

THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS. *)

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For many centuries psychology has been merely a speculative part of philosophy. At the end of the nineteenth century, practical psychology began to develop rapidly, and now the application of Adlerian psychology in the solution of psychic problems gives us a firm basis for a new philosophy. This new philosophy is empirical in its character and has, therefore, a surer foundation than any other type of psychology has ever had. We do not speculate; we base our philosophy on what we have observed and can observe again every day.

We know from our psychological practice that psychic problems, including limitation of happiness and unhappiness, spring from attempts to solve the three great social problems of life in an asocial or anti-social way. We have established these three problems to be:

Co-living with others
Occupation
Sex relationships

The Greek word "sofia" means, in its strictest sense "wisdom". Philosophy means "the love of wisdom." Which is the wisdom we love? It is the knowledge of the best way to love. There is no longer any doubt about the fact that the best way to live is the social, the cooperative way. Should we have needed another demonstration on a large scale, the present war would have given it to us. Again we can see the ultimate triumph of cooperation over the antisocial attitude.

When acting as consulting psychologists, our task is to make our consultants see that only by a social solution of the three life problems can they free themselves from their psychic difficulties and increase their happiness. We must further show them how they

*) The class conversation published here seems to us a fine example of how the eternal truths of Individual Psychology may be applied to any subject and how they can be taught to school-children of eleven even when extremist passions fill the atmosphere.

have developed in accordance with their conception of life formed in early childhood, an insufficiently social, asocial or antisocial style of life, and help them to adopt a new conception of life.

In our connection with schools, we must always strive to make teachers understand that their main task is not, as they generally think, INSTRUCTION, the imparting of knowledge, but EDUCATION, the "socializing" of the erroneous style of life of the children entrusted to them, and the creation in the children of social conceptions and life styles. The school must help the children see that the happiness of the individual as well as of any larger human unit is directly proportional to the grade of "sociality" of ones attitude towards the others of the group.

The teaching of a love for this wisdom, of this "philosophy", must not begin, as did that of the philosophy now taught, in the last years of high school. Our empirical philosophy should not be taught as one of the subjects of the curriculum; it should permeate all that is said or thought in the school. On the other hand, the pupils must not be "taught" to think socially, they must be led to do so. They must be led to discover the truth of our philosophy. Class conversations, such as the one presented here, are a fine way towards our objective: the creation of a generation more social than our present one.

The following class conversation is the third of a series held in a primary school of Barcelona, Spain, a few months after the outbreak of the Civil War of 1936-1939. The conversations were held in the last school hour of the week, on Saturdays from 12 to 12:45 PM. In the first conversation, two weeks before the one reported here, the psychologist introduced himself as a friend of the children of half a dozen countries on whom he had called previously. This first conversation served also for creating a comprehension of the division of life into "the useful side" and the "useless and harmful side." The second conversation, one week later, deepened this comprehension; and in the third conversation, here reported, we can see the children establish without difficulty the equations; useful--social; useless---asocial, harmful--antisocial. The fourth conversation,

which we might report some day, introduced the concept that to be asocial or antisocial means to be ill, while the social attitude is healthy and therefore gives happiness.

Nothing had been planned for these conversations, but they were, of course, always influenced by our social philosophy, which had been represented to the children and promptly accepted by them.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Psychologist: "I should like to know what you think a hero is." (He puts down the answers of the children on a piece of paper).

Joseph: "If a boy is about to drown and another saves him, the latter is a hero."

Richard: "One who has made himself great in a war."

John: "One who has made himself great in motor races."

A boy: "A child who has died in order to save another."

George: "One who has made a great invention."

A boy: "One who defends humanity."

Another: "One who has killed many soldiers of the enemy in war."

Boy: "One who has made himself great by his ideas."

Boy: "One who has died in defending his father against a bunch of highway robbers."

Boy: "A policeman who captures a band of highway robbers and is rewarded by a promotion."

Ps.: "Let all those raise their hands who think that the person who has made himself great in the races is a hero."

Boys: (all talking at the same time, with the exception of John): "He is not."

Ps.: "Many people admire him and for them he is a hero, but he is not the same kind of a hero as the person who has saved a drowning child, for instance." (He divides the blackboard in two parts by a vertical line): "Where shall we put 'useful' and where 'useless'?"

