'cultural town'. When the participants were describing the current affairs in Telavi, they often indicated stagnation and regression. They emphasized that "Nihilism reigns in the town", "here is hopelessness", "nothing ever happens" – "the town is dead".

This kind of description might seem to be odd if we take into consideration that we are talking about a small town (1095 m2) with around 58,350 inhabitants, and at this point, there are 32 kindergartens, 27 public and one private school, one university and two professional colleges, 6 musical schools, 27 libraries, 11 houses of culture, one museum, one theatre, one art school, several sport and dancing schools. Also, apart from that, international and local NGOs provide various training courses to the citizens.

It might be true that the quality of education is low, and in many cases, the infrastructure is outdated, but all these institutions are still functional: people work there, something is happening, people are learning, but this process is still associated with the metaphors of 'death'.

During the interviews, several constraints were identified which do not let the town to breathe, to learn, to live, to develop. There are multilayer challenges in political, economic, social and cultural life. These constraints can be summarized in the following key themes:

1. **Centralization: rights to the city**
2. **Lack of cooperation: agency of the city**
3. **Lack of trust: workers vs eaters**
4. **Fragmented time/space: islands vs graveyards**
5. **Fragments and differences: important people vs ordinary mortals**
6 **Lack of research: data collection and data utilization**
7. **Media: mass communication vs miscommunication**

In the following sections, we will discuss each of these themes in more detail.

1. Centralization: rights to the city

The learning city is a collaborative project, where different actors make a joint effort to reach positive changes, but the local government should play a leading role. This is an entity responsible for initiating joint platforms, for establishing legal relationships with external partners, and for defining the status of the learning city. However, it is obvious from the interviews that the local government does not have enough rights and resources to lead this process because the centralized governmental apparatus weakens the local government's power significantly.

The participants complained about centralized budgeting and decision-making system. The participants mentioned, that "decisions are not made at the local level" and "nobody asks them [the local government] what to do". They emphasized that decision-making is the prerogative of the central government and the local government just fulfils the role to formalize and implement orders of the center. This problem is especially important in the context of education because only the kindergartens are under the local government's supervision. On this note, NGOs complained that they did not have a chance to collaborate with the local government, and they found it difficult to involve them in their projects because education-related issues are only under the Ministry of Education and Science. The representative of the local government also acknowledged this problem.

The participants indicated that in this centralized system public participation and participatory democracy could not develop. Citizens are not interested in the local government's work because they know that the local government only has a formal function and it is impossible to achieve real changes on the local level. The participants concluded that the centralization put Telavians in a passive, inert and inactive position. As a result, citizens have limited rights to make and remake their city according to their own needs and desires – in other words, the citizens' right to the city is limited.

All the participants more or less agreed at this point – including the representatives of the local government. All of them spoke about the need for decentralization. Nevertheless, when it comes to actual models and strategies of decentralization, participants were divided into two camps: some of them thought that there were not enough knowledge and competence for decision-making on the local level. Thus, they supported slow, reserved and stepwise reforms. Others argued that during the last 30 years of independence the local governments could not manage to increase knowledge and competence, which indicated, that the centralized system did not contribute to development. Therefore, they supported rapid and complete economic, political and legal decentralization: From their perspective, decentralization seemed to be the only way to increase competence, as they believed that the government officials would learn directly by doing and the city would learn from its own experience.

It is out of the scope of this paper to discuss models of decentralization, although in conclusion, we can mention that the learning city is a bottom-up project where a citizen should be at the center of social change. Contrary to that, in Telavi, we observe a top-down vertical of power, where initiatives come from the central institutions. In the next sections, we will see that this model has been killing the opportunity to mobilize resources and to intensify learning processes in the city. This is one of the challenges, which leads to the 'dead city' – instead of the learning city.

2. Lack of cooperation: agency of the city

The lack of cooperation between the stakeholders creates additional constraints on the way to building the learning city. The governmental, non-governmental and private sectors do not have an intersectoral coordination mechanism to discuss education-related issues and to plan their policies. The participants expressed worries that joint actions and initiatives were difficult and they often felt isolated. "We live in our bubbles: we do not know what others are doing and there is not even a goodwill to know", said the representative of the local NGO.

Nevertheless, some preconditions of fruitful collaboration are in place. The participants said that the problems were related to joint planning and collaboration - organizations were not proactive. However, if someone needs help to implement a project, most organizations are happy to help. For instance, it is common for many organizations to let others use their conference rooms, projectors, other equipment, and tables and chairs for free. In the case of need, they are ready to help other organizations to disseminate leaflets, brochures and other information through their organizations.

This kind of cooperation is taken for granted as it is considered to be natural and a part of the local 'Telavian culture'. However, it seems to be based on personal relationships, and not on the institutional practices of organizational partnerships. "Intelligent and kind people live here", "This is a small town and everyone knows everyone else," – they explained to me.

It might be a good starting point to build up an efficient coordination mechanism for strong, sustainable and formal organizational collaboration. However, when we zoom from individual to institutional level, additional challenges still become visible.

3. Lack of trust: workers vs eaters

Sustainable cooperation needs trust between the stakeholders. However, as we have seen from the previous chapter, representatives of different organizations might trust each other on the personal level, and they might have hopes that others will help, but it is not reflected in the trust on the organizational and institutional level.

When it comes to intersectoral cooperation, the NGO sector is the most proactive: they have joint projects with other organizations. However, other participants questioned the sustainability of the NGO projects. "These projects will be finished, they will spend money and everything will be finished", "nobody admits it but their projects do not work", - the representatives of the local government stated. The representative of the Educational Resource Centre expressed the same opinion.

In the participants' narratives, NGO workers were often referred to as 'grant-eaters' – those who are interested not in public goods, but in private well-being (Mühlfried, 2005).

Therefore, participants perceive NGO projects as pretentious and inefficient.

In this case, we can observe not only a lack of trust between sectors but also within sectors. For instance, local NGOs unanimously criticized international NGOs and donor organizations. They think that those donor organizations are only interested in their own goals and agenda, and they do not take local needs and visions into consideration. "They do not want to really work – to really work on something", "you should adjust your ideas to make it attractive to them", "they are not supportive to small local organizations", "always the same people win their grants", "when I attend NGO meetings there are only the same, familiar faces" – the representatives of the local NGOs stated.

