



THE RELOCATION OF THE UN HEADQUARTERS

IDEAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Prof. Rasigan Maharajh

Chief Director: Institute for Economic Research on Innovation, Tshwane University of Technology

Speaking Notes for United Nations Organisation *ReLocalisation* Engagement

In November 2021, the New York City Commission on Human Rights acknowledged that "... the land politically designated as New York City to be the homeland of the Lenape (Lenapehoking) who were violently displaced as a result of European settler colonialism over the course of 400 years, the original custodians of these same lands continue to bless the soil past, present and future, and are with us in this very moment" (NYC-HR, 2022). The NYCCHR went further to recognise that "... New York City has one of the largest urban Native American/Indigenous populations in the United States"

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Hans von Sponeck

Former UN Assistant Secretary-General & Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq

The Imperative of UN Reforms Does this include the Relocation of UN Headquarters in New York?

This issue is not new. It has been raised before. Such a UN location debate could evolve around three options: option i: if there is a convincing assurance by the 'West' that it is ready to accept democratic principles in multilateralism and become a reliable UN team member, in the short run, admittedly most unlikely, the UN could conveniently remain based in New York. Option ii: UN HQ moves to either Geneva or Vienna, two locations where basic UN institutional infrastructure already exists.

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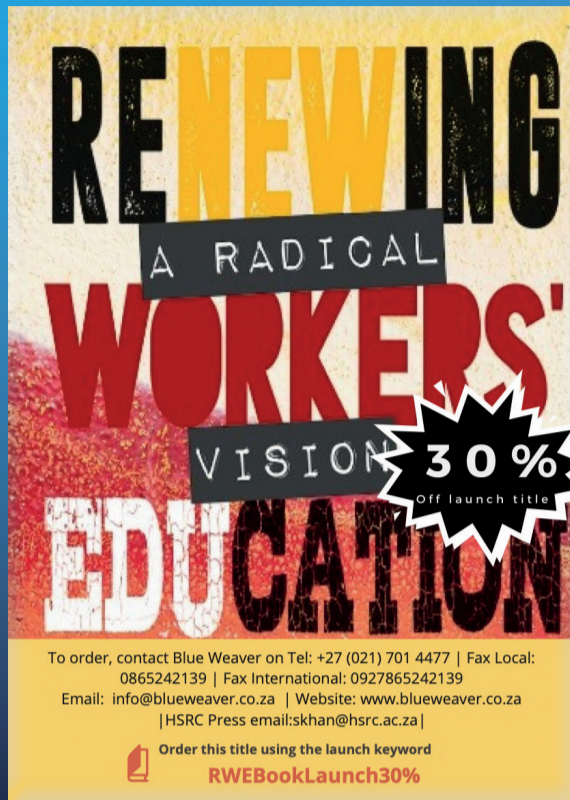
Prof. Enrique Javier Díez Gutiérrez

University of León - SPAIN

Rescuing the UN from imperial captivity and embargo

Therefore, we ask and demand, as a first and essential step, the transfer of the UN out of the borders of the United States, to rescue it from its captivity and embargo by the U.S. imperial power. As long as the UN does not escape from this geopolitical captivity and is not radically transformed to build an Organization in which all countries have a voice and a vote, and the resolutions adopted cannot be vetoed by the powerful, the UN cannot be considered to be fulfilling its founding charter and serving the objectives for which it was created.

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Renewing Workers' Education A Radical Vision

Edited by Linda Cooper and Sheri Hamilton

December 2019

ISBN (soft cover): 978-0-7969-2581-7

Format: 240 x 168 mm

Extent: 264 pages

Rights: World Rights

About the book

Renewing workers' education focuses on educational forms created by workers for workers. It extends beyond trade unions to include the range of educational initiatives aimed at the working class more generally, including working class women, casual and informal sector workers, migrant workers, and workers' political parties.

This book contributes to filling the gap in the South African literature on workers' education and documents the more recent history of workers' education as well as current practices and perspectives, including some international experiences. It explores conceptual tools that may assist in reflecting on and theorising the practice of workers' education and analyses current challenges. This essential book also seeks to inform future policy and practices on workers' education and is key for those who wish to reinvigorate and contribute to building an alternative future for workers' education.

About authors/editors

Linda Cooper is Associate Professor and teaches on the Adult Education programme at the University of Cape Town. Her interests lie in widening access to adult learners in higher education; radical traditions of workers' education; and the relationship between 'everyday knowledge' and more formal kinds of knowledge. She has a long history of involvement in trade union education and other adult education initiatives that seek to promote radical, social transformation. Recent publications include: Cooper L & Ralphs A (Eds) (2016) RPL as Specialised Pedagogy: Crossing the Lines. Cape Town: HSRC Press Cooper L & Luckett T (2017) Past and present intersections: Legacies of Popular Education in the 1970s and 1980s. In A von Kotze & S Walters (Eds) Forging solidarity: Popular education at work. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers

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Publisher

Verein für Allseitige Bildung e.V.
(Germany)

PoliTeknik International

every 4 months
ISSN: 2628-0833

Zeynel Korkmaz (Coordination)
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Speaking Notes for United Nations Organisation *ReLocalisation* Engagement*

1. On 10 December 1945, the Congress of the United States unanimously resolved to invite the United Nations to establish its permanent home in that country.

2. On 14 February 1946, the General Assembly representing Delegates representing 51 nations¹ voted to locate the United Nations near New York City. A private citizen of the United States of America, John Rockefeller Jr. bought approximately 69,000 square meters of land and donated the property to the UN.

3. The Philanthropy Roundtable website cites Fosdick, 1956 and Collier and Horowitz, 1976 in support of their claim that by locating the UN in the USA, Rockefeller sought to ensure that the USA would not stray “into mistaken or irrelevant policies, ... New York City would enjoy economic benefits, American diplomats would have easy access to counterparts in a convenient location, and U.S. intelligence could keep an eye on foreign officials” (Philanthropy Roundtable, 2024).

4. In November 2021, the New York City Commission on Human Rights acknowledged that “... the land politically designated as New York City to be the homeland of the Lenape (*Lenapehoking*) who were violently displaced as a result of European settler colonialism over the course of 400 years, the original custodians of these same lands continue to bless the soil past, present and future, and are with us in this very moment” (NYC-HR, 2022).

5. The NYCCHR went further to recognise that “... New York City has one of the largest urban Native American/Indigenous populations in the United States” (NYC-HR, 2022).

6. The NYCCHR also accepted that “... in not centring Native American/Indigenous voices in the work in the past, and as a result has not having appropriately addressed the needs of the communities and their experiences with discrimination.

7. This dynamic exists within the broader context of ruptured relationships between Native American/Indigenous communities and municipal governments, resulting from centuries of state-sanctioned genocide” (NYC-HR, 2022).

8. Yet it is not only the fact that the land currently occupied by the United Nations in New York City was recognised as being property violently expropriated from the indigenous peoples of the territory, various other challenges within world systems and the international relations domain have emerged since the build began on the 24 October 1949. For our purposes, I will refer to just (sic) one such incidence.

9. In 2020, the UN’ First Committee for Disarmament and International Security noted that it is essential for all Member States to participate on equal footing as the UN Charter states (Soliz from Bolivia cited in UN, 2020).

10. In concluding its Programme of Work, the Committee sought to reconvene in either Switzerland or Austria as some delegations maintained that the USA was failing to abide by its host country obligations when issuing visas to UN Member State representatives (UN, 2020).

11. The resolution [L.57/Rev.1] was sponsored by the Russian Federation with the support of Algeria, Belarus, Burundi, China, Cuba, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe who further called upon all Member States to “stand as one on the principle of equal rights for all countries” (UN, 2020).

12. The delegation of the Russian Federation however joined the consensus whilst retaining the right to revisit the question should the USA not conform to its obligations as a host country.

13. Today, the United Nations has 193 Member States and two UN General Assembly non-member observer states: the Holy See of Vatican City and the State of Palestine. Our world population has breached 8 billion people, and the balance of economic, social, political, and ecological no longer render world systems as they were at the end of the second world war.

14. Whilst the combined gross domestic product generated by all the economies of the contemporary world systems reached at least US\$105 trillion in 2023, different parts of the world contributed diversely (IMF, 2024).

15. Whilst the USA remained the largest capitalist economy with a share of 25.6%, our combined yet uneven development pattern meant that its share was also the more than the sum of the GDPs of 174 countries ranked from Indonesia (17th) to Tuvalu (191st) (Visual Capitalist, 2024).

16. Notwithstanding this massive inequity, the collective value of the GDPs of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) overtook the combined value of the G7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) in purchasing power parity terms in 2020.

17. The BRICS have received over 34 applications for membership and officially now includes Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates in 2024.

18. The BRICS+ are currently home to approximately 3.64 billion people or 45.38% of the world’s population whilst generating 28.2% of total global gross domestic product.

19. On the social front, increasing recognition of the real dynamics in international relations praxis has revealed that the notion of a rules-based system does not actually exist.

20. The biased applications of rules to suit the means and ends of maintaining hegemony through unequal exchange persists and is being expanded upon.

21. The genocide of the peoples of Palestine starkly renders the biases of the G7 in strong black and white terms. Intergenerational change is however gaining momentum, as the current generation realises this asymmetry and begins to mobilise against its unjustness.

22. Even inside all G7 countries, young people in the main are organising for solidarity with West Asia and for the freedom of the Palestinians from settler colonial violence.

23. On the political front, the USA and its economic allies are receiving dwindling levels of international support as evidenced in a number of General Assembly votes such as on Cuba, as well as within the UN’ Security Council where it is complicit in the perpetration of Genocide by Israel and in not heeding the provisional measures of the apex judicial instrument of the UN, the International Court of Justice.

24. On the ecological front, all of humanity and the other life-forms with whom we share the Planet are increasingly threatened by accelerating climate change and deteriorating planetary boundaries.

25. We are advancing towards increasing precarity as international scientific consensus recognises that carbon dioxide emissions are the primary driver of global climate change.

26. Since 1750 up until 1888, the UK was the world’s largest emitter before being overtaken by the USA which would only be overtaken by the PRC in 2020. On a per capita basis, the USA remains the world’s largest polluter.

27. It is upon these facts and data that we must consider relocalising the United Nations organisation to a territory that affords all Member States to participate freely and on an equal basis.

28. With looming ecologic precarity, it is critical that the UN be situated in a space reflective of the current balance of power in economics, politics, and social organisation.