Boys: "'Useful' on the right and 'useless' on the left." (Psychologist writes it).

Ps.: "And 'harmful'?"

Boys: "Even more to the left." (Ps. writes it).

Ps.: (Writes down the words "social", "asocial" and "antisocial" in the corner of the blackboard,

reserved for remarks) "Who knows what the word 'social' means?"

A boy: "Social is what refers to a nation."

Another: "What happens in a nation."

Ps.: "You seem to feel, more or less, what the word means. 'Social' is that which is useful to all. That which is useful to one person only is not social. No doubt you know the word 'socio' 1) means a person who joins others. Socialism, of which you will have heard, is a system which consists in directing a nation in such a way that all may have the best possible life. Do you know what the letter "A" means in 'Asocial'?"

Boys:

Ps.: "It is a prefix, which means the same 'not'. 'Asocial' means 'not social'.....And the little word 'anti', what does it mean?"

A boy: "It is like 'antifascista', one who fights against the fascists."

Ps.: "That is right and 'antisocial' means that action or a person is against, or hostile to the others. "Is it social or antisocial to save a drowning person?"

Boys: "Social."

Ps.: "If we now wish to place 'social' and 'antisocial' on the sides of the line which correspond to them, where shall we put them?"

Boys: "'Social' next to 'useful' and 'antisocial' next to 'useless'."

A boy: "'Antisocial' next to 'harmful'." (Ps. puts 'social' next to 'useful' and 'antisocial' next to 'harmful' with the corresponding 'equal' marks).

Ps.: "Well, and where shall we put 'asocial'?"

Boys: "Next to 'useless'." (Ps. does so).

Ps.: "Where shall we put 'to save a drowning person'?"

Boys: "Below 'useful'.....Below 'social'." (Ps. does so).

Ps.: "And where shall we put 'to kill many soldiers of the enemy in war'?"

Boys: "Below 'useful'."

Ps.: "In this case, if we take a fascist newspaper in

1) This is the Spanish word for "business partner" and also for a member of a society.

hand and read that they call Queipo de Llano 2) a great man, will we put him on the useful side?

Boys: "He is useless. He is harmful."

Ps.: (Puts the name of Queipo de Llano below 'harmful' - 'antisocial'). "So we cannot say that one who has gained importance in war is always useful."

A boy: "One who has become important in a social war."

Another: "In Civil War."

Ps.: "But how shall we determine who is the hero? Queipo de Llano has taken part in the actual social or civil war just as Durruti 3) or Hans Beimler 4) have." (Ps. puts this latter name in corner of the transitory remarks, its German orthography being difficult for Spanish children. Class discussion affords a good opportunity for showing children the sense of their studies of the different school subjects from orthography to geography, etc., without having to say so in so many words).

Boys: "Durruti was useful."

Ps.: "Then, where shall we put him? Here? or here?" (He shows the three possibilities on the blackboard)

Richard: "On the useful side, for he was concerned for the welfare of humanity."

Another: "Because he was concerned for the welfare of the workers."

Boy: "Because he wanted to free an oppressed people."

Ps.: "What you have said is contained in the wording of Richard: 'he was concerned for the welfare of humanity'." (He puts 'Durruti' below 'social').. "Where shall we put Hans Beimler?"

2) One of the generals of the fascists, mentally and morally defective.

3) Durruti was one of the heroes of the Catalan and Spanish peoples who died in the fight against fascism on the battlefield. He was a leader of the Catalan anarchists and his funeral in Barcelona was a most impressive manifestation against fascism.

4) Hans Beimler was one of the heads of the International Brigade fighting on the side of the legitimate Spanish government. He died in the battles around Madrid. He had a sort of a counterpart in Durruti of the anarchists.

Boys: "Below 'social', And Ascaso⁵⁾ too. - Franco, Mola, Cabanella⁶⁾ are 'antisocial'." Ps. writes down these names in accordance with the indications given to him.

Ps.: "And the person who has made himself great in the motor races?"

Alfred: "He is useful,⁷⁾ To have a good time in life is the main concern." (There is no better way of knowing the pupils than in listening carefully to their remarks in the class discussion. Listen to Alfred's motivation of what he has just said).

