

## THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION IN FICHTE'S PHILOSOPHY

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**Abstract.** *Fichte's comprehension of Education depends directly upon the way he understands philosophy and philosophising. The Primacy of Practical Reason is quite noticeable in his philosophy. First of all, Fichte is an orator, a teacher, a rhetorician and an educator. The idea of Man stands at the foundations of his entire philosophy and philosophising. The precise definition of Man enables a clear and fundamental definition of Education. According to Fichte, Man is a community being. If he strives to be Man, he must not be selfish and egoistic. The role of Scholar and Educator is of particular importance in this. The essence of each individual indeed lies outside himself, yet not in some kind of abstract metaphysics of ethics. It lies in other people and in the general spirit of the community to which Man is directed if he wants to fulfil himself as a being. Man's destiny is not metaphysics but politics.*

**Key words:** *education, practical reason, man, politics, community, nation, educator, practical philosophy, ethics, duty, serving, addresses.*

From the historical point of view, Fichte's completely new approach to the problem of Education comes, above all, from the key notion of his philosophy – *Tathandlung* (Act)<sup>1</sup>. Taking into account that the Primacy of Practical Reason is more consistently realised in his works, while the theoretical and practical Reasons make an inseparable unity, Fichte brings Education back from the sphere of

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<sup>1</sup> An interesting thing about the relation between this notion and the notion of Education is that, in the history of philosophy, a new complex perception of Education coincides with a repeated attempt to understand human action as a unity of theory and practice, subject and object, not separately. The Ancient Greeks had a very wide apprehension of the notion of *practice*, which led to the complex perception of the Education notion. In Aristotle's works, where this notion is most developed, practice would be a kind of unity of the entire human action together with theory. Aristotle is very clearly aware that even "theory is a kind of practice", nothing beyond practice or separated from it. The Greeks, of course, could not think of subject and object being connected into a unity because they never separated them, but the Greek widely understood notion of *practice* and Fichte's universal and fundamental understanding of *Tathandlung* give us enough room to connect these two historical moments of philosophy.

the metaphysics of ethics (Kant) into the sphere of the practical philosophy and politics. If there is no Thought which would simultaneously be Action and its Effect, then Education can no longer be apprehended exclusively as something defined solely by the ethical sphere, awareness of duties and Categorical Imperative, but also by the immediate self-effective action of Man in his surroundings, i.e. in the community he lives in, for which Fichte uses the term of Society and later the term of Nation.

However, it is interesting that, in the reconstruction of Fichte's understanding of Education, most of researchers do not take the basic idea of his philosophy or especially his apprehension of philosophising, or the difference between his and Kant's philosophy as a starting point, but, in a very one-sided manner, they rely exclusively on his late work *Addresses to the German Nation*<sup>2</sup>. We have no intention whatsoever to diminish the importance of this text in building a complete picture of Fichte's apprehension of Education. On the contrary, we regard it as very significant for Fichte's understanding of the subject. However, we find that those controversial parts of his writing, which have largely been the reason for the criticism of Fichte's theory of Education, made it impossible to "read" it in a more constructive way and to see all those conditionally "positive" moments. Contrary to the one-sided picture of Fichte's attitude to the problem, we support its more complex perception.

Fichte formed his understanding of Education through several of his writings, both through those belonging to the early phase of his philosophising and through the late ones. The same goes for another classification of his works. Namely, both Hegel's<sup>3</sup> and Schelling's evaluations of Fichte's philosophy launched a common attitude that Fichte's popular writings originally came into being either as lectures or public speeches less worthy than his purely theoretical writings, and that they represent a less important part of his work. It may also be one of the reasons why the subject of Education, mostly worked out in such writings, has drawn no attention of Fichte's researchers. Even before we name the works upon which Fichte's apprehension of Education should be interpreted, a few words must be said about Fichte's entire work and especially about the character of his philosophical activity, i.e. his philosophising. Without an insight into these questions and only by perceiving Fichte's concrete quotations on Education in the very text, we will not get the true and complete picture of the real status of the subject in the whole of his philosophy.