29. Therefore, being in Africa would make most sense as the continent host the world’s future demography.

30. The under-development within and across Africa would also receive the attention it requires due to the public investments that would be necessary to rehouse the General Assembly and the Head Office Staff.

31. The New York office employed the largest number of secretariat staff among the United Nations offices, with 6,500 people whilst almost 22,000 secretariat employees were working in other UN duty stations all over the world in 2022 (UN, 2023).

32. In conclusion, if the UN is serious about being the key vehicle to realise the ‘World We Want’ which would guarantee ‘A Future For All,’ it must be liberated from those forces who seek to maintain and reproduce the unequal world that we don’t want and that only seems to cater for the nearly 776 million citizens of G7 countries where average life expectancies has reached 82 years.

33. The USA has the second highest poverty rate amongst the wider OECD at 18% in 2022 (OECD, 2024).

34. From all we have learnt for our combined pasts, our current situation, and our collective prospects – lets push to relocalise the UN to where it is actually needed and demanded.

¹ Argentina; Australia; Belgium; Bolivia (Plurinational State of Bolivia); Brazil; Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (Belarus); Canada; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; Cuba; Czechoslovakia (Czechia and Slovakia); Denmark; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; Egypt; El Salvador; Ethiopia; France; Greece; Guatemala; Haiti; Honduras; India; Iran; Iraq; Lebanon; Liberia; Luxembourg; Mexico; Netherlands; New Zealand; Nicaragua; Norway; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; Philippine Commonwealth (Philippines); Poland; Republic of China (People’s Republic of China); Saudi Arabia; Syrian Arab Republic; Turkey (Türkiye); Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukraine); Union of South Africa (South Africa); Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Russian Federation); United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; Uruguay; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela); and Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia). The five Countries in bold indicate permanent members of the UN’s Security Council with the power of Veto.

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* This article is published simultaneously in PoliTeknik Turkish edition, PoliTeknik International and PoliTeknik Español

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THE IMPERATIVE OF UN REFORMS

DOES THIS INCLUDE THE RELOCATION OF UN HEADQUARTERS IN NEW YORK?*



A decisive meeting for the future world order following the end of the Second World War took place in Yalta (Crimea) in February 1945. Joseph Stalin, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, a communist from the East and two capitalists from the West had come together to reassure each other and the world that they would jointly be in charge of an institution replacing its predecessor, the failed League of Nations. While the two sides differed fundamentally, both ideologically and politically, they were fully aware that they needed each other to hold the reign of power in the organisation that was about to be created. Four months later, on 26 June 1945, 50 governments came together in San Francisco to sign the UN Charter.

It took many years for the international public to become aware that the US and UK Governments had started as early as 1941 to work out, often in secrecy, a strategy for shaping the future United Nations as a west-centric institution. As it turned out, the political UN (the Security Council and the General Assembly) would be located in New York, the Judiciary UN (International Court of Justice) in The Hague, the commercial and financial bodies of the UN, the World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, in Washington. The UN Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes (as UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, WFP, UNESCO, WHO and others), without exception, would have their headquarters either in North America or western Europe. Only recently have a few UN entities established themselves outside of the western hemisphere, for example the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi and the UN University in Tokyo.

This reality has certainly influenced the politicisation of the work of the UN system, especially in the areas of policy, finance, and economics. Until the early part of the 21st century, the UN including its operational sys-

tem, was unquestionably largely determined by western interests. Changes in the geo-political dynamics and a world order having become more and more diversified, however, have led to a trend towards de-westernization. The countries of the South which until recently, the industrialized world had condescendingly called the 'third world', have become much more self-confident and independent in their national decision making. Their recent voting record in the UN General Assembly (GA) is a good indicator in this respect for example with regard to the war in the Ukraine. While they generally condemned the tool of war, and more specifically, Russia's invasion in the Ukraine in one GA resolution, they did not support sanctions against Russia in another GA resolution.

A new norm for political decision is noticeable in non-western countries. There is an awareness across the continents that the world of the 21st century is not the world of 1945 when the UN was created. As a result more and more governments, and civil society organizations, recognize the need for a new international security and development architecture and the contextual urgency for liberating the United Nations from its structural shackles in order to become an institution able to protect universally peace and security and bring socio-economic progress that was promised at the end of WWII. The world is still waiting.

Only a few countries have remained steadfast in their almost pre-programmed alignment with western, especially US foreign policy interests. A closer look at the debates in the GA and the corresponding casting of votes reveals a profound but not entirely surprising picture: on major issues of international concern such as disarmament and the estab-

lishment of nuclear free zones, decolonization, sustainable development, climate change, universal human rights, more equitable international trade, many western UN member states would vote against such resolutions thus preventing the development of a safer and fairer global order. The US was in the forefront of rejection. Often alone, frequently supported by only a handful of smaller nations in the Pacific like Micronesia, Palau and Nauru plus EU/NATO countries plus Canada and Israel, the US would cast consistently negative votes. The US is today the only country that has yet to adopt the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the one western country that has yet to ratify the Convention for the Elimination of All Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Non-western countries have become increasingly vocal in their rejection of such western domination. The Doha Round of Trade negotiations are the most prominent example. In 2001, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) had initiated such talks between developing and developed countries. The aim was to create a level playing field for global trade relating inter alia to agriculture, intellectual property rights and non-agricultural market access. Mainly due to US and EU refusals to reduce agricultural subsidies, these talks have failed. Developing countries remain unwilling to accept what they consider unfair trade practices.

From a non-governmental and civil society perspective reference must be made here also to the world-wide immensely destructive power of corruption in the relationships between and within developed and developing countries. Even though it has so severely impacted the lives of normal citizens everywhere, the UN has been largely helpless in containing this evil. The overall multi-

lateral picture that is presented here is one of increasing political independence of the non-western world; the inadequate socio-economic progress of low-income countries; and the lack of political will of well-to-do countries in translating their promises into action. In 1970, as an example, the UN accepted the proposal of the Organisation for Economic Development (OECD) that .7% of the GDP of industrialized countries be made available for funding international development assistance. In 2023, only four of the 32 OECD/DAC countries (Luxemburg, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany) had met this target. The average for all countries came to a mere .37% (2022) amounting to a total of \$217.7 billion or about 35% of the funds available for defence. The US was with .23% at the bottom of the scale. In contrast, NATO has established an annual benchmark of 2% of the GDP to be spent by its members on national defence. Eleven of the 30 NATO member countries have met this target in 2023. Out of a total global defence budget estimated for that year at \$2.3 trillion, the US with a defence budget of \$816.7 billion was by far the biggest contributor.

In summary, economically developed countries are much more ready to provide funding for their *military* security than for contributing their financial resources for countries trying to meet sustainable development goals for their *human* security.

Opportunities for genuine cooperation and teamwork in combatting mega crises such as global warming, poverty, human migration, militarisation, and impunity for violation of international law exist but are ignored, even though such crises affect all 193 UN member countries. Polarization and confrontational alliances such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have created deep rifts across countries and continents.



It therefore cannot surprise that non-western countries no longer want to accept western unilateralism and US exceptionalism and increasingly display a lack of trust in the intentions and promises of the five permanent powers of the UN Security Council which in turn contribute so decisively to the confrontational atmosphere prevailing in the UN General Assembly.

More specifically, the political UN, especially the five permanent member countries in the Security Council, has consistently failed to prevent or to solve inter-country crises. In fact, countries like the Russian Federation, the US and the UK have repeatedly displayed serious disregard for UN Charter law, most dramatically in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Yugoslavia, and Ukraine. Justifiably, public voices have started to ask whether the persistent failure of the P5 to act as a multilateral team of like-minded should lead to a withdrawal of their right of leadership the UN General Assembly has bestowed on them in accordance with the UN Charter. Its mandate assigns to the SC “the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security”, “to act on their behalf” and do so consistent with “the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations” (Articles 1 & 2).

The glimmer of hope for more permanent peace following the signing in 1990 of the Charter of Paris, or the Freedom Charter, as it sometimes called, by all eastern and western European countries including the USSR, and the US and Canada, waned long ago. The Cold War has continued, it only has become colder and more confrontational. Even the 1947 agreement between the United Nations and the US that was to guarantee that the US Government would ensure that the UN would be a hub where diplomats and visitors coming to New York on ‘UN business’ could come together unhindered (see UN/US Agreement of 29 June 1947, Article IV, Section 11) to discuss multilateral issues, has continuously been violated by US authorities. Permanent missions to the UN in New York from countries with which the US has either no or poor relations, often have to wait for extended periods of time before receiving diplomatic visas for their staff to join their respective missions, or they are told by the US authorities that specific individuals would not be cleared at all. Not infrequently, visas would be refused for non-governmental citizens from certain countries having been invited by the UN to come to New York to attend important UN meetings or worse, they would be cleared for their visit but only after the event was over. Just to give one example, Iraqi citizens wanting to join UN, UNICEF, UNFPA or UNDP meetings, during years of sanctions, were frequently humiliated in this way.

UN headquarters in New York has become more and more a centre of unabated geopolitical turbulence and confrontation rather than a centre where the world comes together to discuss global problems, and where compromise and convergence determine the outcome of international diplomacy.

No treaty and no law is cast into iron. Those who drafted the UN Charter understood this. For this reason they included a provision in the Charter to hold a general conference not later than in 1955 (!) to determine whether any alterations of the UN Charter of 1945 were required (see Charter Article 109). As of today, or 69 years later, the UN General Assembly has yet to fulfil this obligation.

Aware that global pressure has been mounting for such a review, UN Secretary-General Guterres proposed last year to the UN GA to debate UN reforms at a special session of this year’s GA meeting in New York. UN member states have accepted this proposal and decided to convene on 22nd /23rd of September a ‘Summit of the Future’ with the stated objective to identify ‘multilateral solutions for a better to-morrow’. Preparations for such an important (and overdue) UN initiative are currently underway led by the Governments of Namibia and Germany as facilitators.

While the final agenda for the meeting this autumn is not yet known, it is clear that two days in September will be a most welcome beginning of what is bound to be a long and arduous reform path not in the months but in the years ahead.