Regarding the private sector, the participants emphasized that they were passive in terms of educational projects. Apart from several exceptions, they are not interested in learning programs. Businesses are more likely to finance an individual student, but they do not invest in other organizations' projects: "they want to see where their money goes, they want to know exactly, and that is why they prefer to directly give money [to student]".

It should be mentioned, that I contacted four private sector organizations out of which three did not reply and one refused to participate in this research. This is why this paper does not cover their perspectives and this topic should be studied within future research projects.

Overall, it seems that in Telavi there is no trust which is essential for organizational cohesion and which should increase the social capital of these organizations: instead, we observed sectoral and intersectoral fragmentation.

4. Fragmented time/space: islands vs graveyards

The main basis of a learning city is interconnected spaces, where the learning process should flow unceasingly – it should create learning networks and an ecosystem of education. By doing so, people meet each other, engage in dialogue, share information and learn from each other. Instead of that, when we observe the geographical time/space, we can again capture signs of fragmentation.

In 2012, a big rehabilitation project was carried out in Telavi. Within this project, the centre of the town, its housing and cultural infrastructure were reconstructed. However, the renovation did not cover suburban and rural areas. The center of the city includes a theatre, the main library, cultural institutions and a museum. The representative of the local government described the center as "a golden ring of the city", "piazza" and "an island of culture". There is nothing wrong to have an island of culture, but only if the surrounding areas would not be an ocean of misery. The participants indicate the contrast between center and periphery. They reported that "beyond the center, life is dead", "there is nothing to entertain – to kill time", "just drinking beer at the graveyards".

The problem is that the center is not connected with other spaces and even mobility is difficult: there is no efficient public transportation system in Telavi. The participants could link this issue with education as well. For instance, a representative of the college mentioned that during meetings students often asked her to let them leave earlier because the latest bus went from town to villages at 6 pm and they had to hurry up. As a result, "then, the class is half empty and other students also lose motivation". A representative of the local initiative group indicated the same problem. She said that rural people did not have a chance to go to the theatre because plays started in the evening and there was no available public transport at that time. The representatives of cultural institutions also worried that all the cinemas had been closed in Telavi because rural people could not engage in the nightlife of the city – so, the demand for cinema decreased. There is no efficient transportation system and "who has money for taxis?!".

After finishing the fieldwork, in November 2020, Regional Development Fund gave five buses to Telavi and in this regard, the town has started to develop public transport system. However, the coverage area is still limited.

This restriction of mobility distorts the perception of time/space and increases a symbolic distance between neighborhoods. One of the participants illustrated that a village that was 15 minutes' drive from Telavi, was perceived to be further away than much longer distances in Tbilisi: for instance, in Tbilisi it takes 30 minutes to drive from Gldani to Vake . "This is why, nobody would open a bar in Ikalto [village in Telavi] – why should it be like that?"

Consequently, a big part of the population has limited access to café-bars and public spaces, which is not only an economic obstacle but it also slows down the learning process. Finally, the municipality is divided into the center and peripheries. The segregation is less visible because people struggle economically in the center as well. However, in terms of access to cultural and learning infrastructure, inequality is apparent. The 'suburban and rural areas are excluded from the educational and cultural life of the city'.

This issue goes beyond the transportation problem and creates a stigma. As one of the participants reported Telavi had the same kind of relationship with its villages, as Tbilisi had with other towns. When urban encounters rural, there is a misconception that superior encounters inferior: "urban people assume that the rural people do not deserve as much as urban people". The context is different, but this relationship is very close to what is called mimicry in Babbha's decolonisation theories: (Bhabha, 2012). Mimicry is a process when a colonized one desires and tries to imitate a colonizer – as if Telavi tries to imitate Tbilisi regarding relationships with the 'peripheries'.

Consequently, instead of interconnected spaces, we can capture a cult of the center and deserted peripheries – these are "islands of culture" and "graveyards", where youths kill time.

5. Fragments and differences: important people vs ordinary mortals

Fragmentation does not end with time/space fragmentation: The symbolic distance between the citizens would be increased if we took ethnic, cultural, gender, age and economic variables into consideration.

The participants said that during the Soviet Union ethnic Georgians and ethnic Azerbaijanis had a much closer relationship than they have now. For instance, the biggest village in the municipality is Karadjala, where 99% of inhabitants are ethnic Azerbaijanis, but they are not involved in educational, cultural or sports life in Telavi. The participants emphasized that "tolerant people live in Telavi"; they also said that ethnic Georgians had a good attitude towards ethnic minorities, although, the participants still confirmed that ethnic Azerbaijanis

were only involved in economic activities of the town, but they were not visible in other spaces. Ethnic Azerbaijanis have shops, they work in the agro market, and bargaining is a context in which they encounter other citizens. However, in order for citizens to learn together and from each other, the integration of minorities is crucial. The relationship, which should be strengthened in the learning city, is more than bargaining or trade.

In the participants' narratives, we can also capture issues related to ageism. The participants worried because intergenerational communication was limited: there are no platforms for intergenerational dialogue and learning in Telavi. One of the participants tried to create such a space, but as she said, she could not find the necessary finances for this project. On the other hand, some participants blamed elderly people for being passive: as they said, they did not have many expectations from elderly people because "elderly people lag behind time". It was observed that elderly people, who underwent socialization during the soviet time, were associated with 'regress', while the post-soviet generation - with 'progress'. This might explain why most of the NGO projects in Telavi targets only youths and they do not take the needs of the older generations into consideration. Consequently, Telavi is 'no place for old men/women'.

Gender differences also lead to unequal learning opportunities. The participants emphasized that the situation was much better than it had been several years before. For instance, the fitness clubs were considered to be only for men, but currently, this attitude has changed. Still, many public or semi-public spaces are not gender-inclusive. For instance, one of the participants mentioned that a new electronic music club was opened in the town, but men did not let women go to this club – "music is not bad, but only men go there".

Women are allowed to go to restaurants, but in this case, a woman's role is subordinated because of the traditional Georgian Supra culture. This issue is well described by anthropologists and I will not discuss it further (Mühlfried, 2005; Tuite, 2005). However, I should mention that the participants also confirmed that the Supra was still far from Habermasian café-bars culture: "[t]he Supra may be a kind of academy, but it is rarely an agora" (Tuite, 2005, p. 24).