Ps.: "Why?"

Alfred: "Because he entertained those who see him."

Ps.: "We must admit that anything that entertains is useful, because it contributes to our happiness⁸⁾. Nevertheless, there are many degrees of usefulness. If we call the line which separates the useful from the useless side 'the frontier' we can measure the usefulness or each person or action on a horizontal line. Which is the best known measure?"

Boys: "The meter."

Ps.: "Well, let us then apply a meter right and left from the frontier....And let us measure the utility of this rager. How much is it?"

John: "Half a meter⁹⁾."

5) Ascaso was well known leader of the workers. He died in the street fights in Barcelona on the very first day of the military rebellion.

6) Franco, Mola, and Cabanella were three of the leading generals on the fascist side.

7) Alfred is the perfect epicurean. To have a good time in life is his main concern.

8) This is, of course, an overstatement, because many entertaining books, for instance, can be harmful. It is not however advisable to discuss each question that comes up in a class discussion to its ultimate point. When reading the records of the discussions, the psychologist may make a note of such points and propose them for discussion at some later occasion.

9) John is the one who has proposed this class of hero. The boy looks rather weak and it seems that he admires force and vitality because he has little of them. Indeed when we look at his theme answering the question "What do you want to be when you grow up", we find him starting it with "When grown up if I am alive".....

Two or three boys: "Zero."
 Ps.: "Let us vote! How many give him more than zero of utility?"
 10 boys: "One centimeter."
 3 boys: "Ten centimeters."
 Ps.: "Who will give him more?"
 Boys.....10)
 Ps.: "And Durruti or Hans Beimler, how many centimeters of utility shall we give them?"
 Boys: "100 Centimeters."
 Ps.: "All right, then we put on the horizontal line, on the right side of the frontier, at cm. 100: '100% social'.....One of you has said that the person who has made a great invention is a hero. Where shall we place the great inventor?"
 Boys: "On the useful side."
 Ps.: "We must be careful. Do you know who invented dynamite?"
 A boy: "A dynamiter¹¹⁾" (The boys laugh, but none of them can tell the name of the inventor). "It was Alfred Nobel." (He puts the name in the corner of the remarks)...!"Is dynamite useful?"
 Boys: "It is useful in mines."
 Other boys: "In war too."
 Ps.: "As to its use in mines, we can say that there dynamite is always useful. But in war?"
 Boys: "If we use it."
 Ps.: "The fascists can say the same about themselves. We must again apply Richard's phrase about the welfare of humanity. Those who fight for the

10) Out of thirty present, only 14 have voted. Some of the others may not feel inclined to give more than 10 cm. of utility to the racer, but others seem to belong to the group which one finds in every class, those who do not think along with the others. Without saying anything about this, the psychologist observes them and makes a mental note of the faces, in order to give them special attention.
 11) The miners of Asturias were using dynamite as one of their main weapons in the fight against the fascists in Oviedo. Dynamite was also used as a means to stop tanks and there were groups of "Dinamaitoros" (the Spanish equivalent of "Dynamiter") in the front rows of all the battlefields. They naturally impressed children very much, because they represented an incarnation of the childish wish to play the part of David in front of Goliath.

welfare of humanity have a right to use dynamite, if they are forced to do so. They would not, if they were not compelled to do it...This Alfred Nobel, when he saw how his invention was misused in war, under the influence of a woman who has done much for the idea of peace, Berta Suttner, (this name goes into the corner of remarks) created a fund from the fortune dynamite had given him, of which five prizes are distributed annually to those who have contributed most efficiently to the welfare of humanity. One of these prizes is given to the person who has done most for peace. This year the prize has been awarded to Charles Ossietsky (the name is put on the blackboard), whom the Germans are keeping in prison because of his very work for peace. They say that he has worked against his own nation, because they do not want to live in peace with their neighbors, but rule over them. Where shall we put Ossietsky?"

Boys: "On the 'social' side."

A boy: "The inventor of the locomotive was useful."

Ps.: "Well, I believe we can put him down on the 'social' side without any hesitation. (He does so) But what about Nobel?"

Some boys: "We put him down as 'useful'."

Other boys: "As harmful."