The list of non-negotiable reform topics will have to include, first and foremost, the Security Council. Until 1965, the SC had eleven members, five permanent (P5) and six elected (E10). At that time, it was decided to increase the Security Council to fifteen members by adding four more elected countries. The total number of SC members has not changed ever since. While the size of the SC must be carefully considered in order to make sure that size of membership does not interfere with the efficiency of decision making. At the same time, it is also clear that the size of the SC has to be an issue since the UN GA has increased from 117 countries in 1965 to 193 in 2024. Even more important is the question of the composition of the P5 and the justified demand for geographical adaptation. This undoubtedly will be the most contentious challenge for some of the current members of the Council since the composition has remained unchanged ever since the UN came into existence 79 years ago. Currently, three of the P5 countries, France, the UK, and the US, are western. Africa and Latin America are not represented at all, and Asia, with over 50% of

the global population, has with China only one permanent member.

Other SC reforms that need to be considered include the use of the veto. Use for purely national interests has over the years often prevented the Council from taking effective action in preventing conflicts or finding peaceful solutions. Its use by the US and Russia involving the wars in the Ukraine and in Palestine are the most recent examples of misuse. Another SC reform issue has to do with the fact that the SC has never adopted formal rules of procedure, as the GA has done. The SC, in contrast to the GA, has insisted to work with *provisional* rules of procedure which the P5 countries find more useful in meeting their individual national rather than global interests. The prevailing stalemate in the SC to reach agreement on critical issues of international peace and security makes it necessary to consider reforms that would give the GA more decision-making authority and an ability to overrule the Security Council when the Council is unable to reach a joint conclusion. Currently, the GA has very limited authority to do so under the so-called Uniting for Peace resolution (GA RES 377 of 1950). This resolution needs to be broadened in the context of UN reforms.

Important progress has been made in recent years in integrating actions taken by the SC, the GA, and the Secretary-General involving political, peace-keeping, and human security-related executive initiatives. Reforms must be introduced to expand and institutionalize such multi-sectoral dimensions to allow civil servants from different UN departments to work together.

Valuable cooperation exists between the UN and civil society. In 2022, 6494 international, regional, and national NGOs had a consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with the right to participate in UN consultations. The reform debate must consider how such cooperation with the UN can be broadened to include similar cooperation with the SC, the GA and possibly also with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to allow Civil Society to become an integrated partner of the UN System. Such an extended role of non-state actors will most certainly be opposed by many governments as they fear what they consider undue intrusion into ‘their’ affairs.

The UN reform catalogue is not only long but also very contentious. The multilateral climate at the UN headquarters in New York, as has been noted, is stormy during this time of global geopolitical confrontation and re-calibration. The ‘western block’ with a population of less than 10% of the global population, must recognize that in the 21st century, multilateral west-centrism cannot have a future.

Accordingly, it must become willing to join the community of nations, not as a dominator but as a member of the UN global order team.

It remains to be seen whether the UN reform debate will also include consideration of shifting UN headquarters from New York to another location where the overall atmosphere for multilateralism maybe less contemptuous. This issue is not new. It has been raised before. Such a UN location debate could evolve around three options: option i: if there is a convincing assurance by the ‘West’ that it is ready to accept democratic principles in multilateralism and become a reliable UN team member, in the short run, admittedly most unlikely, the UN could conveniently remain based in New York. Option ii: UN HQ moves to either Geneva or Vienna, two locations where basic UN institutional infrastructure already exists. This, of course, would mean that the UN HQ remained located in the western hemisphere. Option iii: The UN finds a new location elsewhere. There are locations around the world of 8 billion+ people with hopes for a better to-morrow and an international organisation that is reliably peace-minded, with powers, big and small, working together, where

international law is respected, and accountability rather than impunity prevails, and human dignity for all and respect for nature exist.

Yes, words, meaningful words but little more than words – a daydream and a nightmare. Where to find such a place where the seeds for this better tomorrow can find good soil? A theoretical answer: There are places, e.g., the capitals of Bhutan (Thimphu), Costa Rica (San José), Botswana (Gaborone), Oman (Muscat) – all peaceful UN member countries but regrettably not suitable to receive an organisation representing the interests of 193 member states. But there is Singapore, a stable and sprawling city with 5.9 million people, a third of the size of New York City with its 20.1 million inhabitants, and a seasoned UN member state since 1965. It could do better on human rights and on climate change policy, but it has a crime rate that is among the lowest in the world, and according to Transparency International (TI) after Denmark, Finland, New Zealand, and Norway comes Singapore as the country with the fifth lowest corruption rate.

What about it?



Kamogelo Seitireng
South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU)

RELOCATION OF THE UN HEADQUARTERS



The United Nations (UN), as well as its predecessor the League of Nations, have continuously attempted to create a world without conflict as well as mechanisms that facilitate peaceful social dialogue. However, since its inception, there has been continued global conflict with countless lives lost and millions displaced. The organisation is currently located in New York in the United States (U.S.). There has been a suggestion that the UN headquarters should be moved to the African continent and this discussion document will attempt to critically engage on this possibility as well as its implications.

Track Record of the UN

The question of whether the UN headquarters should be moved from where they are currently located, to somewhere on the African continent (which is very heterogeneous in many respects) is very provocative. This is because it triggers other questions that should precede it. Furthermore, this initial question raises debates concerning the efficacy of the UN. Put differently one cannot ask the question of whether the UN headquarters should be relocated to the African continent without asking other related questions such as:

1. Has the UN been effective in its primary mandate of ensuring world peace since its inception following WWII?

2. What are we to make of the role and efficacy of the UN in a world that has seen:

- a. the invasion of Iraq and Iran as well as other countries in the Middle East by foreign governments, in particular the U.S., which is part of the U.N Security Council?
- b. the massacre of millions of Palestinians in a decades-long genocidal campaign on the part of the successive Israeli governments?
- c. the collapse of the global economy on many occasions (with acutely negative impacts on countries in the Global South) despite the existence of an Economic and Social Council?
- d. numerous conflicts occurring (roughly 285 since 1945), some with the involvement of countries who are party to the UN including:
 - Chinese Civil War in Asia
 - The Greek Civil War in Europe
 - The Colombian civil war - La Violencia in South America
 - The Vietnam War in South-east Asia
 - The Ethiopian Civil War in Africa
 - The Guatemalan Civil War in North America

Therefore, given this dismal track record, what would be of interest to us to advocate for the relocation of

the UN headquarters? It has to be stated however that the organisation as well as its subsidiary entities has done remarkable work, particularly in the arena of humanitarian aid. However, it has fallen short on many occasions regarding the mandate to prevent wars and/ or conflicts and promote peace throughout the world.

On 29 December 2023, South Africa took Israel to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) (which is the judiciary organ of the UN) to file proceedings on allegations that the latter is violating its obligation to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention). This is as the atrocities that are occurring constantly in the Gaza Strip against the Palestinian people continue unabated. The Court has granted provisional measures in favour of South Africa's case, to mitigate the continued genocide. Some of the approved provisional measures that Israel has to abide by are as follows:

-" take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all acts within the scope of Article II of this Convention, in particular,
 - o killing members of the group,
 - o causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
 - o deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruc-

tion in whole or in part imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group..."

-" take all measures within its power to prevent and punish the direct and public incitement to commit genocide concerning members of the Palestinian group in the Gaza Strip..."

-" take immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to address the adverse conditions of life faced by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip..."

As much as these recent developments have been politically monumental, the historical context ought to not be forgotten. Since the creation of the UN, many genocides have occurred some of which were sponsored by Western countries that are members of the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council. For example, from 1982 to 1987, Zimbabwe experienced genocide as the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) began a political and military campaign against civilians and political opposition members who belonged to the Ndebele ethnic group. This was referred to as the *Gukurahundi*. The International Association of Genocide Scholars estimates that roughly 20,000 people were killed during this period. Another example of genocide that was left largely ignored by the ICJ

was in Rwanda from 7 April to 15 July 1994, where an estimated 500,000 to 800,000 people mostly from the Tutsi ethnic group were targeted and killed. These and other such heinous atrocities occurred unabated despite the existence of the UN and its organs. This pessimistic overview has to be taken into account even when keeping track of the South Africa-Israeli ICJ case. Furthermore, it needs to be kept in mind as we consider the possible permutations of moving the UN headquarters to the African continent.

There has often been great contention behind how the UN and its structures operate. For example, the most powerful body in the organisation the Security Council, allows 5 permanent member states. These are the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), France, Russia, and China. The other member states (10 in total) are non-permanent and are elected for a total duration of 2 years. It is interesting to note how, the countries occupying permanent member states are powerful Global North nations, some of whom have participated in heinous historical processes. These include slavery as well as contemporary geopolitical issues such as the constant support of vile regimes committing unspeakable crimes against humanity.

Furthermore, any one of the 5 permanent member states can veto any decision taken within the Security Council. Many decisions have been vetoed especially those that pose a challenge to the geopolitical interests of either of the permanent member states. Given these issues, it can be assumed that the UN is a body that is not equally representative of the interests of all nations in the world. It can also be assumed that it is an international organisation constructed to maintain the unequal global balance of forces that favour the elite and powerful nations. With this in mind, it is therefore necessary that before advocating for the move of the UN headquarters to the African continent, the progressive Left should advocate for the expansion of the permanent member states to include countries in the Global South, and from all continents including Africa, South America, Middle East, and South-Asia Pacific.

Therefore, in this discussion, and well before we explore the possibilities of relocating the headquarters of the UN to the African continent, we need to be mindful of this context. We need to make sure that our broad aspirations do not exclude this unfortunate, uncomfortable yet glaring reality.

Possible permutation of moving the UN headquarters

The second broad considerations that we need to take into account are as follows:

- what are we hoping to achieve as intellectuals, activists, progressive thinkers, trade unions, etc, by advocating for the relocation of the UN headquarters to the African continent?
- how might this relocation be of benefit to: the continent, workers, migrants, displaced populations, women, children, and local economies? relief efforts? efforts to improve the overall socio-economic condition of the African citizens both in Africa as well as in the diaspora?

There should at least be a clear indication (s) that this envisaged relocation of the UN headquarters will have an overall positive impact on the specific country as well as the continent as a whole. As indicated in the second point, there needs to be a demand that such a move would come with a clear and actionable policy agenda to restructure the African socio-economic condition away from its colonial past. Furthermore, the move should bring about change regarding the continued unequal neo-colonial relations that are persistent between metropole countries in the Global North and satellite nations on the African continent. These two key changes in the form of short-, medium-, and long-term social and economic policy mandates should be a central part of the UN should the headquarters be moved to the African continent.