If one takes into consideration his immediate philosophical practice as a lecturer at the universities of Jena, Erlangen and Berlin, then numerous political-theological conflicts and the Primacy of Practical Reason stressed in his philosophy, as well as the order and selection of the writings he published during his life, one can get the impression that the live lectures and their publishing had a special meaning for Fichte, much greater than it is the case with other philosophers in German idealistic or the entire history of philosophy. The problem of philosophy "entering" the life of ordinary people through, so to speak,

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Helmuth Seidel, *J.G.Fichte*, Hamburg 1997, p. 126-133 and Peter Rohs, *J.G.Fichte*, Muenchen 1991, p. 161-165.

<sup>3</sup> G.V.F. Hegel, *Istorija filozofije* III, Kultura, Beograd 1964, p.502.

"popular" lectures and not only its presentation to a versed circle of people, that is to educated philosophical public has hardly been taken into serious philosophical consideration since Plato's *Academy* and Aristotle's *Lyceum*. As far as it is known, Fichte is the first philosopher after Plato and Aristotle who, in his philosophical practice, made a difference between exoteric and esoteric lectures as they were called in *Academy*, that is, lectures for all interested citizens, i.e. the broad public, and highly specialised lectures for professional philosophers. The history of philosophy shows that all 34 of Plato's dialogues are nothing else but "popular" writings, read and interpreted to a wide circle of citizens who were interested in philosophy. Together with theoretical development of the basic assumptions of The Doctrine of Knowledge, Fichte kept on trying to bring the science in question closer and in a more appropriate form to a wider public, i.e. to his compatriots and fellow citizens. Having in mind the basic assumptions of The Doctrine of Knowledge and the character of his philosophy, we can say that those popular lectures were not just a kind of theory "exercising" before the eyes of the public or a kind of exhibitionism of a man partial to some sort of philosophical extravagance, but, on the contrary, they represent an integral part of his philosophy, i.e. its particular completion.

In the above-mentioned book, Helmuth Seidel finely notices something very important in Fichte's understanding of philosophising:

"Fichte was the only one among the great German philosophers who turned the lecturing rostrum into a speaker's platform, sometimes into a tribunal. Leibniz corresponded, Kant taught with a particular punctuality, Schelling's appearances were not without a note of aristocratism and Hegel wrestled with words during his lectures in order to express his profound thoughts. Fichte's mind and heart made him "step out of the words!"<sup>4</sup>

In fact, judging by the whole of his philosophical and life activity, there is no doubt that Fichte brought back the faith in the importance and power of the spoken word in philosophy. The awareness of the significance of great orators came back to philosophy with him. In the meantime, and after the Greeks and Romans, together with the disappearance of the faith in the power of the oral, direct communication, the consciousness of the importance of live speeches and lectures almost completely vanished among philosophers and scientists. Not relating to ordinary listeners for whom philosophy by its nature is intended, philosophers developed their thoughts and theories self-sufficiently and exclusively in the form of written texts and specialised lectures for an educated philosophical and scholarly public. Thus both philosophy and science scarcely reached common people. The struggle for a new understanding of Education, from the humanists and Komenski to Rousseau and Pestalozzi, goes simultaneously with an effort to realise the principle of "the school for everybody". That way Education would become available to absolutely everybody and not only to the circle of the educated and rich. Pestalozzi's persistent and self-sacrificing practical activity in this direction inspired Fichte himself. He met Pestalozzi in person and was occupied with his ideas especially during 1807-1808, that is, while writing *Addresses to the German Nation*.

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<sup>4</sup> Helmuth Seidel, J.G.Fichte, Hamburg 1997, p. 118. (author's translation)

By opening the subject of Fichte's attitude to appearing live in front of an audience, we do not recognise only his character, i.e. the specific qualities he had as a person. It would be wrong to understand his tendency to develop philosophy through live communication with the public solely as a trait of his character. The story of Fichte as a speaker and an orator leads us straight into the centre of his understanding of Education, i.e. his understanding of philosophy. Contrary to the tradition that preceded him in the period of the humanists and Pestalozzi, Fichte's approach to the subject led to a major turn in the history of Education.