The participants' narratives also illustrate, that similar to gender differences, social status is also related to access to education. Basic services, such as buying tickets for theatre, needs some kind of social status and social capital. Several participants mentioned that when

there were prestigious events at the theatre "ordinary mortals" could not buy the tickets – "they need to know important people". For example, a representative of the INGO complained that the theatre did not sell tickets online and one needs to call a cashier. The cashier permitted her to buy a ticket only after she was told that a representative of an international organization was calling. Otherwise, one should know someone in the local government or in other prestigious organizations, where they have access to the tickets. "Sometimes the hall is mostly empty, for this reason: they even cannot count how many people are going to attend an event", she explained to me.

Which school should a pupil attend is also related to social status. The participants, including the representative of the Educational Resource Centre, confirmed that Telavi secondary schools were divided according to prestigious and non-prestigious schools. Here we need to go back to the issue of center and periphery because the prestigious schools are located in the center of the town, while the non-prestigious schools are in the suburban and rural areas. It can be said, that important people send their children to prestigious schools, while ordinary mortals have to go to the non-prestigious ones.

As we discussed, the town is fragmented by differences. If we study this issue further, we might identify other negative factors as well. However, it is apparent that these differences divide citizens into different groups and each of them has a different kind of access to education. People have limited communication and a limited possibility to encounter each other and have a dialogue. On this note, it is important to critically examine the widely accepted notion that "in Telavi, everyone knows everyone else". As one of the participants suggests, it means that Telavians know each other's bodies: they know the origins and families of these bodies, but because of the lack of dialogue, each other's real desires and soul is unknown to them".

Consequently, it would not be illogical if we assumed that in Telavi a male INGO worker might feel closer with European colleague in Brussel, than with a female Azerbaijani farmer who grows tomatoes in the nearby village. This would not be an illusion: this is the logic of networks (Latour, 1990, p. 4). These INGO workers still have a chance to meet, network, and dialogue during a coffee break at an international conference somewhere in Brussels, Stockholm or virtually in Zoom. However, in the fragmented town, the farmer and INGO workers have neither networking sessions nor coffee breaks: they live in parallel time/space.

6. Lack of research: data collection and data utilization

In the learning city, differences should not be interpreted as problems: contrary to that, they should try to reflect diversity. The learning city needs to create safe spaces for ethical and efficient dialogue between diverse actors. In order to do so, the learning city should acknowledge that different groups have different needs, demands and desires, which require an in-depth examination and analysis. Therefore, in the learning city, stakeholders should conduct regular assessments and surveys to create evidence-based decision-making practices and to implement inclusive projects.

Nevertheless, it is apparent from my research that institutional mechanisms neither for data collection nor for data utilization are in place. The participants said that Telavi organizations did not conduct research; instead, decision-makers followed their own prejudices.

Telavi Iakob Gogebashvili State University could be the main research institute, but it also does not have research projects (apart from individual initiatives from several professors). The university was the most criticized organization in the town and even the representatives of the university agreed on that point. The participants complained that one clan ran the university, there was nepotism, corruption, and stagnation: not only did the university not conduct research, but they also were not open to external initiatives. As a result, potential partners did not want to collaborate with the university. For instance, two participants mentioned that the university did not allow them to organize a public meeting on campus, because they were afraid to talk about feminism and gender issues. The interviewed professor explained to me that some of the influential professors got their PhDs without following the standards in the 1990s – at that time one could get a degree through corruption schemes. Thus, these professors do not have enough competence to be open to innovation, or they are afraid that if they speak up about 'dangerous topics' (like feminism), someone might remind them of their past. Consequently, the university is not involved in city life and it does not allow the city to be involved in university life either: "they prefer to be silent – they are afraid of everything".

Currently, NGOs fulfil the role of research organizations in the town and they are the ones who conduct needs assessments. NGOs also hired consultants and they created a guideline for local government for conducting needs assessment. However, most participants, including the representatives of the local government, admitted that the local government neither took the needs assessment conducted by NGOs into consideration, nor did they use the guidelines to conduct their own research. The representatives of the local government said that they could not afford these surveys, but other participants linked this issue again with low competence and low motivation from the local government's side.

Also, only NGO organizations integrated Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) systems in their work. Other organizations do not have MEL, and thus, they lose the chance to learn from their own experience – they cannot analyze the results of their work. The organizations responsible for intensifying learning processes in the town are not learning organizations themselves. In this regard, INGOs have some experience and they are ready to share it with others. Thus, in the case of intersectoral collaboration, other organizations will learn from INGOs. The learning city is exactly such a model where actors learn from each other.

7. Media: Mass communication and miscommunication

The problems aggregated over time need to be publicly discussed. Also, the learning city should ensure that citizens are informed about ongoing affairs and they should engage in discussions. Therefore, it is crucial to have strong local media outlets in the learning city. In this regard, Telavi does not meet this criterion: the town has a local TV station and several online media outlets. However, the participants mentioned that media were still very weak and their coverage area was very limited. Telavians mostly get information from the central stations and only a small portion of them – from local media. There are no municipality disaggregated media studies to double-check the number of actual users of the local media, but all the participants confirm this tendency.

It seems that this problem is linked again with centralization: when the decision-making process is concentrated in Tbilisi, media cameras are also focused on the capital. On the local level, there are neither enough financial resources, nor motivation to create strong media organizations.

Consequently, Telavians also 'live' in Tbilisi because in terms of the information they also depend on the capital city. Their political, cultural and educational concerns are related to Tbilisi. This is a one-way cohabitation and an unethical form of relationship because the information flow comes from Tbilisi not as a dialogue between equals, but as the superior's monologue.

The local media crisis is reflected not only in the lack of discussions about the local issues, but it also makes it difficult to disseminate information regarding ongoing projects, events and meetings in Telavi. The participants said that they tried to use all the available sources – social media, personal networks, leaflets, banners and media – but they still could not reach target groups. In this regard, citizens' right to be informed about ongoing issues is violated and they cannot be engaged in the city-making process. This is another problem, which reminds us of the metaphor of the "dead city".

CONCLUSION

Overall, Telavi faces many multiplayer and interdependent challenges in the education sector, which limit the possibility of sustainable development. However, these challenges should not be interpreted as an argument against the learning city. Quite the contrary: the learning city is a technological model of education, which generates agency of the city, strengthens and enables it to cope with these challenges. The goal of the city might be to overcome centralization, fragmentation, lack of research and miscommunication. This is the only way to mobilize all the available resources in Telavi in order to intensify formal, non-formal and informal learning processes.