Brief literature review

A brief analysis of the literature on the issue shows some interesting results. There are both advantages and disadvantages when it comes to an entity (corporate entities for the most part) moving headquarters from one country to another. One research study in particular, which was looking at the possible change in operational performance, found that there was no significant change concerning this specific variable. Furthermore, Gregory, Lombard, and Seifert (2005) revealed that HQ relocation resulted in increased operational costs for the organisation. These costs include coordination, knowledge transfer, new interdependencies, training and coaching, protection of intellectual capital, and monitoring and controlling of performance amongst others.

It is also suggested that due to these aforementioned cost factors, there may be ensuing operational weaknesses that would have to be overcome gradually. Of course, the onus would be on the entities who have initiated this process, to ensure that these and other related challenges can be overcome. Moving headquarters, otherwise referred to as interna-

tionalisation, has been done by many corporates particularly as many countries began to liberalise their economies. The search for profits, facilitated by better business environments spurred many companies to look offshore. Many of these companies have done considerably well as a result of this process, however others have failed. Given these empirical studies, the logistical implications of moving the UN headquarters to the African continent would need to be taken into consideration. For example, would the current UN staff members in New York be willing to relocate to a region that is substantially different from what they are accustomed to, or would the specific African country need to provide this required personnel? Furthermore, will such a move interrupt the constant functioning of the UN and what will the mitigation strategies be to prevent any negative impacts? These are some of the questions that would need to be taken into consideration.

So far we have touched on the broad issue of the need to review the UN and its track record, critical questions that need to be asked, as well as studies on headquarters relocation that need to be taken into serious consideration. The following section will be an attempt to synthesise some of the concerns and issues raised into attempting to answer the question of the possible benefits (if any) of moving the UN headquarters to a country on the African continent.

Symbolic versus material changes

The symbolic purchase and meaning behind moving the UN headquarters to the African continent would not be lost on most liberal audiences. For centuries, the continent has been a victim of heinous, savage, exploitative, and inhumane practices that have structurally underdeveloped many nations. This underdevelopment has led to the simultaneous acceleration of social progress of countries in the Global North. Therefore, symbolically moving an institution such as the United Nations to this historically downtrodden continent would offer some indication of “change”. The deliberate use of quotation marks around the word change “highlights that in many notable historical and political processes that have occurred throughout the globe, what has often been considered as change, was a continuation of the same processes under different faces or leadership, as has been alluded to by the likes of Frans Fanon.

It is thus very important for progressives to make a clear distinction between *symbolic* and *material* changes, especially as it concerns the structure of society. For example, the 1950s and 1960s saw mass anti-colonisation movements sweep across the

African continent. Many countries were actively choosing to disassociate themselves from the control and administration of their colonisers in the Global North. These liberation movements brought about some semblance of *change* in the socio-political character of the countries in question. However, the economic structure of these states remained (for the most part) intact.

The former colonisers maintained unequal economic relations through the ruling elites of the countries, whilst the majority of the citizens continued living in squalor. Furthermore, the advent and spread of globalisation largely spearheaded by Multinational Companies (MNCs) have entrenched the African continent in neo-colonialism that continues underdeveloping many countries. Such destructive geopolitical relations also emerge in the form of loans from International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These organisations have for many decades given loans to African countries meant for “development”. However, attached to these loans were almost conditionalities to which the said countries had to strictly adhere. It is sadly ironic how these loans became the basis for which many African states were not only underdeveloped but were forced into permanent unequal relations with countries in the Global North.

The point being driven home is that given this context of immense geopolitical inequality both in the present as well as historically, moving the UN headquarters to the African continent would symbolically suggest the beginning of changes to these relations. However, should the progressive Left seek to advocate for such a reality, the campaign as well as the expected outcomes should not merely rest on symbolic victories. This is because generally symbolic social change without its material equivalent is hollow and therefore meaningless. It would simply not be enough for us to advocate for a move of the UN headquarters without also demanding material change within the structure and operations of the organisation. Put differently, such advocacy should be simultaneously tied with a campaign that demands *material* changes *within* the UN. Failure to do this would therefore make the change in headquarters location a redundant exercise.

Role of the African Union

Furthermore, the implications of moving the UN headquarters to Africa draw into question the validity and legitimacy of the African Union (AU). This organisation, which is a predecessor of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) has the broad mandate to integrate African states economically and politically, as well as deal with colonial legacies on the continent.

Geopolitically, the move of the UN headquarters may be seen as a Global North attempt to undermine an African political structure that has similar mandates to it. Furthermore, should the UN headquarters be placed on the African continent without fundamental changes to the internal character of the organisation, it could be seen as another neo-colonial agenda that seeks to further colonise the continent through closer proximity.

Heterogeneity on the African continent

Another complication on this issue is that the African continent, as mentioned earlier, is not homogenous. Outsiders (and insiders alike) often overlook its heterogeneity. The lack of homogeneity is brought into sharp focus when considering the various neo-colonial ties that persist. For example, many countries in the West African region have continued strong economic and political relations with their former coloniser, France. These are in the form of loans, financial aid, and various grants. This is partly what has led to the crisis in the region, as seen by recent coup de tarts seeking to dismantle the continuing influence of the French. Furthermore, given how some of these countries continue to insist on maintaining these unequal relations, the question that begs is, will the coming of the UN headquarters chan-

ge such neo-colonial relations for the majority of the Africans in the region? Given the aforementioned heterogeneity that pervades the continent, the moving of the UN headquarters to Africa would need to be accompanied by pragmatic policies that are specifically targeted at dismantling these unequal neo-colonial relations for the benefit of millions of Africans. Where it will be located?

Other global institutions that need to be considered

Once again considering the track record of the UN overall, and its lack of substantial impact on global affairs, one could suggest that other institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and/or the World Trade Organisation (WTO) should be considered as candidates for moving of headquarters into the African continent. These institutions have had significant (although largely negative) impacts on the African continent. Their move to the continent could be an opportunity to change the trajectory of the discourse on global financial practices in a direction that significantly reduces existing and worsening structural inequalities. However, the essential point is that should the UN or any other global institution move its headquarters to the African continent, this should be accompanied by significant structural packages in the form of progressive policies, as well as improved internal practices. Relocation that is not

accompanied by fundamental organisational and policy change would be undesirable and superfluous.

Conclusion and a way forward:

This brief discussion document has attempted to give a nuanced perspective on the idea that the UN headquarters should be moved to the African continent. The main argument developed is that before considering that this organisation should move its headquarters, the internal issues that have been raised for many years of its existence need to be first dealt with. Failure to deal with this issue would render the move (and perhaps the campaign) only for symbolic purposes and nothing more. Symbolic political gestures are not incorrect however, they need to be grounded by material changes. The UN has in many instances failed spectacularly in its mandate of peacekeeping throughout the world since its inception. Furthermore, the structure of the Security Council creates extreme inequality within the organisation, which gives undue power to 5 permanent member states at the expense of General Assembly members. Many resolutions of the SC have been overthrown based on one permanent member states using their power of veto. This has in many instances rendered the UN ineffective and ultimately, powerless. Therefore, here are the following proposals:

- Should there be a campaign for the UN to move its headquarters, it

should first begin with advocating for the inclusion of Global South countries in the permanent positions of the UN Security Council

- That the power of veto should use principles of majoritarianism
- The UN should take an unequivocal, and material decision on the genocidal actions of Israel on Palestine as well as on the inhumane actions of *any* member state involved in crimes against humanity (whether directly or indirectly)
 - o These decisions should include complete, substantial, and encompassing use of economic and political sanctions
- There needs to be concerted effort to prioritise progressive socio-economic policies within the UN whose primary objective is to fundamentally alter the colonial structure of the African economy
 - o These policies must be tailored to cater to the economic and social histories as well as current realities of each country on the continent
 - o The policies must be centred on fundamentally disentangling unequal geopolitical relations between Africa and the West
- Once substantial progress has been made concerning the above, it is then when progressive social stakeholders can begin having discussions on a campaign to move the headquarters of the United Nations to Africa

EXTENSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO EDUCATION

SYMPOSIUM
COLOGNE 2016
KOBLENZ 2018
&
POLITEKNIK
SELECTED ARTICLES



PoliTeknik

EXTENSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO EDUCATION

SYMPOSIUM COLOGNE 2016 | KOBLENZ 2018
&
PoliTeknik Selected Articles

The Project "Extension of Human Rights to Education" has been conceptualised as a council to the UN. Various social actors involved in the extension of human rights to education will work out different aspects of this matter with the aim of formulating a "Declaration on the Extension of Human Rights to Education" to the UN for voting. The project focuses on Article 26 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights which is to be modified/supplemented in the sense of a progressive enlargement. The original deadline for submitting the Declaration to the UN was 10th December 2018, the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This date is considered by management to be the time to fully develop the project, which is expected to take several years. Since the UN General Assembly of 1948 proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in resolution 217(A), several international agreements, conventions and declarations have been adopted which seek to provide new ways of approaching the human right to education. On the basis of the concrete experience with these subsequent agreements, and in light of an expanded and deepened conception of education, Article 26 of the UDHR will be re-examined and reformulated by a council, participation in which is open to all the democratic forces of the world. This is the outstanding feature of the project "Extension of Human Rights to Education". The series of articles published in PoliTeknik under the theme "Thoughts and Recommendations on Extending Education Rights in UN Declaration of Human Rights" since September 2015, have highlighted the global need for the project. This series drew participation from education unions, scientists and students from Germany, Turkey, Switzerland, United States of America, Cuba, India, Australia, Greece, Chile, Brazil, Spain and Costa Rica. The ideas and suggestions presented in the articles are diverse and wide-ranging. The contributors focus on the content, quality, funding, duration, implementation, target groups, and sponsors of education, engage theoretically with definitions of education, and are broadly critical of Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The project is designed to take on board concerns of affected and interested parties around the world, and to meet needs that are new or neglected.

ANTIOCHIA & GAZA

SISTER CITIES

[an idea]



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RESCUING THE UN FROM IMPERIAL CAPTIVITY AND EMBARGO*

The United Nations (UN) has been captured. World peace and human dignity are held hostage in New York. Currently, the UN has become an instrument of U.S. domination. That is why we must rescue this international organization from its captivity.

The UN can be considered the first ever effort to build a system of collective security and global governance. The UN embodies the historical dream to create an international system that places the collective interest and the common good at the center, over national interests and economic power agendas, and that discards the use of war as an instrument of international relations.