After the Greek philosophical tradition, Fichte was the first philosopher who began to take Education seriously, so to speak. As for him, it was not reduced only to a set of rules for the education of individuals, mainly seen as children, or to didactic problems and the school as a specific place for the pedagogical work. The practice of an educator (in Fichte's language "a scholar") is directly linked with Society, i.e. with the community he lives in. Fichte's Scholar-Educator does not address an individual, a child, but Society on the whole. For example, both Komenski and Pestalozzi make some marginal remarks about the social problem being extremely important in Education, but neither of them, nor any other pedagogue or philosopher shows such a close connection between the phenomena of Education and Society, that is, between Pedagogy and Politics. In the key points of his work Fichte speaks of Education in a quite different way from the above-mentioned pedagogues and philosophers. Education does not emerge from nowhere simply as a need "to bring to order" the young members of the community and it does not come from the work organisation at school – but it is derived directly from the Vocation of Man.

If we apply the clarity and the firmness of the subject foundation and the number of pregnant formulations, i.e. the strictness and accuracy of performance as a criterion, there is no doubt that Fichte's early Jena manuscript, *Several Lectures on the Vocation of Scholar* (1794), is crucial in the interpretation of Fichte's theory of Education. In no other work did Fichte develop the subject so completely. Of course, there are certain paragraphs in *The Doctrine of Ethics* (1798), *Natural Right* (1796), *The Main Characteristics of the Modern Age* (1806) and *Addresses to the German Nation* (1808) which also play an important part in the interpretation of the subject, but the impression remains that Fichte most completely founded his concept of Education very early, almost at the same time when he formed his basic philosophical standpoints. It actually shows his relationship towards the very subject. The fact that he approached it so early tells us it was not something marginal for him, but, on the contrary, it was something vital, something standing almost at the centre of his philosophy.

Fichte determines the Vocation of Scholar through the introduction of the Scholar-Society relation, i.e. through the Vocation of Man in Society and, first of all, through the Vocation of Man-in-Himself. To Fichte, Man is a being that aspires to achieve the state of being perfect (Vollkommenheit) by the power of his mind above all. He tries to reach the absolute unity and the complete harmony with himself. The objective, however, remains something basically impossible to achieve, but Man's main aspiration is to reach it somehow in an everlasting struggle. The constant attempt to achieve the impossible, the infinite improvement (Vervollkommung) is in fact the Vocation of Man-in-Himself, according to

Fichte<sup>5</sup>. Since he sees Society, i.e. the human community as "a mutual relation of reasonable beings", and Man as a being with the urge which makes him aspire "to find other free reasonable beings beyond himself and to make a community with them", the aim of Man in Society is to make other people more perfect so that all the people in Society may become more united "through the mutual uniting by means of improvement". The reciprocal relating of people in Society, or improvement, as Fichte says, has its ultimate objective in making the community and people living in it more perfect, i.e. united as much as possible. According to Fichte, the objective of the community is to treat everybody equally and to enable each individual to find his own status freely and according to his own abilities, that is, to enable each individual to realise his abilities and talents, and to improve and "complete" himself that way.

The reciprocal action of the people living in the community by means of improvement and according to the principles of Reason, and always acting freely is nothing else but Education. Therefore Education is understood as a universal way in which the people in the community relate to each other. So it is the basic relation that makes it possible to realise one's essence in the community with other people. Man can be Man only if he comprehends his relationship with other people as mutual improvement, i.e. mutual Education. Thus, Education is not just an aspect of Society associated with particular social institutions, family or school; rather it is the way of Man's existence in Society, the only possible way of becoming Man. Here we quote Fichte's view containing the essence of his apprehension of Education as improvement, most pregnantly formulated in this text:

"...the mutual improvement of ourselves through a free use of other people's action upon us, and the improvement of others by the return action upon them as free beings is our Vocation in Society." <sup>6</sup>

This quite clearly determines the essence of Fichte's apprehension of Education. As for Fichte, Man in Society is someone who improves other people, but is improved too, someone who educates others, but also is educated and someone who teaches others, but is taught as well, so he is both an educator and a disciple, i.e. a teacher and a student at the same time. If we remember Socrates and his specific dialogue method, we can determine these are exactly the ideals Socrates himself supported. What else can Socrates' basic standpoint: *I know that I know nothing* actually mean but an attempt to unite the educator and the disciple, the teacher and the student into one person?! Education, therefore, must begin with Self-education.