In the end, we should acknowledge that the scope of this research is limited to studying the linkages and collaborative practices between Telavi-based organizations. Therefore, it would be good if future research projects were more focused on the external linkages in order to study how Telavi collaborates with international partners outside the municipality.

In addition, my research was only based on the in-depth interviews and the narratives of the participants. Hence, the study has its own methodological limitations. For triangulation purposes, it is recommended that future studies use other research methods as well. For instance, quantitative research methods would be useful to generalize the findings and to measure a scale of the discussed challenges. Also, non-human resources and the role of the material networks need to be further studied in order to find out what role they can play on the way of transforming Telavi from a 'dead city' into the learning city.

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TSIRA BARBAKADZE

THE MODERN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN METAPHORS, I.E. FROM THE LINEAR EDUCATION SYSTEM TO THE INDIVIDUALIZATION OF EDUCATION

Keywords: *#Education, #stereotypes, #slavery, #individual education #conceptual metaphor*

EDUCATION - IN METAPHORS

> *If the society is arranged in such a way that it offers only one type of defined and established desires, and the fulfillment of other desires different from these desires is severely punished, sooner or later the whole society will be inclined to circulate only within the scopes of proposed desires and will not allow the invasion of other desires. This is done primarily through the education system, which is transformed into a punitive-preventive apparatus: the education system provides children with the legal scale of desires on which they can move. "*
>
> ***Gigi Tevzadze "The ten letters to readers about slavery and us"***

It is no secret that there is a long-term crisis in the education system in Georgia. The education system in the digital world is far from the challenges of life: the school prepares for higher education, but for what and how the higher education system prepares young people - becomes increasingly unclear;

The manufacturing of consciousness with templates offered in education is still going on successfully till now. Conceptual stereotypes embedded in the collective unconscious continue to operate independently of us and are "cut out and sewn" at will.

Once our conscious life begins, the "fear" penetrates into us most intensely - it walks through the door of consciousness uninvited and stays there forever. Education and culture nourish the seed of this fear every day, water it and strengthen it, so "fear has big eyes" and it begins to manage and control us.

The church instills - the fear of God, the school instills - the fear of error, the family instills - the fear of the future, politics - the fear of uncertainty and a thousand kinds of fear ...

The plants of fear grow, multiply and bloom in us, they come to consciousness like weeds and do not go.

We frighten little ones with "bogeyman", "man with a sack", "monster man" who come and "take the children" - if they don't eat on time, if they don't sleep on time, if they don't behave well ...

The nest of fear is the modern school, and teachers are the instillers of fear, intimidators (mostly) ... "Behave yourself, otherwise I will tell your parent, learn, otherwise ..." A system based on violence and coercion is still onboard (including a physical violence: ear twisting, slapping the head, slapping in the face, etc.).

The system is focused on errors rather than on knowledge transfer. The main phrases of the school are: "Do not make a mistake", "Write without mistakes", "Correct mistakes" etc.

Fear of exams - is another phenomenon, so powerful and universal that the metaphor of "life is an exam" is based on the bitterness of school exams. After all, the Christian faith helps us to do this, to convince us that everything is a test - to enter heaven ... Nobody knows what paradise is, but they know that "it is a good place" that can be "bought" by "spiritual life".

And, what is the result of such a system, is it its product? - Fear inoculated with collective consciousness, or the future guided and obedient citizen..

And the question is: where is the life and man in terms of this fear-driven automatism? Where is the joy and celebration of knowledge? Why is it expelled from the system?

Such education creates a culture based on suffering and both together condition our boring and limited reality in which everyone's soul is embraced.

The concept of "savior" and the reproduction of unfulfilled dreams

That the content of our textbooks is out of date and not just out of date is no longer news.

Probably everyone remembers "Lake Bazaleti" written by Ilia Chavchavadze - at the bottom of Lake Bazaleti there is the cradle in which the savior grows:

"At the bottom of Lake Bazaleti
There is a cradle from gold;
And under water, around it
Unfamiliar garden is flourishing "....

I once interviewed students (approximately 100 students), what impression did they get after studying these poem at school? Many answered that they were afraid of the Lake Bazaleti - they thought that someone really lived at its bottom.

Do you know how many children are worried about the fate of the child lying at the bottom of the lake in the cradle? "This is a myth, a metaphor," you will say, and you will be right, but come and explain to the child that this is not really the case. And the author wanted to say that...

And yet, what did the author want to say? The nation should be constantly waiting for a savior to come, "whose name cannot be pronounced" and to which "every Georgian dreams of in silence day and night", do we?... and before that, we should make a toast of "OSI" on a tableful. Do you know what "OSI" means? - Yes, yes... "Our Silent Intentions"... We love "Silent Intentions", and God will forbid, we're not going to fulfil them, are we? Do you remember that second toast? Cheers to "Our dreams!" This is also from the OSI cycle.

If all our dreams and intentions are fulfilled, how many toasts will be lost on the tableful? Is it possible that all dreams come true? Should there be something intact and unattainable? Life will lose all meaning if all our dreams come true, will it?

"If the present doesn't favor us, the future is ours". Ours, whose else? The past and sweet memories are ours also, and the future also ... and, if the owners of these two times lose the present, it is not a big deal. The present is not even time... and this is how we live... having lost the present, and in the hope of the future... but, for our consolation, we can always remember that there is the golden cradle at the bottom of Lake Bazaleti and that one day a hero will appear, who will pull Savior out of cradle ... And then our salvation will come!

The idea expressed in this poem may have been natural for the Iliad era, but how much does the Georgian consciousness need to strengthen this myth in modern times? In reality, school texts have more power than we can imagine. This is no longer a myth, it is a cursed program - of inaction and false expectations, so persistently implanted by the post-Soviet school.

Ilia Chavchavadze's whole life and work was aimed at overcoming inaction, and what did we achieve? Remember Luarsab Tatkaridze and the metaphor of the mirror. "Look at yourself in the mirror," Ilia told us directly, and what did we do? Untill today, we have been looking at the inactive, weak and "harmless" character, Luarsab with sympathy.