The UN, replacing the League of Nations, was founded by 51 countries on October 24, 1945 in San Francisco, California. Supposedly, it was created to facilitate cooperation in international law, international peace and security, economic and social development, humanitarian affairs and human rights. Nowadays, the Organization is comprised of 195 countries and continues with practically the same structure and the same anti-democratic functioning.

The UN responds to an outdated institutional architecture that reflects the international order that emerged 75 years ago; national interests still play a dominant role in important decision-making processes; it has not been able to prevent growing inequalities between and within States, despite economic growth; it lacks enforcement mechanisms to convert its resolutions into action and its recommendations into measures; and the Security Council has hardly evolved at all, with the loss of credibility that this entails.

The United Nations (UN) is really being held hostage. World peace and human dignity are held hostage in New York. Currently, the UN has become an instrument of U.S. domination. That is why we must rescue this international organization from its captivity.

The United States has turned the United Nations into its private domain, an instrument at the service of its multinationals and power groups, and has distorted the ideals embodied in the founding charter: its mission to preserve peace and security through the promotion of development and human rights.

Having the headquarters of the Organization located in New York resulted in the United States taking in billions of dollars from the expenses incurred by the UN Secretariat and all its agencies and bodies, as well as those of diplomats around the world.

The United States, in addition, enjoys the privilege of being the only country for which a maximum limit has been established on the contribution it must pay to the Organization's budget. On top of this, the imperialist government has incurred in a long-term delay in the payment of its reduced financial contribution. Far from losing its rights within the Organization due to this non-payment, as required by the San Francisco Charter for such cases, the UN negotiated with its largest debtor: The United States paid part of what was due, and the UN reduced the amount of its already reduced quota, committing itself to make changes in its administrative management that would favor the U.S. blackmailing government even more.

For this reason, it is not surprising that military interventions have been decided or allowed from this space, which have submitted countries and regions of the world to long periods of war and destabilization. The most recent barbarism, the genocide in Gaza, is the culmination of Zionist apartheid over the Palestinian people for the last 75 years. However, the United States is one of the five countries sit-

ting on the Security Council that has the undemocratic right of veto, and it will obviously never allow its protected ally (Israel) to receive any punishment, even if the International Criminal Court of Justice (ICC) condemns it for genocide.

Responding to this sentence for crimes against humanity, the U.S. empire seeks to divert attention from this new Palestinian Holocaust by suspending funding to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), arguing that it is true what the Zionist regime of Israel claims: that members of this agency are "terrorists"¹. And most seriously, this lie, which has been repeated in all its media and amplified by the media at the service of western countries, has caused nine other countries, satellites of US colonial interests, to also suspend their funding to UNRWA.

This is the only organization helping the Palestinian population in the face of the Zionist barbarism that has already murdered more than 26,000 Palestinians, from children to the elderly, doctors, teachers, etc., and that is systematically torturing the rest of the population through displacement, kidnappings, rape and even through siege by hunger and thirst, leaving them without food and water.

Because of all this and because of the long history of inactivity and servitude to the interests of the United States, there are many countries that have repeatedly called for deep changes in the United Nations and the removal of its headquarters from the imperial kidnapping in the United States, so that it can truly be an organization that represents all member countries equally. But critical voices are always silenced or ignored; a single vote against, from those who have

the right to veto, is enough for any attempt at reform to be shamefully overturned.

It is not acceptable that the tyranny with which the UN operates should condition the lives of the vast majority of the world's population. It is totally unacceptable that five countries - among them the United States, which is the one that most often uses the fascist tool of using the veto - can ignore the decisions taken by the other 190 countries.

Therefore, we ask and demand, as a first and essential step, the transfer of the UN out of the borders of the United States, to rescue it from its captivity and embargo by the U.S. imperial power. As long as the UN does not escape from this geopolitical captivity and is not radically transformed to build an Organization in which all countries have a voice and a vote, and the resolutions adopted cannot be vetoed by the powerful, the UN cannot be considered to be fulfilling its founding charter and serving the objectives for which it was created.

¹ On 4 January, Noga Arbell called for the destruction of Unrwa during a debate in the Israeli parliament: "It will be impossible to win the war if we do not destroy Unrwa, and this destruction must begin immediately."

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* This article is published simultaneously in PoliTeknik International and PoliTeknik Español.



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RELOCATION THE UN HEADQUARTERS?*

The United Nations system arose at the end of World War II as an attempt to prevent the conflicts that led the world to catastrophe in the first half of the 20th century. The world in 1945, with its promise of peace, but also with the threats posed by the Cold War that would divide the world into two antagonistic political models, appeared to open up a prosperous world based on peaceful coexistence. The United Nations offered a meeting place from which to manage the various conflicts and wars that followed one after the other over the following decades.

Indeed, the majority of the wars and conflicts were related, for the most part, to the processes of decolonization. The United Nations, in fact, grew and became pluralistic as its seats were occupied by new states that had gone through a dark period of colonial dependence. While the tense chapters of the Cold War had often more to do with colonial liberation struggles

in which various factions tried to lean on superpowers (the United States and the Soviet Union) appearing to be communist or capitalist.

The trajectory of the United Nations, particularly towards the last decades of the last century, made it clear that the ideological confrontation between the capitalist and communist worlds was more theatrical than real. The Non-Aligned movement demonstrated that the main world problems had less to do with the antagonism between East and West than with the inequalities between North and South.

Neo-liberal globalization, along with its policies drawn from the Bretton Woods system (World Bank, International Monetary Fund), served more to sustain the greatest inequalities between North and South than to support harmonious economic development between nations. Indeed, their interventions led to serious

problems of social underdevelopment.

The United Nations being based in New York made sense 80 years ago. Nevertheless, the world has changed. We have shifted from a bipolar to a multipolar world, with emerging nations demanding more participation in global governance. It is logical to move the headquarters to those areas that were ignored in 1945, considering the global assumption, increasingly installed in reality, that in order to achieve a more equitable world, international institutions must set an example.

It would not be unreasonable for the United Nations to have rotating headquarters, at least in the five continents in an agreed manner, in which there would not be a centralized headquarters in the United States with its bureaucratic apparatus, but rather international representatives who would have a more accurate picture

of the plurality of the world and its cultures, by passing periods of time outside the West.

Nevertheless, in addition to the United Nations as an entity, basically diplomatic and focused on security issues, the need to involve agencies of the United Nations system, especially UNESCO, FAO and WHO, seems to be more relevant. And, most especially, international economic organizations such as the OECD and, in particular, those of the Bretton Woods system, the World Bank and the IMF, which are responsible, in a certain way, for the global problems of development and poverty.

More than just moving a building, we need to change certain mentalities.

* This article is published simultaneously in PoliTeknik International and PoliTeknik Español.

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Essay on Education in Conflict Zones



ABSTRACT

The Right to Education in Conflict Zones. Wars ignited by sectarianism and politics should not be barriers to education. These conflicts must not stop lifelong learning. Difficult answer to the question how to deal with this is action. Education in conflict zone is a priority. The how to do this is varied, through mentoring and teaching support, sent to conflict zones to replace civilian teachers. Mobilisation, pooled engagement, student, youth and adult outreach, STEM activities, home schooling or flown in and flown out (FIFO). These in combination give action which is yet to be realised. A call for more recognition for needs of education in conflict zones is required by United Nations, international charities, education professionals and worlds nations.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality Education stated, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (UN-SDG 4, 2015) (WHO 2015). Sectarianism and Politics should not be barriers to Education. All people deserve the fundamental right to access Education. Moreover, in unfortunate situation of no education, around the world having become a conflict zone. Teaching facilities destroyed, with educators killed, and students kidnapped from classrooms (LeBlanc, J. and Odegard, S., 2023).

According to the United Nations (2023), suggested ethically people in conflict zones have access education. This right was declared by United Nations (2023) is termed the Safe Schools Declaration (2023). This allows any person in conflict zones the right to education. This Safe Schools Declaration (2023) bounds UN member states to continuance of education for teachers, schools, students, and universities during conflict and stop military use of such learning institutions.

Education in conflict zones barriers include poverty and hunger because of war. Sustainable Development Goal 1 No Poverty and 2. Zero Hunger are affected (UN SDG, 2015) (WHO 2015). These are knock on affect due to conflict. Destroying education structures and curriculum. According to UNICEF (2016) about fifty million children

around the world were displaced due to poverty and twenty-eight million in conflict zones. Schools cannot function due to uncertainty and displacement of students, family, and community. This makes education a weapon of war, demonstrates the need for the United Nations, Safe Schools Declaration (2023) (Micallef, J., 2023).

Learning and teaching within conflict zones requires more recognition by United Nations, international charities, education professionals and worlds nations. The right to education in conflict zone must be a priority when this unfortunately happens. Fundamental is to keep children studying to avoid them going into forced labour or taken as recruits in the war. Education interventions can play a substantial allows for continued discussion, strengthening fragments of community, and ward off, future conflict.

The uncertainty of the conflict makes for lack of food, deepening poverty, and lack of education. This cycle must be stopped with introduction of reaching vulnerable. Therefore, a humanitarian approach with people at centre of the process be provided education when involved in conflict zone. Education in conflict zone is a priority. *The how to do this is varied, through mentoring and teaching support, sent to conflict zones to replace civilian teachers. Mobilisation, pooled engagement, student,*

youth and adult outreach, STEM activities, home schooling or flown in and flown out (FIFO) (EWB 2023). Using locally sourced educational tools and materials being makeshift or flown in, are decisions needed immediately when conflict arises. Other possibilities are communication using internet though in conflict zones it is often first thing destroyed (Badrasawi, Ahmed, and Eid, 2018).

Methods employed to get children to school in conflict zones are varied not successful. Barriers to access education are a priority. The Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989) established United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR and NGOs to provide educational services to refugee children. Home schooling is an option. An example Gaza strip children cannot adapt to NGO School environment. Many people in conflict zones apply to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the hope of moving to a country where my children can obtain an education (Buitrago, A.O., 2011.). Children are compelled to community or sectarian schools, making a path to extreme ideologies. Most importantly quality standards are not upheld (Badrasawi, Ahmed, and Eid, 2018).

Unfortunate consequence of war is disablement of society this in turn have combatants prefer the education system collapse to create chaos (Micallef, J., 2023). The International community and United Nations are

making every effort to make amends, on the ground with stakeholders of the conflict zone to assure the right of quality education once conflict ceases. Rebuilding educational system (Badrasawi, Ahmed, and Eid, 2018).