Studying, like all other activities we do in a community with other people, becomes here relevant for the subject of Education. Thus it includes the total domain of Man's existence within the community and not only some isolated spheres. Some actions, which at first sight have nothing to do with Education, become a part of it.

However, Fichte's apprehension of Education has one specific point when compared with the Old Greeks or, more precisely, with Aristotle, who formulated it most accurately. Namely, when Aristotle speaks of the Vocation of Man and his achievement of happiness,

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<sup>5</sup> J.G.Fichte, *Zatvorena trgovačka država*, Nolit, Beograd 1979, p.147.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p.158.

he always has a concrete *polis* on his mind. For Aristotle, the man who feels fulfilled, the man who reached his happiness is always a citizen. Nevertheless, in his *Several Lectures on the Vocation of Scholar*, Fichte says that "the whole of Human Race"<sup>7</sup> improves itself through Improvement and Education. Carried by a changed picture of the world after numerous geographical discoveries and especially after the French Revolution, Fichte goes out of the limits that restricted Aristotle by the general political and civilisation state of affairs of his time. In Aristotle's Definition of Man and notion of happiness, the function of Education in the human community can be perceived only implicitly, while in Fichte's work, particularly in this manuscript, it is derived much more explicitly. For example, Aristotle would never say that Man is definitely undefinable because he always improves himself and aspires to perfection, but because the *polis* in which he lives changes, is always different, never the same. For him, it is not even possible to determine the best possible state establishment, for it is always determined according to circumstances. On the basis of the above-mentioned, it could be said that Fichte sees Man not so strictly bound to his community, but, above all, his home is the Human Race. Nevertheless, many other formulations in the text, as well as large parts from *Addresses to the German Nation* assure us that the opinion was expressed in romantic enthusiasm in the period after the French Revolution which strongly inspired Fichte, and that this enthrallment by an abstract unity of the entire Human Race still cannot question Fichte's crucial binding of Man to his concrete community.

It is best shown in his Vocation of Scholar. The Vocation of Scholar and his practice in general have their meanings only in relation to Society. Therefore he is not someone who, by learning and studying particular fields of knowledge, finds the purpose of himself and his living in his own improvement. Life in the Society, in the community with other people is always bound to this counter-relation towards finding the purpose only in your self, self-sufficiency or self-satisfaction. Choosing his own status according to his abilities and doing his job, Man always gives back to Society what it has given him. Life in the community always moves according to the ethics of duty and service to Society and other people. Those duties also include particular duties of Man towards his natural state (family and the relationship between parents and children) and, which is especially interesting, the duties of Man towards his particular vocation<sup>8</sup>. Actually, Man becomes Man because by doing his job in Society he demonstrates his readiness to serve other people and the community on the whole. Thus he overwhelms his sensual, animal nature inclined towards self-sufficiency, selfishness and egoism. It is interesting here that Fichte, in comparison to Kant, does not derive the morality sphere of Man's action, that is, the ethic of duties from some higher principle, from the metaphysics of ethics – rather finds it in the political nature of Man and his life in the community with other people. In that sense, Categorical Imperative is relativized according to circumstances and it is not so unconditional anymore, as with Kant.

The Vocation of Scholar is, therefore, derived from the total ethics of duty and Man's service in Society. However, the job of Scholar, i.e. Educator is unique and particularly important in the human community. He has a triple role in Society: he is the teacher of the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 159,170.

<sup>8</sup> See: J.G.Fichte, *Sittenlehre*, Leipzig 1922, p. 347-369.

whole Human Race, the educator and the one who ethically ennoble the mankind. As he knows human nature and ethical laws best, he makes sure that every man chooses his vocation according to his talent. Thus he constantly supervises the happiness of every individual in the community, i.e. he supervises the progress both of the community and of the Human Race in general, constantly trying to make the progress faster. So he helps people both by dealing with science and his own learning and through concrete educational work with them so that they can more easily be conscious of their needs and free themselves of everything that prevents them from mutual improvement. Being morally superior as well, he ethically ennoble and betters both his compatriots and citizens and the entire mankind serving as an example and cherishing faith in high historical ideals. This way he sets a living example and represents the best model for everybody. In a word, Scholar-Educator guides and directs the Human Race. It depends on him, that is to say, on how he does his job, whether and how his community and the whole mankind are going to advance. He is the one responsible for the direction the humanity is going to take. The entire progress of Human Race directly depends on the progress of science and scientists. For that reason exactly, his role and duty in Society stand so high above all others<sup>9</sup>. Doing his job he does not use the means of violence to make people accept his beliefs. On the contrary, he tries to develop their self-action, independence and strong will, not obedience and blind following of an authority. Considering all these, Fichte also marks Scholar as a preacher of truth, which is the Philosopher's and Scholar's role long time lost in the course of the history of philosophy. He says for himself: "I am competent to present truth". Truth becomes a friend of Scholar's.