Maybe it's time to create new myths? Or maybe with one computer game we can overcome this myth? For example, how the hero takes the savior out of Lake Bazaleti and how Iveria will shine. And both will be happy, the child who asks his father "let's save the baby and get him out of the bottom of Lake Bazaleti, I feel so sorry for him", and his father, who complains: "How can I explain to a child why is a baby lying at the bottom of Lake Bazaleti?"

Textbook, sample and "What did the author mean"?

Another stereotypical phrase of school life is: "Do not deviate from the topic", "Do not miss the topic" ... as if everything is linear, and deviating from the topic –means a waste of time. You are scared, you measure words so that the teacher does not think, when you are talking about this or that character, as if you "deviate from the topic" - which would not mean anything good.While "deviating from the topic" is very important for cognition, it means that you develop associative thinking and can look for analogies, for example, between a life and literature - it helps a person to gain new experiences and a broad view of the world and life, which will determine his right choice in the future. In a broad sense, it is a metaphor: to discover the interconnection between objects, events, and facts in life and literature.

"Do not deviate from the topic" - this school stamp then applies to life and is replaced by another stereotype with the same content: "Do not deviate from the path", "Do not go astray".

The power of a Conceptual Metaphor is determined by its unconscious use. According to George Lakoff, the property of metaphors is that they do not disappear, but remain in human consciousness, and the logical consequences of their actions are revealed in the peculiarities of our perception of the world.[21]

If a person neither deviates from the topic nor deviates from the path, how should a young person get to know life? That is why "deviation from the path" in our culture is still understood in a negative aspect and means: "cause-lost person". But, how can understanding be so unambiguous? If you say that based on experience, then you have to explain which experience? We were just taught at school, so as that "we should not get distracted from the topic"? Often the so-called experience is based on fear and prejudice, the philosophy of "what you know, what will happen" but not in reality. In order not to deviate from the path, you should first know where you are going and which way is going there, where you are going, and until you find and choose this path, before that "diversions" are a natural search process.

Another ruinous phraseological expression is - "Better the devil you know than the devil you don't". What kind of a bum should a person be to have such a fear of changes that he would be afraid of unusual "devil he doesn't know".

Do you wonder where all these come from? - Of course, from schools and the modern education system as a whole!

The greatest wisdom is to give the student the right to **"deviate from the topic"** and **choose his own path**, but this approach is alien to our system.

At the first glance, what do these two facts have to do with each other? But if we take a closer look, we will find a metaphorical connection between them. A stamp ingrained in our consciousness, starts operating and reproducing in automatic mode. At school, if it was about not deviating from the textbook and the topic, in life this stamp will find completely new content, as it is very easy to program consciousness at school age. It is much more difficult then to remove these mental programs and sometimes even impossible. Because of this, a person is constrained and can not self-realize, his desires remain unfulfilled, he becomes constantly dissatisfied, dependent on past, dreamy, mentally inactive, and so on ...

[21] Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. 1980. Metaphors We Live By. Chicago, London: Chicago University Press.

The result of all this is the life and the society, in which we are now and cannot / do not want to change it..

Not only is the education system in such a state ... but so is the economic system as well, because everything is interdependent and is in the captivity of one paradigm.

Of particular interest from the linguistic metaphors of education is the conceptual analysis of the **textbook** and the **sample**.

What does the current "textbook" mean in schools? This means standardizing and most customizing views of a person or a group of people. The world, which is changing every day, should be understood from the books written decades ago. And we should learn everything according to the "textbook"; for example, the teaching of literature in public schools is based mainly on irreplaceable texts of literature.

And, what is the purpose of teaching literature? The contents of specific texts or the reflection based on texts?

And who are the **model pupils** in the school? Those who study and act according to patterns, the textbook, those who "do not deviate from the topic" and those who "**do not go astray"** in the future.

Even when I was a schoolgirl, I doubted "chrestomathy truths" in school textbooks, because the magic word for a pupil is "it says so in a book" and the harsh voice of teachers you can hear at this time: "do you dare to teach those who wrote this book?" We used to learn by heart the "written in the book" material and retell it to the teacher. The teacher "ran his finger along the lines" in the book, and if you didn't miss a single paragraph, you got the top grade.

The idea of a fictional text was both some kind of a puzzle and some kind of a task. The task was because we had some data: a text that told us something and had to be explained - the story, behaviors of the characters and so on ... We had to explain what idea it served, "what did the author mean"? - That was a deadly question. Prose texts were relatively easy, we could read and understand them in a book, but in the case of lyric works, things got more complicated. For example, what did the author mean by the texts: "The wind blows, the wind blows, the wind blows...?" or: "Suddenly beetroot will laugh?"

Even today, while teaching fiction at school, the question is still asked: "What did the author mean by this" and even now many pupils think of finding the "right answer" because they think that the right answer is the only one.

The standardization of imposed desires is reduced to the physiology of slavery. Gigi Tevzadze, the most distinguished education expert, professor and writer of modernity, writes about this well in the above-mentioned book: "Ten Letters to the Reader about Slavery and Us". But what happens next? If we follow this book again:

"But the advent of technology is followed by new desires that are slowly becoming dominant. Soon there comes a time when the range of technology-driven desires is radically different from the desires set by rulers years ago: consequently, every member of society already has significantly different desires from those what governance offers. Consequently, members of the community are also willing not to accept such an offer and are willing that the offer of desires should be diversified in their society."[22]

What is the purpose of education?

Let's start with what do we think about knowledge? What is knowledge and what is the purpose of education? Most people think that knowledge should first be "accumulated" and then used ... then ... sometime later... The process of "accumulating knowledge" is very similar to primary accumulation for future feeding. We "dry", "pickle" the acquired and accumulated knowledge and "can" it for future use.

These metaphors accurately express the essence of Georgia's education system. The phraseology "pickle well so as not to lose!" - can be considered as the final of these metaphors. It also happens that the accumulated and canned knowledge expires and becomes unfit for food and is poisonous.

If we accumulate knowledge for future use, it turns out that knowledge is food, but food that we do not immediately eat and process, but store for the future use. This opinion is also supported by classics:

[22] Gigi Tevzadze, "Ten Letters to the Reader about Slavery and Us", p. .28 https://5160a234-41a6-49cb-a4d8-372b00b8b368.filesusr.com/ugd/1b8510_bb0fb850db1f4ad0b948818507241cd4.pdf

"The root of learning is bitter, but it becomes sweet at the peak ..."

or: "Eat bitter first, sweet again, if you are looking for taste" ... and so on. No one knows when the "peak" of learning will be and probably it will never be .