Conflict may mean teachers go to war. Volunteers need to take over. Many not paid, for interest of the children's normality. Volunteering recognition is a priority in any conflict zone, and a conflict-sensitive approach is priority. Quality of education depends on sensitivity. This sensitivity must lessen conflicts trauma. Volunteer educators and existing educators need training due to conflict environment on sensitivities, including identification of educational needs and curricula which is conflict sensitive. International Organisations going to conflict zones must be education combat ready with procedures to cope in teaching. Teachers are central to the right of quality education not buildings. Otherwise, bias desensitise teaching just adds to war effort making bad ideology (EWB 2023).

Therefore, in doing so education is instrument reduce violence and conflict. Ignorant rhetoric leads to war. The learning of alternatives to conflict suggests promotes community consultation, collaboration, and cooperation to develop democratic principles, intern improving poverty, hunger, and education for economic good (LeBlanc, J. and Odegard, S., 2023).

Sectarianism and Politics should not be barriers to Education. All people deserve the fundamental right to access Education, even when in a conflict zone. Betterment of people's lives depend on education and continuance during a conflict for all involved, irrespective of creed, race, religion, or political affiliation.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this paper is to make people aware of issues of education in conflict zones and barriers to implementation and access to education. Conflict zones circumstance makes education not possible and puts people in uncertainty and endangerment.

The paper makes recommendations on priorities for education in conflict zone and these are right to quality education, Education interventions the how, access through teaching, access of facilities, humanitarian approach with people at centre of the process be provided education Volunteering recognition is a priority in any con-

flict zone, and a conflict-sensitive approach is priority and Rebuilding education system when conflict ceases.

The removal of barriers to right of education in conflict zones means efforts by all stakeholder's teachers, volunteers, students, children, adults, Local Community, United Nations the International communities, governments, international development partners, and international organizations. The efforts are to keep peace. Education stopping ignorant wars. Education promotes stability and social cohesion. Humanitarian intervention must include mitigation that education is priority as other humanitarian aid. Community transformation in peaceful society needs education. Education is the interconnection for tolerance, respect and understanding for communities. The result of quality education is betterment of life, sustainable practices, no more poverty and no more hunger and a prosperous economic future.

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This is the educational circumstance in Iraq

The Norwegian Council for the Displaced has performed a thorough investigation into the situation in Iraq in general, and education in particular. The analysis found that during the start of the war against ISIS, the Iraqi government cut or curtailed aid to 5.2 million children in Iraq. Despite the fact that the Iraqi constitution and ministerial law require free education at all levels and the provision of educational prerequisites. 770 thousand people have been displaced and are living in and out of shelters. Since last year, 240000 people have not had access to school.

In fact, the Iraqi government has not followed UN recommendations, particularly the fourth article of its post-2015 program, which focuses on the education process in general and makes specific appeals to the education process in Iraq for the displaced. They had asked funds to assist disadvantaged children in obtaining an education, but the Iraqi government only handed them half of the \$ 35 million.

According to Tom Kosta, Senior Coordinator of the Norwegian Foun-

dation, the greatest method to find jobs is to seek education and learning possibilities, particularly for young people who have more opportunities to study. 'If the Iraqi government fails to intervene immediately, the process will collapse quickly.' He stated that since the commencement of the ISIS battle in 2014, the education process has been completely forgotten, using Nineveh as an example. They claim that no teachers have been employed. This has cut the number of teachers by 32 percent. This happened in Iraq's second-busiest zone. The number of teachers in this province has decreased from 40,000 to 25,000.

Normally, cutting the number of teachers has resulted in an increase in the number of children leaving school. Female students now account for 28%, while boys account for 15%. In primary schools, the rate is lower, at 6.9% for females and 2.7% for boys. They are leaving school to work to support their families, which is illegal under international law and violates the rights of humans and children. According to the Norwegian Organization, despite Iraq's strong financial

position, its schools operate in two or three shifts. The number of students in one shift is still more than 650. On the other hand, 50% of school buildings were destroyed during the four-year terrorist conflict.

The current government has failed to take any major efforts toward rebuilding them. This is the educational circumstance in Iraq. This has enraged the Iraqi people, who have reached a boiling point. They are constantly clamoring for the removal of political leaders who have exacerbated the situation. I've proclaimed this solely to inform and request assistance from the Kurdistan administration in reviving the education process from its current state. The Kurdistan government, in particular, must provide for the educational process, including teachers, school buildings, and curriculum. Above all, a clear educational philosophy must be offered because there are several flaws, deficiencies, and issues at the heart of the process. Without a meaningful response, there will be a bleak future. Then every try will be fruitless!

To sum up, The Norwegian Council for the displaced has conducted a study on the situation in Iraq, revealing that the Iraqi government has reduced assistance to 5.2 million children since the start of the war against ISIS. Despite the Iraqi constitution and ministerial law stating that education at all levels is free, 770,000 displaced children have not received education since last year. The Iraqi government has not complied with UN recommendations and has given half of the \$35 million requested to help the poor children. Tom Kosta, Senior Coordinator of the Norwegian Foundation, warns that the best way to find jobs is to find education and learning opportunities, especially for young people with more opportunities to study. The Norwegian Organization also notes that Iraq's schools are two or three-shifts and that 50% of school buildings have been destroyed during the four years of the terrorist war. The Norwegian Council urges the government of Kurdistan to help recover the education process and provide a clear educational philosophy to address the weaknesses and shortages in the education system.



Mahir Konuk
Researcher-Author - TURKEY

THE END OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY THE RISE OF DIRECT DEMOCRACY*

An "Occidental" liberal fascist (K. Schwabs) in his speech in Davos, one of the headquarters of world piracy, declared to the workers of his own country and to all the peoples of the world the following: **"We no longer even need to hold elections, because we can foresee and even know in advance what the results will be"**. What a nerve! The proclamation of the **absolute slavery** that finance capital imposes on all humanity; moreover, the clarity with which he establishes the limits of the scope of a "destruction - annihilation" process that he promulgates has never before reached such a magnitude. The reason for the retreat of the "end of history" thesis, which is another expression of the same thing, on the part of the intellectual "cronies" of world capital, was none other than to prepare the passage of a genocidal attack directed against all humanity from the ideological to the practical plane of politics.

The above mentioned words of this "crony", who is a liberal fascist in addition to his ideological and political position, can also be defined as an indicator of the complete **arrogance** of global capital against the working class world. But what drives capitalists and their "cronies" to such arrogance? Do they mean, as can be understood from the statement, "Working class, we are no longer afraid of you"? Or is that arrogance nothing more than a show of bluster that they try to display in order to subdue their fears? We believe that both assessments are fairly close to reality, but are far from a complete description of what is happening: **"We've come to the end. We do not have a lot of margin for maneuver, nor do we have the possibility to exist through sharing. So, whether we like it or not, we cannot exist in any other way, we have no other path to follow and we have no other lies to**

tell. Therefore, we have no other way out but to use our last trump card by accepting the truth that we know better than anyone else."

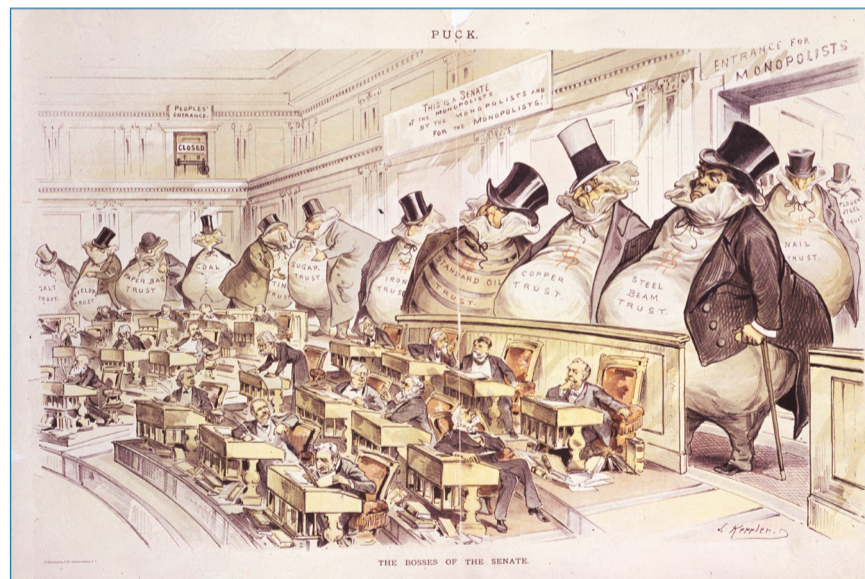
If it were otherwise, that is to say, if it were possible to duly enjoy the possibility of "exploitation" while remaining within the narrow borders of "bourgeois democracy", -which are not always permeable to the worker and the laborer or less permeable depending on the relation of forces in the class struggle-, it would not have been possible to bring the monopolization

Jupiter god, in charge of "La République", the temple of the French bourgeoisie; nor would it have allowed him to open the decayed doors of "Le Palais des Versailles", symbol of the "counter-revolutionary" movement in the history of the country, several times forced by the revolutionaries, to "return to the past". If it had the opportunity to act otherwise, it would not have tried to get a man it brought to power in Turkey through elections with "a handful of dollars for a tip" to dismantle a long-standing society, de-

presses its political existence, is limited to the possibilities it can really have in the History of Humanity. This means that "bourgeois democracy" as a "political form" and the "capitalist system" as a social form, while being specific forms of the intervention of capital in the anthropological process which we call **humanization** in its own time and space, constitute eternal and unceasing forms of the general existence which we call "human society". In the same way that "money", which is defined in its general function of "exchange value", was not invented in order for "capital" to acquire a supra-historical power...

The issue of "bourgeois democracy" as an object of research and reflection can be addressed and analyzed with the limited concepts and methods of "political science" and its "everyday" content, but when the question of the **"end of bourgeois democracy"** is posed with the objectivity it may contain, it will be seen that such an approach is insufficient. An excellent example of this can be seen in the works of the French scientist Emmanuel TODD, who is a bourgeois scientist "to the core", who proudly vocifies his "bourgeoisie" of various origins to the "global cronies" and defends his bourgeoisie against "global capital" and other "supranational" institutions and elements (the Euro currency) which according to him threaten "French national independence". E. TODD is a contemporary French scientist, a writer of world history well versed in anthropology, economics, political science, demography and other scientific fields, an heir to the tradition of the "Ecole des Annales," which emphasizes "observation and evaluation over a long period of time".