In such devotion of Scholar and science to the community interest, when Education becomes the property of all people, i.e. the property of Society and Human Race in general, the humanist concept of Scholar as *homo universale* is completely shattered. No matter how personal Scholar's work can be in its form and aspirations, he must permanently feel that the function of his work is social in the last instance. It is the experience clearly expressed by the Greeks. Only from this angle we should look at Plato's controversial attempts in *The Republic* to limit the freedom of poets, writers, artists and philosophers by a special censorship. Plato could give such a statement only because the Greeks felt every work of art or philosophy truly belonged to the whole community. The Greeks simply did not possess the consciousness of some universal categories in which the treasures of their culture could be considered. Artistic, philosophical or literary works serve the *polis* above all, and possibly the whole of the Hellenic world. It seems that the brilliant power of the Greek spirit lies exactly in its unbreakable ties with the community soil. It is because Scholar has the knowledge of universal moral and natural laws that he feels the duty to serve and educate other people and the entire community. Thus he is free from the danger of comprehend his practice in an exhibitionist manner as an artistic and intellectual, self-satisfied virtuosity. Every work of Scholar is, first of all, a child of his community and the mankind in general. That is why his main purpose is to serve them.

The idea of serving Society, i.e. the nation, is established in Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, too. Here Fichte speaks highly of the duty to serve and he speaks about it more pregnantly and more thoroughly than in any other work. He uses a strict criticism of

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 350-352.

selfishness and egoism, which he considers the biggest problem of not only the Germans, but also the century he lives in. Unfortunately, these are the details rarely noticed<sup>10</sup>. The common interpretation of the manuscript is based mostly on the lectures no. 4-10 in which Fichte gives a very inspired outline of the basic characteristics of the Germans as a nation. These characteristics make them special and worthier in relation to other Germanic and, as he says, "new-Roman" peoples (they are the peoples whose languages originate from Latin, so their languages are not authentic like German). Eulogising over the Germans and their plebeian "dignity and honesty" and praising to heavens certain great people from the German history ( for example, Luther<sup>11</sup>, for whom he had a special and almost self-loveable<sup>12</sup> affinity as for a great rhetorician ), Fichte really seems to open a large space for a severe criticism and interpretations that mark him as a great nationalist. If we also add his statements such as "it is upon us, Germans, to solve and complete philosophy"<sup>13</sup> or the one which annoys most "to have a character means to be German", we could get an impression that by this writing Fichte really annulled everything he had previously said about the Vocation of Man and role of Education in Society.

The excuses for such inappropriate tones of the writing, even contradictory to Fichte's previous attitude to the problem of Education, could be found in at least two crucial moments of his life. The very creation of Fichte's lectures and then their publication were preceded by very important historical events, as well by some difficult personal disappointments. Disappointed by the appearance of Napoleon and his destruction of some results the French Revolution had had, Fichte lost his earlier enthusiasm and the faith that the Revolution might spread outside the French borders. Berlin, the city he had moved into, was occupied and the existing regime in Germany was shattered. The German nation was in a terrible situation because it was deprived of a strong leadership. When Hegel and Schelling's writings appeared, Fichte was pushed into the background and some of his theses became outdated. Neither Hegel nor Schelling paid any special attention to him. It is well known that Fichte had to leave Jena earlier because of his conflicts with the university authorities. All these reasons, but especially the state of the German nation, conditioned the appearance of the writings which referred to the existing reality in a very criticising manner. It does not apply only to *Addresses to the German Nation*, but also to a work from 1804-1805, *Characteristics of the Present Age* in which Fichte dealt very harshly with his time and its circumstances.