This attitude towards knowledge is only a focus on results. Let's say, after 20-30 years, you really achieve a certain result and enjoy this result for 2 days, but at the same time you lived in a routine for 3 decades ..., I do not know, there are probably still sado-masochists in modern education system who like the "victory" achieved through suffering, but we must admit that the new technological age has posed completely different challenges to the Georgian educational space and has necessitated mental (r)evolution, and this is unthinkable without a fundamental change in the education system.

The solution is the only one: we should not accumulate knowledge, but process it as soon as we receive it and then use it and turn it into action:

"If I do not act, the knowledge of wise philosophers will be of no use to me" - I can repeat this phrase of Rustaveli every time.

Yes, this is a fundamental change, a change of worldview, a change in the picture of the world, different parameters of vision.

We need to move from knowledge accumulation to knowledge application, but who will create such an education system?

From linear education to the individualization of education - from slavery to freedom

"People are different. Consequently, their education and "enrollment" in higher schools should be done differently. This, too, is the cornerstone of modern, successful education theory and practice. However, we do not pay attention to it and even today in schools and universities, education takes place according to the outdated, "factory", "conveyor" principles of the 19th century".

Gigi Tevzadze, why there is no need for Unified National Entrance Exams[23]

[23] See the full article here: https://www.criticallog.org/blank-5/

We move, act, aspire to something very often, but we do not know where we are going. This can be said about a specific person, group of people, political parties, country and so on. After years of "movement" we may find that it was all a lie and just a rat race... that we were not going anywhere and that we were squeezing in one place, just like running on a simulated treadmill is the move towards nowhere; Of course, you get tired of this path, you increase or decrease the speed, but you anyway don't move from one point.

Contemporary Georgia's education system reminds me of **running on a simulated treadmill.** The modern school should realize that simply learning facts and events, and even acquiring certain skills - is nothing **if you do not know where you are going**.

If we approach the issue more philosophically, we can recognize that our internal (hence external) movement is in two main (and transitional) directions. We are moving towards either freedom or slavery (this applies equally to both the individual and the nation as a whole);

The next question is: what is freedom and what is slavery?[24]

Explanations read in the dictionaries will not explain anything to you, at such a time, only your own reflection on these issues will help you to find the point of your movement on the graph - between freedom and slavery, or to identify our movement. Yes, it's a lifelong thought, and it's a thought to start at school and then keep an eye on your navigation in life.

On a physiological level, Freedom and Slavery and their understanding will explain many of our actions, and we may find that thinking that we are faithful and diligent, in fact, we were just "slaves". "Slavery" in this case is a metaphor and, of course, does not mean what is meant traditionally. Frequently, we become slaves of our own free will, and our search should be reduced only to finding the answer to the question: **why?**

If the education system has not taught us to distinguish between freedom and slavery, others will not be able to do it! Consequently, the society that helps to identify and implement the wishes of the people moves in the direction of freedom and vice versa ... In your opinion, which of the streams are we in today?

[24] Gigi Tevzadze. "Ten letters to the reader on slavery and us", "Ten letters to the reader on liberty and us". https://www.criticallog.org/blank

"Our environment, in which we find ourselves at birth, teaches us how to achieve the fulfillment of desires. Also, how should we identify our desires - find out what and how we want. Some communities are successful on this path, some are not. This learning is necessary, otherwise we will harm ourselves and others."

According to Gigi Tevzadze, the implementation of this content should be carried out by the vibrant self-government through the relevant structures and, first of all, what nowadays Georgia's state should do is to "destateize" the educational institutions. This is necessary in order for people in community to identify as many desires as possible and learn to fulfill them, otherwise, the person will not be able to self-realize and be happy.

"Every person should have the right to teach according to his own views (obviously, taking into account the common agreements we have talked about in the previous letters) and every person should be given the right to choose any teaching" (Gigi Tevzadze).

Diverse offerings are a system tailored to the interests of individual people, therefore, development and creativity will be implemented through this approach.

Gigi Tevzadze started introducing this type of teaching experience at Ilia University during his tenure as the rector. This approach has been reflected in syllabi and in the forms of teaching. The professor was obliged to offer new courses to students every year, such as the topics on which professors themselves were working. This was necessary in order for the teaching to be interesting and fun for the professor, at the same time the professor had the opportunity to involve students in his research, which meant "teaching by research" and again: "No specific number of people wishing to join the group was determined. If 2-3 students chose any course, the professor would normally work with this small group as well. This attitude made the learning process really creative and interesting, so I think this format was successful and if we want a progressive education, we have to adapt it as much as possible to the students' wishes and fulfillment of those wishes (in this case, through teaching)".

Imagine how diverse people's creativity will become, how different and interesting ideas will be born as a result of such teaching. Thinking about different topics creates a chain of new ideas based on synergy and this process becomes irreversible, this is how we can move towards a free society in which people help each other to achieve goals, to fulfill desires.

This is how we move from a linear education system to the individualization of education.

GIGI TEVZADZE

SELF-EXPRESSION, COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE - WHAT WE ARE TAUGHT AND WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

1. A few ideas of what is common in education relationships in creatures with higher nervous activity systems

While debating and discussing education, the superficial pact, that educational relationships are what we, in the same manner as social structure, institutions and hierarchy, the interdependence of individuals, emotional life, the importance of sexuality and much more, inherit from the world of other animals is forgotten.

Taking the above mentioned researchers (and not only them) into consideration, by observing and experimenting with other animals' kingdom, they develop ideas on the behavior and social habits of our immediate ancestors, third chimpanzees[25] or homos[26]. Sometimes these observations help to unveil even hidden structures in human societies. But that does not happen in the case of educational relations.

Educational relationships are inherited behaviors like all of the above: in daily lives of animals with higher nervous activity systems, educational relationships play as important role as in our lives. Communication, hierarchy, food intake, play - are taught in a highly developed mammalian community in the similar way as in ours[27]. Therefore, it is likely that educational relationships should be of the same structure.