We must remember that E. TODD is not a scientist "internally consistent" and "successful in his field". In addition to providing a great deal of important



of capital to its current globalized dimension, nor would the national borders of its own "homeland", the "nation-state", have been blown up and capital transferred to its past "mortal enemies" (like China...). If globalized capital in its present form had another vision of the future in the "history of mankind" from which it could take advantage, in France, the country of both the "bourgeois-democratic revolution" of 1789 and the "Paris Commune" of 1871, which was an experience of "direct democracy", it would not have put "a third-class globalist crony" (Macron), a self-proclaimed

stroy the republic and install a "sharia-sultanate" state.

Why the end of "bourgeois democracies"?

As the "bourgeois democracy" is historically the replacement and reestablishment of a class domination led by "capital" through revolutions or other methods; the life of such a "democracy" is limited to the historical possibilities of the "capitalist system", which is a form of class domination directly attached to society. In this sense, the destiny of capital and the destiny of "bourgeois democracy", which ex-

information, concepts and data in various fields of science, he was also the one who announced the collapse of the USSR to the globalizing bourgeoisie in 1976. TODD, in his capacity as a "demographer", attempted to justify this "prophetic" statement on the basis of the phenomenon of "infant mortality", which at that time reached high levels in the USSR, and explained the "October Revolution" by the fact that the type of "egalitarian communal family" prevailing in Russian society was decisive in the relations between individuals. We will soon delve into the veracity and falsity of this thesis of TODD, which has to do with social and political practice. However, here we need to note that TODD himself today regards the US - and indeed the entire West - as a "world power leader" that is **collapsing** for similar reasons.

Besides all this, the "prophet" TODD argues that humanity has entered a process of transformation that goes beyond the "neolithic period", using similar indicators (such as infant mortality) that he always uses as a demographer. Nonetheless, he does not propose a new social formation outside that determined by the capitalist system, nor a political institution that could replace "bourgeois democracy", which is characterized by the "representative parliamentary system" in its various variants. For him, global capitalism is an "economistic" and "national independence-destroying" deviation from the "capitalist system," which he believes is the only economic and social organization. To summarize, he is nothing more than an "individualist" and a "BCBG" ("clean and elegant family guy") in French terminology, who cherishes the "**nationalist bourgeoisie**" and favors the continuation of "modernization".

On the other hand, we must emphasize that, as an "auto-materialist" (Lenin) scientist, we have obtained invaluable information from E. TODD. The most important of all the things we have learned about the world of phenomena and concepts in his works is the current situation, which he describes as "defeat" or "disintegration" (La défaite) and which we define as "annihilation-destruction". Finally, based on the data, we can say the following: The awakening of humanity to a new day, to a new society, to a new way of being, will certainly not be realized under the "capitalist mode of production" and its social system, its political prolongation, "bourgeois democracy"! So, let us now explain how we justify this statement.

Phenomena experienced in the economy

The existence of a "global capitalism" is not, as TODD claims, the result of an "economistic deviation" by pol-

iticians, but a result of the fact that capital has historically exhausted its capacity to socialize, that is, **the capacity to realize itself**, in the same way as other forms of production have done before it². As a result of the shift of capital gradually abroad, the "nation-state" of France, which, as our anthropologist himself has pointed out on every occasion, has been a source of inspiration for all mankind, has been systematically destroyed by the political powers in the last 30-40 years. This is the most concrete example of the phenomenon of the "end of bourgeois democracy", first the economic and then the political collapse. In fact, some French economists claim that the proportion of capital socialized through investment in production (variable capital) in the total capital of the country has fallen to 5%.

The disappearance of the socialization of capital and of the material conditions for the continuous reproduction of human existence indicates that the conditions for anthropological destruction and extinction have also come to the foreground. Consequently, like in France, an "anthropological" and global phenomenon has appeared in Turkey as well, which determines everything: The processes of "**individualization-socialization=humanization**" and the equation formed by them, which were previously linked to each other with very close dialectical ties, have blown up because of an economic and socio-political system that has gone out of time-space. Since the political perspective of the entire world has changed with this phenomenon, the anthropological processes involved in it have also been redefined in accordance with the current situation.

The process of individuation and the question of the subject

With the discontinuation of socialization and even with its retreat to the past, **a new type of individuals has emerged, who prove themselves one-sidedly participating in the function of eliminating the process of socialization**, who over-individualize themselves at every step and who can become a subject-individual not even for themselves, but only for capital and the capitalist system. This Thatcherian neoliberal-postmodern individual, who has the freedom to exist only as "anti-society", is the ideal subject of the "oligarchic" formation that replaces bourgeois democracy, and is the individual who gives up the right to be an individual for him or herself as a "deposit" to global capital in exchange for participation in the system. Since these individuals are not an individual for the society from which they have removed themselves, they have also removed themselves from being "an individual for humanity". Nowadays, in addition to this type

of individual, a totally new individual profile is gaining prominence, one that participates in the process of humanization through intervention in "social production", which is the opposite process.

The socialization and its subject

The subject of socialization is the individual who, by participating in the continuous reproduction of human life, which cannot be possible without socialization, also becomes "the individual for oneself". This kind of subject exhibits a background and a form of action very different from the crony subjects who constitute the mob that crushes each other to penetrate the system in order to maintain the capitalist system in a "vegetative state", which has become a "black hole" in the era of globalization, spreading death. Being able to exist through his/her participation in the reproduction process of human life, he/she is also a "**subject for humanity**" or a **subject of the humanization process...**

Individuals who are subjects of socialization and/or humanization and **who represent the future** because of this position in time-space, and the "identity group" formed by them also constitute examples of the new forms of sociality of the future. We were witness to its activity as a politicized social movement during the "June revolt" in Turkey and the "yellow vests movement" in France.

The "direct democracy" and the question of the subject of democracy

The "representative parliamentary democracy", or "bourgeois democracy" in short, conceived a popular participation of the "working class people", born of the revolutions and bearer of the process of sociality and humanization under various forms in time and space, and without this participation it lacked practical and theoretical political sense. Such political participation was, of course, a spontaneous consequence of participation in the continuous reproduction of human and social life. Nevertheless, since it included the bourgeoisie as responsible for the rules and their enforcement in favor of capital, it masked the reality of the direct relationship between the "real subject" (the worker) and the "social object" (democracy), a relationship that excluded the "bourgeoisie", one of the parasites created by history. What we have quoted in the introduction is, in this case, an attack on the reality that the working class is the active "subject" of the phenomenon of "democracy", which includes the "political participation" with which it is "existentially" linked, and which must be evaluated together with the phenomenon of the "deadlock" of current human labor.

The capitalist class, in all countries where global capital dominates, has long since practically put an end to the rule of the "elected ones". The "crony" at the head of France has declared that the country, which he claims to rule by divine power, is a "Startup Nation"; his counterpart in Turkey, formed by an unelected group of the same type, arbitrarily takes over the government in disregard of the country's founding laws. While Macron provides the police with armored military combat vehicles, the other one intends to create new prisons...

We call this new form of government that has been established on the ashes of bourgeois democracy **liberal fascism**: It is "liberal" because its rhetoric and action are the product of extreme individualistic neoliberal ideology; and it is "fascist" because it considers "others" as "nobodies" (Macron) and associates "strength" with being part of a "superior" race as a crony of this organization. At the same time, the fundamental objective of this group of "cronies", which also has an oligarchic structure, is to wipe out the mass of billions of workers, whose sociality has been taken away from them and who are considered a burden.

In front of this new "genocidal" scenario that threatens all of humanity, what kind of new participatory social organization is urgently needed to replace the old one? The answer to this question is given by the working masses who mobilize to recover their lost sociality and give a future to the "process of humanization" of which they are the historical bearers. The "yellow vest movement" and the "June" movement, which we have highlighted, have brought to the fore their inherent demand and practice of "direct democracy" through the creation of RICs (Citizens' Initiative Referendums) in France and "Local Forums" in Turkey.

Apart from these concrete and extremely appropriate responses, the "false opposition", which has the support of capital, which no longer has any historical function and which has no more historical function than dragging its feet in "bourgeois democracy" based on class alliance, and which has the "scientific" support of people like E. TODD, has also been put on the market to play the role of the fire department that throws water on the fire. For us, this group will be the most important obstacle for the process of **direct democracy** in the coming days.

* This article is published simultaneously in PoliTeknik International and PoliTeknik Español.

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The political and economic instrumentalisation of the COVID-19 pandemic by the business and the political elite in South Africa: Profiteering from disaster.



ABSTRACT

This paper's crux is to analyse the manifestation of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa from the lens of disaster capitalism, particularly the economic consequences precipitated by the pandemic, which hit the poor and working class the hardest. The paper argues that disaster capitalism unfolded in the South African case through the declaration of a national state of disaster and the establishment of emergency procurement regulations skilfully used to administer economic shock therapy (through PPE procurement corruption) on people experiencing poverty and the working class. The article also analyses the economic crisis precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated regulations, such as the national lockdown. The article will further examine how PPE and other COVID-19-related procurement irregularities were orchestrated through a public-private sector dialectical relationship in disaster profiteering. The paper's central thesis is framed by the theory of disaster capitalism, which denotes that catastrophic events are instrumentalised by a national political and corporate elite into exciting market opportunities to accumulate wealth. In other words, these disaster events are construed as windows of opportunity to capitalise on catastrophe (Naomi Klein, 2007:6-7). This paper presents a context-specific nature of disaster capitalism through a case study research design that analyses secondary documentary data. The paper employs document analysis as a preferred research methodology, and the findings will be analysed using the content analysis approach.

KEYWORDS

Disaster Capitalism, COVID-19, disaster profiteering, business, and political elite, political and economic instrumentalisation

Introduction

This paper presents a theory-informed analysis of the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for the underclass (the poor and unemployed) and working class in South Africa through the lens of disaster capitalism. Politico-economic analyses of the COVID-19 pandemic have focused mainly on the global north, especially North America and Western Europe. Therefore, an analysis of the global south is justified, in alignment with the worldwide scope of the pandemic and its economic consequences that have impacted the south disproportionately (Fihlo and Ayers, 2020:84). According to Schuller and Maldonado (2016:62), disaster capitalism can be defined as a concerted effort by both transnational and national government institutions to convert catastrophe or cataclysmic events into an opportunity to serve an array of private and neoliberal capitalist interests. Klein (2007:6) and Storey (2008:74) concur that disaster capitalism is a window of opportunity for the enforcement of neoliberal capitalist interests and increased involvement of the private sector in the provision of services formerly provided by the

public. The COVID-19 pandemic and emergency procurement regulations provided the gaps and opportunity for the corrupt in both the public and private sector to go on a looting spree (Mantzaris and Ngcamu, 2020:463).