Without any intention to defend Fichte, yet deeply convinced that some parts of *Addresses to the German Nation* can defend him best, we are trying here to point them out. If we take a closer look at the very text, we can notice that Fichte's emphasis on building a new approach to Education and, in his own words, to the whole of "the new order of things"<sup>14</sup> lies, first of all, in the criticism of "selfishness as a major obstacle to Education"<sup>15</sup>. This seems to be the main reason that gives us the right to say Fichte did not lose

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<sup>10</sup> A little more moderate and objective account of Fichte's theory of Education, which does not fall under the usual clichés representing him as a nationalist, can be found in Peter Rohs, *J.G.Fichte*, Muenchen 1991, p.161-165.

<sup>11</sup> J.G.Fichte, *Reden an die Deutsche Nation*, Leipzig 1924, p.89-93

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p.9.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p.12-13.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.p.9.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.p.12-13.

the continuity with his previous standpoints while developing the subject of Education in *Addresses to the German Nation* – quite contrary to the common interpretations. Actually, to criticise selfishness is nothing but to criticise people because they have forgotten what their real nature is. To criticise selfishness means to encourage people to turn to their real nature, i.e. to the community and nation. Selfishness is something that removes Man and the nation from their true goals, that is, perfection and unity within the very individual and the nation on the whole. Ethical motives connected to the life in the community and to the duties Man has in it must replace the selfish and personal ones. So Fichte regards the nation as a framework, a particular place that provides for the ethical action and Education of an individual. Having in mind that the existing crisis in Germany led to a general decline of all values and norms that keep the nation united, we can understand Fichte's nationalistic outbursts and reminding the German nation of the general and personal values as an attempt to set apart his contemporaries from themselves and their hiding in their own self-sufficiency, to bring them back to sharing life with other people, i.e. the nation. It seems that we can acquire a different view of the very text if we understand the nationalistic outbursts in this way and comprehend them as a counterbalance to the common affinity to selfishness and egoism which Fichte considered to be the main problems of the century he lived in. In fact, it is a common phenomenon that different nations recollect great values of their culture in difficult periods of their history, showing, at the same time, an inclination to glorify the results of their history in comparison with other nations. There are plenty of such examples both in the recent history and in Ancient Greece, where they had a high opinion of themselves and looked down on other peoples. If we let us be overwhelmed by the negative impression of some parts from *Addresses to the German Nation* in which Fichte raises the Germans to unbelievable heights, we will not be able to perceive how important the work is in Fichte's total understanding of Education.

The general loss of illusions about the Revolution, as well as many national and personal disappointments made Fichte speak no longer through the categories of universal values and improvement of Man as a Race, i.e. the unity of entire Human Race, but he supported the change of the sick state within the concrete human community he himself lived in, which was much closer to the cruel reality and real life. The progress of the people and community depends much more on real practical and political steps like Education than on the abstract development of universal ethical and esthetical values which were supported, for example, by the Renaissance and Humanism<sup>16</sup>. Therefore, Fichte's nationalistic outbursts should be understood only as an attempt to support the consciousness of the nation and to make people turn to other people in the community and the life of togetherness. That way they can fight the natural laziness in themselves and conquer the selfishness and egoism by working, by performing duties and by serving. The concern for the nation is in fact the concern for people because the nation itself, i.e. the community a man lives in is the greatest educator.

We hope that everything previously said makes Fichte's exact role in the history of Education clearer. Firstly, by the manner and complexity of his comprehension of the subject and its importance for Man and his community, Fichte is the only one who reaches

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<sup>16</sup> In that sense it is interesting to see Fichte's observation on why the Germans did not have their renaissance, see *Ibid.* p.86-91.

the universal nature of the Greek understanding of the question. As for him, Education is not just another profession limited by the practice of particular institutions and people, but the general way in which Man communicates within the community, or to put it simply, it is the only way in which he exists and can truly be Man. The role of Scholars is here special and their responsibility for the progress of Society is bigger than the responsibility of any other profession or class in Society. In every respect Scholars represent the true leadership of the community, i.e. nation. Scholar is not a kind of *homo universale* separated from reality and inspired only by the universal and eternal truth and beauty, but he is strictly defined by the concrete community and exists only to serve it.