The first thing we, as mammalians, especially predators[28], teach our offspring, since they have mastered the elementary ability to demand food and nourishment, is self-expression,

[25] Jared diamond, 1991. The Third Chimpanzee: The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal. 1991 Hutchinson Radius.
[26] Gigi Tevzadze. 2013. Evolution of social behavior to Homo and after. Tbilisi, Ilia University press.
[27] Giada Cordoni, Elisabetta Palagi, Ontogenetic Trajectories of Chimpanzee Social Play: Similarities with Humans; November 16, 2011; https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0027344
[28] It was thought that the human ancestor of chimpanzees was just as vegetarian as other chimpanzees and primates. However, recent studies have found that meat has a large place in the diet of our immediate ancestors: Rapid changes in the gut microbiome during human evolution, Andrew H. Moeller et al. PNAS November 18, 2014 111 (46). https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1419136111

particularly, how to make those around them understand what they want. Teaching of self-expression includes not only positive but also negative, prohibitive teaching: how not to express your desire and what punishment you will receive for improper expression of it .[29]

The second thing a mammal learns is to communicate with others[30]. Learning to communicate, again, is the unity of permissions and prohibitions: how one can communicate with others and how one cannot.

The third thing offspring learns after self-expression and communication is cooperation: how to hunt in a team, how to defend oneself in case of danger[31].

The fourth and final stage of what a mammal learns is exchange: in the world of other like-us animals, not everyone can perform all the functions necessary for an individual and society: not everyone can hunt equally, protect society, care for the maintenance of order and raise offspring. For this purpose, the mammal learns how to exchange: how to exchange what it can do best for what this other can do best. Thus, the results of hunting, breeding of prey, protection of territory, maintenance of order exchanging with each other, and finally this exchange, contribute to the sustainability and prosperity of society[32]. For example, distribution of functions is of great importance in the community of wolves, as well among great apes, elephants, and monkeys: these are social statuses for food masters, offspring raisers, external guards and rulers of order[33].

We can assume that these four components are repeated in all beings with higher neural activity, in varying volumes: the less individuals are involved in society, the more the weight of each component shifts from exchange to self-expression; the larger and more complex society is, the greater weight moves to exchange; the smaller society is and the simpler

[29] McGreevy, Paul; Boakes, Robert (2011). Carrots and Sticks: Principles of Animal Training. Darlington Press. pp. xi–23. ISBN 978-1-921364-15-0. Retrieved 9 September 2016.

[30] Keeley, Brian L. (2004). "Anthropomorphism, primatomorphism, mammalomorphism: understanding cross-species comparisons" York University. December 2008.

[31] Rubenstein, D. & Kealey, J. (2010) Cooperation, Conflict, and the Evolution of Complex Animal Societies. Nature Education Knowledge 3(10):78;

[32] Noa Pinter-Wollman, et al. The dynamics of animal social networks: analytical, conceptual, and theoretical advances, Behavioral Ecology, Volume 25, Issue 2, March-April 2014, Pages 242–255, https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/art047

[33] Бадридзе Ясон Константинович, "О волке: что, как и почему", Изд. В. Секачев, 2019 г.

the tasks to be performed are to maintain stability, the less social importance is given to exchange and its teaching.

It is likely that these four components of educational communication are universal: the teaching of self-expression, communication, cooperation, and exchange take place (should take place) in all societies composed of individuals of higher nervous activity, obviously at different weights and extent.

2. The idea of what should form the basis of human-arranged education systems:

In the modern world, it seems that it is universally known how the education system should not be arranged, especially the education system of our children: we know that it should not be loaded with necessary content, should not be oriented towards memorization, should not be based on authoritarianism by teachers and so on.

We also know that the education system needs to be focused on developing the skills necessary for happiness and success. We know that the education system should serve the discovery and development of skills of the student, we know that it should help the student to understand everyday life and not to make harmful decisions for himself.

In view of all the above, today's world is full of various recommendations on how to teach a modern child: from first grade teaching of any desired profession (Finnish education), to rigorous training in specific skills (Asian education systems).

However, if we transfer the teaching of four universal components (self-expression, communication, cooperation and exchange) into the content of the education system, it is likely that many existing problems will be overcome and also, many controversial issues will no longer be controversial: e.g. If you teach these four components, it is clear that the content of each component must be based on a particular student individuality and a particular society, no matter whether a child is studying at home, in a private school, in a self-governing institution or in any new form of educational relationship.

Consequently, if these four principles are a universal form of educational relationship, then it is also important what stage of education should each of them follow: their confusion

will probably not be fruitful, and in this case the sequence of components must be strictly adhered to. However, it is obvious too, in the case of each student, each stage will take a different amount of time.

Again, what does each of these four universal components include:

1. Self-expression: what desires and abilities the student has;
2. Communication: how to relate to others based on own desires and abilities;
3. Cooperation: how to cooperate with others in the way of fulfilling one's own desires;
4. Exchange: How to exchange one's own result of self-expression, communication and cooperation for a result that one's own self-expression, communication and cooperation cannot achieve.

Almost all of today's schools teach self-expression[34], less - self-expression and communication, even less - self-expression, communication and cooperation, and, as far as I know, none of them teaches exchange. Yet we humans learn to exchange from everyday relationships.

Consequently, we can assume, that the fourth universal component of the educational relationship has fallen out of the school education system. That can be due to the case of human society, since the complexity and multiplicity of human societies' exchange in them is of greater importance than those of all other animals.

3. Why humans are different from other animals, why exchange is important to them, and why they do not teach exchange in formal education systems

To answer this question, we must begin with a brief overview of the physiological mechanism of desire and imagination:

In recent years, studies in brain physiology have paid special attention to the so-called gut-brain axis[35]: according to this direction, the gut microbiota, i.e. the complex of bacteria,

[34] This teaching also includes schools of totalitarian regimes, where specific, permissible and sanctioned self-expression is taught.

[35] John F. Cryan et al. The Microbiota-Gut-Brain Axis, The American Psychological Society, https://journals.physiology.org/doi/full/10.1152/physrev.00018.2018http://dx.doi.org/10.1152/physrev.00018.2018

has a special role in the functioning of the brain. It can be said that there is already enough experimental material to assume the crucial role of the intestinal microbiota in the case of a number of mental dysfunctions[36]: due to microbiota imbalance, substance produced in the intestine and normally delivered to the brain, may lead to autism and epilepsy in children[37] and to Alzheimer and Parkinson in adults[38]. The process of affecting the brain through the substance, produced in the microbiota itself looks like a schematic form: the substance crosses the body-brain barrier, reaches the brain and stimulates receptors. The stimulation of receptors in the brain results in a body as a whole responding in search for the suppression (or, the behavior that leads to pleasure) of this excitation. Pleasurable behaviors[39] can be numerous and can vary in different ages, cultures and civilizations. However, the effect of the action is the same: pleasure in the human brain is manifested by the release of a substance that suppresses excited receptors and the brain "calms down".