Ps.: "It is very difficult to place the inventors. Sometimes a person invents something which serves the welfare of humanity and suddenly others use it for harmful aims. Dynamite is very useful in the mines, but now the fascists use it to make bombs which they drop upon Madrid. Guns may serve to defend us against wild beasts, but now the fascists use them against the people. And we need them to defend us. Cannons are very useful to us in our defense....Who can tell me how cannons could be made useful in peacetime?"

A boy: "They could be used to destroy old houses."

Another: "To destroy criminals."

Ps.: "For that we do not need any cannons. It is better to wreck old buildings in a way which permits the use of the old bricks again, and against peacetime criminals we do not need any cannons. So that cannons are nothing but kill-

ing instruments. This invention is easy to place.
Where shall we put it?"

Boys: "Antisocial."

Ps.: "But as you have seen, the antisocial cannons are serving a social aim when we defend ourselves against the fascists. So it will be best not to try to place certain inventors on any definite side of life, and as to their inventions, we must always keep in mind that all depends on the use they are given....Let us see another thing: What is the distinction between fascists and antifascists?"

Boys: "The fascists wanted this war. They have gone against the people."

Ps.: "So where shall we put them?"

Boys: "To 'antisocial'."

Alfred: 12) "100 centimeters."

Ps.: "Let us then put 'antisocial' at a distance of 100 cm. from the frontier, on its left. We can put 'asocial' at the 50cm. mark on the left and 'social' on the 50 cm. mark on the right." (He does so on the blackboard)...."But we have no example yet of 'asocial'. We have, however, said that 'asocial' is the same as 'useless'."

Alfred: "A miser is 'asocial'." (Ps. puts it on the blackboard).

A boy: "A thief."

Ps.: "They are antisocial; we must put them in the corresponding column." (He does so).

Another boy: "A rich man is harmful."

Ps.: "Many a rich man in the United States helps the poor in a large way. Alfred Nobel has created the Nobel prizes which are given to useful people and help to continue their useful work." 13)

Alfred: "In Spain the rich do not give anything."

Ps.: "Let us go back to our former question. Who is antisocial?"

12) He is an epicurean, but not antisocial, rather something like 30 cm. asocial.

13) Children should not start to think in absolute extremes. Even if there is no time to take up the subject in detail, such remarks as this one should not be omitted.

A boy: "The grabbers¹⁴⁾" (Ps. puts it down).
 Another boy: "Asocial is a person who does not contribute to the welfare of mankind."
 Ps.: "You are right. There are many people in these days who, without being fascists, do not contribute to the welfare of humanity. They are in the cafes all day long, doing nothing. What are these people?"
 A boy: "Vagrants."
 Ps.: "Where shall we place them?"
 A boy: "Under 'antisocial'."
 Ps.: "I believe it suffices if we put them under 'asocial' (He does so), but up to a certain point you are right. Asocial people are much nearer to antisocial than to social persons. The grabbers for instance are not only useless but quite harmful.. And where can we place school children?"
 A boy: "Those who speak while the teacher explains are 'asocial'."
 Other boys: "Those who study well are useful." (The bell rings).
 Ps.: "We have no more time to go deeper into this subject. But we may quickly say this much: Children who study are useful and social and those who do not are useless and asocial. To disturb others while they listen to the teacher is antisocial or harmful. But the usefulness or uselessness of each child must be measured on the horizontal line; we must measure in each case how far he really studies or does not study."

14) When the scarcity of foodstuffs began, a systematic fight had to be put up against the "acaparadores" or "grabbers" who filled their pantries with every conceivable type of food, while others could not find any. The ordinary punishment was: confiscation of all the goods in favor of the hospitals.

At the end of the class discussion the blackboard shows the following:

harmful = antisocial	useless = asocial	useful = social	remarks
Queipo de Llano	misers	saving a	social
Franco	grabbers	drowning	asocial
Mola	vagrants	person	antisocial
Cabanella			Hans Beimler
	children	Durruti	Alfred Nobel
fascists	who do not	Hans Beimler	
thieves	study	Ascaso	Berta Suttner
		Ossietsky	Ossietsky
		the inventor	
		of the	
		locomotive	
		children who	
		study	
		the	
		racer	
100	50	10	50
antisocial	asocial	social	100% social