The way Fichte understands the subject depends, as it has already been said, on the way he generally understands philosophy and philosophising. The Primacy of Practical Reason in the whole of Fichte's Doctrine of Science, i.e. his philosophy is more than obvious. This inclination of his towards practice, public lectures and speeches, as well as his comprehension of the Doctrine of Science as a project to be carried out in reality has unfortunately been mistaken for his affinity to "popular philosophy" and even marked as a less worthy part of his entire philosophy. However, we think that the idea of Man<sup>17</sup> and his essence stands firmly at the foundations of Fichte's entire philosophy and his manner of philosophising. The firm idea of Man allows him a clear and fundamental assumption of Education. Fichte sees Man as a community being first of all. Man must not be selfish if he wants to be Man. The essence of each individual indeed lies outside himself, yet not in a kind of abstract speculation, the metaphysics of ethic or anything similar. It lies in other people and in the general spirit of the community. Man is inevitably directed towards them if he wants to fulfil himself as a being. So Man's destiny is not metaphysics but politics. It is not the abstract metaphysics of the ethical sphere, but the sphere of Politics and Education as skills whose objective is the practical improvement of the community and its members. Thus Fichte comprehends himself and his vocation as something mainly directed towards the community having the task to serve the community in the best possible way. He really tries hard to be strongly connected to the reality and destiny of his community and his countrymen. He deeply feels and experiences everything that happens to his nation. Both his philosophy and his philosophical practice are profoundly determined by the problems of his nation at a certain historical moment. It must be admitted that Fichte has been very lonely in such a philosophical approach especially since the classical period. That is why he was so enthusiastic about Pestalozzi. The overall image of Philosopher and Scholar matches the idea of *homo universale*, more or less. It prevailed from the time of humanism all the way to Fichte's time. Philosopher and Scholar stand very high above the rest of "mortals" and to "mix" with them could be understood as something "popular", in other words, negative. In that respect, we find interesting Humboldt's thesis that the death of philosophy began with Fichte<sup>18</sup>.

It seems, therefore, that the above-mentioned comprehension of the Philosopher's and Scholar's role in Society, i.e. the comprehension of philosophy and science, determined

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<sup>17</sup> See the text of J. Schurr in Klaus Hammacher 's *Der transzendente Gedanke*, Hamburg 1981, p.508. Here he cites Fichte's famous view that the task of philosophy is to find the answer to what actually the Vocation of Man is and what the means of its achieving are.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.p.509.

the reasons why it was forgotten how significant these subjects were in Fichte's work and the reasons for their considerable marginalization. In spite of some digressions towards the philosophy of religion in his late phase, it must be said that Fichte's apprehension of philosophy, that is, his apprehension of the notion of Man and the role of Education in the human community is among the most humane ones in the history of philosophy and human civilisation. Life can be formed only through life and an individual cannot be based on some higher metaphysical principles or imperatives. Fichte's theory of Education gives straight answers to what Man is, what he should be and how he should become that. Very few other philosophers or pedagogues could boast that they even asked the questions in their theories from this field. It equally applies to many a philosopher and a pedagogue before him and to the ones who came later. Unfortunately, the necessity to ask these questions and search for the answers is almost completely forgotten in the manner pedagogy is studied today.

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**PROBLEM VASPITANJA U FIHTEOVOJ FILOZOFIJI****Zoran Dimić**

*Fihteovo shvatanje vaspitanja neposredno zavisi od načina na koji on shvata filozofiju i filozofiranje. Primat praktičkog uma je svuda primetan u njegovoj filozofiji. Pre svega, Fihte je govornik, predavač, retoričar i vaspitač. U osnovi čitave njegove filozofije i načina filozofiranja stoji jedna ideja čoveka. Ovo čvrsto određenje čoveka omogućuje jasno i načelno određenje vaspitanja. Za Fihtea, čovek je biće zajednice. Ako teži tome da bude čovek, on ne sme biti sebičan i egoističan. Uloga naučnika i vaspitača je u tome posebno značajna. Suština svake individue doista leži izvan nje, ali ne u nekoj abstraktnoj metafizici morala, već u drugim ljudima i opštem duhu zajednice na koje je čovek upućen, ukoliko želi da ispuni sebe kao biće. Čovekova sudbina dakle, nije metafizika već politika.*