All these data and other experiments current today confirm the theory that originated in ancient Greece that everyday diet is of great importance not only in the treatment of mental disorders, but also in determining the daily nature and mood. Consequently, it is not difficult to come to the idea that the more substance is produced by a microbiota in the gut and therefore appears in the brain, the more the body is oriented towards finding and getting pleasure.

Let us now turn from the physiology of the brain and its projection into the social world to the subject of the evolution of Homo sapiens:

It is known that one of our ancestors, Homo sapiens Neanderthal, migrated from Africa to Eurasia about 500,000 years ago[40]. Modern genetic studies are releasing new data, according to which our immediate ancestor, Homo Sapiens Sapiens, not only migrated

[36] Gigi Tevzadze et al. Effects of a Gut Microbiome Toxin, p-Cresol, on the Susceptibility to Seizures in Rats, April 2019, Neurophysiology 50(30).

[37] Gigi Tevzadze et al. Effects of a Gut Microbiome Toxin, p-Cresol, on the Indices of Social Behavior in Rats, October 2018, Neurophysiology.

[38] Nangyeon Lim, Cultural differences in emotion: differences in emotional arousal level between the East and the West, Integr Med Res. 2016 Jun; 5(2): 105–109.

[39] This behavior can also be aggression.

[40] Dennell, R.W. (2003). "Dispersal and colonisation, long and short chronologies: how continuous is the Early Pleistocene record for hominids outside East Africa?". Journal of Human Evolution. 45 (6): 421–440. doi:10.1016/j.jhevol.2003.09.006. PMID 14643672.

from Africa to the Eurasian continent 50,000 years ago, but there were cases of migration and return before that. However, it is clear that Homo sapiens began a massive migration from the African continent to the Neanderthals 50,000 years ago, leading to the fact that up to 4% of all modern humans have Neanderthal genes.

What interests us in this process is the following: Before and after the crossbreeding of the Neanderthals and Homo sapiens, the culture of both Neanderthals and Homo sapiens (as well as other hominids that occasionally crossed the Eurasian continent and sometimes returned) was remarkably resilient to the changes. The elements of these cultures were more or less the same (hunting, gathering, sexual and burial rituals, medicine, tools, rituals, in some versions, tamed animals and plants, etc.), but, for thousands of years these cultures did not change, or if changed, in very small doses. A radical change occurred about 8-10,000 years ago when Homo Sapiens Sapiens (already crossed with the Neanderthals) began to live in the form of permanent settlements (first cities) and its ration changed dramatically from meat to plant food. Here begins the history of civilizations that we know from books or other sources.

What happened?

From my opinion, this change, followed by intensification of visible history, is the result of a radical change in the daily diet: it is known that a fat-based diet balances the microbiota and reduces the amount of excreted substance that reaches the brain. This is why a fatty (so-called KETO) diet has been used successfully in the treatment of autism as well as epilepsy and Alzheimer's[41]. Consequently, it can be assumed that the transition to plant-based, glucose-rich foods (cereals, fruits, beverages) increased the amount of substance excreted in the human gut, therefore, its amount increased in the brain also: Human brain receptors were more excited than before turning to mostly plant consumption.

Consequently, a person who ate plant foods should have sought more pleasure objects and also should have more desires. Consequently, it was necessary to develop more active imagination as a skill aimed at finding objects that give pleasure and satisfy newly emerged desires.

It can be assumed, that it is from this time that exchange has become the main skill of man: if you cannot create all the objects of your desire, neither individually, nor with

[41] Ryan W.Y. Lee, A modified ketogenic gluten-free diet with MCT improves behavior in children with autism spectrum disorder, Physiol Behav. 2018 May 1; 188: 205–211.

communication, nor with cooperation, then you must exchange the object you have made for the object you desired. And you have to create the object that someone else desires, in order for the exchange to take place.

It was from this time, from the transition to plant foods and the emergence of settlements, that the intense exchange of objects of desire and, consequently, the intense development of the imagination had to begin. This should be the main thing that distinguishes man from other animals: due to the intensification of imagination and desire, exchange is at the center of human society, while even in the society of other, most highly organized animals, all four components of educational relations are more or less equal.

Suppose so, why not teach each other to exchange? Why not teach children that developing exchange skills is key to happiness and success? Probably because we think of the four components of an educational relationship as exchange: if we think about it, it really is: self-expression is thought to be exchange because we expect payment for it, communication is thought to be exchange because we receive the result of our communication, co-operation is more specific because of the result of this action. This is why economic relations are central to the dominant theories about human society.

In fact, we do not teach exchange. We learn to exchange spontaneously, through practice, through personal experience, which is why mistakes and frustrations being common: in our educational systems, in self-expression, in communication, and cooperation are presented as exchange, and exchange itself is not even taught. Therefore, it is important to reinstall the exchange in the education of children.

4. How to teach exchange?

It is not hard to guess that by the teaching of economics I do not mean the teaching of exchange. Economic institutions, it is true, are a component of exchange, but not a major component. Economics is already taught in good, successful schools and educational systems through teaching of self-expression, communication and cooperation.

But it does not teach what we might call The Tree of Desires[42], or, negative self-reflection: that is, to teach that there exist desires that you cannot fulfill without exchange, and how

[42] Gigi Tevzadze, Ultimate Philosophy, Tbilisi, 2019, pp. 155-162.

to identify those desires and how much it will cost you: with the aim of not having to pay too much or totally damaging, price.

It seems that what the modern successful education system lacks and needs is the teaching of the technique of self-reflection that provides the teaching of not possibilities but of impossibilities: the teaching of the technique that provides the understanding of what is necessary and what is not, what is really desirable and what is not, that the exchange is inevitable and you should know, what you are exchanging for what and what the real price you will pay can be.

I think that teaching self-reflection, which sets the price for the fulfillment of desires, will make a significant contribution to the teaching of achieving happiness, which, fortunately, is already the goal of education.

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