In the age of the hegemony of neoliberalism and capitalism, the poor and the working class usually receive neoliberal shock therapy (Cline-Cole, 2020:181). Such therapy can be attributed to COVID-19 regulations including the national state of disaster which restricted movement and assembly, emergency procurement regulations, weak oversight enabling PPE tender corruption accompanied by massive job losses. Naomi Klein (2007:7-8) avers that there are three distinct shocks related to disaster capitalism: first, is the collective shock induced by the disaster event, leaving the public in a collective state of trauma; second, is the economic shock therapy, an array of neoliberal policy instalments; and third is the literal (usually electric) shock (often administered by the police or soldiers) on any resistance to the economic shock therapy. A critical assessment of the implications of such events is academically justified and

necessary, especially in the South African case wherein there's an overt gap on this particular subject matter from the lens of disaster capitalism (Fihlo and Ayers, 2020:85; Farrell, 2020).

A Theoretical Lens

Although Naomi Klein's book "*The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*" published in 2007, was not necessarily an academic book, it gained immense traction in the circles of academia. So much so that contemporary academics have employed the concept of disaster capitalism. Assessments or analyses conducted by academics are not only limited to post-disaster settings but also include scholarly disaster analysis in the fields of disaster risk reduction, social policy, industrial sociology, and anthropology (Schuller and Maldonado, 2016; Harvey, 2017; Illner, 2021). Academics have also employed the concept of disaster capitalism as a Marxian-style theory to critique contemporary neoliberal market democracies and their disaster response efficacy (Gunewardena and Schuller, 2008; Perez and Cannella, 2011; Mirowski, 2013; Pyles, 2016). The concept of disaster capitalism is also dominant

within social movements and in the mainstream media; there are a plethora of brimming journalistic accounts of profiteering from disaster (Mahlan-gu, 2020). The concept has established a footing in the academy and has received both plaudits and critiques from scholars.

For Klein (2007:6), disaster capitalism encompasses "orchestrated raids on the public sphere in the wake of catastrophic events, combined with the treatment of disasters as exciting market opportunities." Harvey (2017:334-5) substantiates that this process of disaster profiteering is orchestrated through the government's provision of no-bid disaster response contracts to politically connected private corporations. Loewenstein (2015:21) affirms that "many ongoing crises seem to have been sustained by business to fuel industries in which they have a financial stake. These corporations are like vultures feeding on the body of a weakened government that must increasingly rely on the private sector to provide public services." It is important to note that this study's theoretical framework is congruent with its unit of analysis and helps narrow and

focus the study, enabling a theoretical explanation of the phenomenon under investigation. The study's theoretical foundations are formed by previous research or literature on disaster capitalism and the industry-government relationship that is characterised by negative patron-client relations reinforced by the revolving door between business, organised labour, and government (Perez and Cannella, 2011:47; Schuller and Maldonado, 2016:64).

Disaster capitalism remains a relatively new concept and one that is largely unexplored in the South African case, construed here, as a health crisis that was exploited by a nexus between a state and industry (illicit) relationship that defrauded the public purse. Disaster capitalism during the COVID-19 pandemic is construed as a process permitted by the national state of disaster and emergency procurement regulations which according to Mantzaris and Ngcamu (2020:462) was "Manna from heaven" to corrupt public and private actors. Disaster profiteering can be observed in the litany of PPE and other COVID-19-related tender corruption scandals, which are brimming in the popular news media. As the catastrophic event was instrumentalised to amass profits for the public health bureaucratic elite and politically savvy service providers, the underclass and the working class were hit the hardest by the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic (Farrell, 2020; Mahlangu, 2020). Three million South Africans lost their jobs (Tswanya, 2020). It can thus be inferred that the theory of disaster capitalism places the phenomenon under study in sharp focus.

Literature Review The Orientation

Mirowski (2013:9) posits that the 2007-8 global financial crisis was "the most dramatic catastrophic global economic collapse after the Great Depression of the 1930s." However, Gürcan and Kahraman (2020:56) contend that the economic crisis induced by the COVID-19 pandemic surpasses that of the Great Depression and the global financial crisis of 2007-8. Klein (2007:18-9) challenges the claim that free-market economics go hand-in-hand with freedom and democracy and that the evolution and progression of free-market economics results from embracing modern democracy. She contends that the growth and progression of free-market ideas across the globe is a result of an increase in shocks such as wars, invasions, natural or human-induced disasters, epidemics and pandemics, and economic crises that create a collective shock and a subsequent collective trauma. While the public is in a state of trauma, free marketers, right-wing think tanks, neoconservative politicians, and prominent corporate magnates

collude to profit out of catastrophe and instate neoliberal economic reforms which accumulate wealth for global elites at the expense of the greater majority.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2023), SARS-CoV-2 is the virus which causes COVID-19 – coronavirus (World Health Organisation, 2021:1; Naude and Cameron, 2021:1) which first broke out in Wuhan, China in 2019. On the 30th of January 2020, WHO declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). In South Africa, the outbreak was characterised as a pandemic on March 11th, 2020. The national state of disaster was declared by President Cyril Ramaphosa on March 5th, 2020, followed by a nationwide lockdown. The lockdown regulations were provided for in the Disaster Management Act No. 57 of 2002. The national state of disaster was lifted on the 15th of March 2022 (Saloshni and Nithiseelan, 2022:1). The WHO (2023) reports that as of 23 September 2023, there are 2 248 538 confirmed deaths globally. The African continent surpassed the one million mark of confirmed cases in early August of 2020. In South Africa, the pandemic caused over 100,000 fatalities and more than 3.9 million reported cases (Saloshni and Nithiseelan, 2022:1). The economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic exposed socioeconomic injustices throughout the world and in South Africa as well (Vaughn, 2021:1). Filho and Ayers (2020:88) surmise that "the economic fallout from the pandemic could increase global poverty by 500m people (8% of the world's population) and push 265m people to the brink of starvation."

The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced deep inequalities already existent in society, and the impact of the virus mirrored these inequalities. For instance, blacks in the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK) were more prone to infection and death than their white counterparts. Inequalities of race, class and gender were evident in the victims of the disaster. Blacks, the lower-income working class and women are seldom in employment wherein it is possible to work from home behind a computer screen, thereby reducing risk; they seldom have health and life insurance and, in most instances, are unable to afford private quality healthcare (Cline-Cole, 2020:181-2; Fihlo and Ayers, 2020:85; Leach, Macgregor, Scoones and Wilkinson, 2021:4). Cline-Cole (2020:180) avers that "while the Covid-19 pandemic might not discriminate, the political economy does, frequently reinforcing existing and sometimes creating new patterns of coronavirus-related inequality." The preceding postulations have established, the impact of the COVID-19

pandemic has disproportionate intensity.

Ploughing ahead, Naude and Cameron (2021:5) argue that quarantines, curfews, social distancing, prohibition of mass gatherings, the closure of institutions where infections were identified, and the seclusion of cities, towns or households curbed the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the absence of a vaccine. COVID-19 regulations have produced a paternalistic state with centralised decision-making concentrated in the executive in the form of the National Coronavirus Command Council (NCCC). In these circumstances, mechanisms to hold the government accountable were suspended, and disaster profiteering ensued without public interruption (South African Government, 2021; Medical Brief, [n.d.]). Schuller and Maldonado (2016:61) emphasize that "what is most significant to consider here is not the disaster event itself, but rather the disaster after the event that reproduced social inequalities, in large part through the process of disaster capitalism."

By the end of June 2021, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) had already spent a total of R350 million in investigations on COVID-19 PPE procurement corruption that arose because of no checks-and-balances in the systems of national and provincial governments, State-owned Enterprises (SOEs) and municipalities. The SIU further reported that it is probing 4000 cases involving 2400 service providers where there is a suspicion of or alleged irregularity. An estimate of the tally of the value defrauded from the government in the unlawful awarding of PPE contracts amounts to R4.8 billion. R4.8 billion, which is alleged to have been illegally channelled out of the public purse into private hands through a public-private partnership involving the public health bureaucratic elite and politically savvy businesspeople (Matya, 2021; McCain, 2021).

Research Design and Methodology

As was already alluded to elsewhere in the paper. This is a case study research design, and secondary data is analysed. Document analysis is the preferred research methodology. Documents analysed include newspaper articles, policy reports and government publications. The findings will be analysed using the content analysis approach.

Findings and Discussion Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Corruption Scandals: An Illustration of Disaster Capitalism – Making A Killing out of Catastrophe

The literature critiqued hereunder focuses on the industry-state dialecti-

cal relationship in manifesting disaster capitalism through contraventions of public procurement regulations, the Public Finance Management (PFMA) Act No. 29 of 1999, National Treasury guidelines, misconduct, unethical behaviour, and dereliction of duty in the PPE procurement process. Unsurprisingly, the beast of corruption, economic nepotism and cronyism has far-reaching consequences for the South African economy and its public, democratic, and legal institutions. This is despite the context of the country's supreme guiding document, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, which mandates a corruption-free and publicly accountable government responsive to the needs, demands and preferences of the people (Farrell, 2020; Mahlangu, 2020; Medical Brief, [n.d.]).

Despite the multiplicity of anti-corruption legislation and other government measures to eradicate corrupt practices, corruption is highly prevalent in South Africa. This scourge of corruption soared after the emergency COVID-19 procurement regulations were put in place. These regulations aimed to create a quick response to the impact caused by the pandemic and to strengthen the public health sector. However, the public sector bureaucratic elite and politically exposed service providers saw a window of opportunity to engage in self-serving acquisitive corruption at the expense of human lives (McCain, 2021; Dayimani, 2021; Heywood, 2021). The milieu of fear, panic, and uncertainty (Stiegler and Bouchard, 2020) culminated in the easing of procurement regulations concerning PPE and this blind spot was used by society's undesirables to engage in tender corruption by inflating the cost by up to 500% in some cases and providing sub-standard PPE to the government's health sector (Mokoena, 2020:526-7; Vaughn, 2021:5).

In the middle of a health emergency, while the public is in a state of disorientation, induced by the Covid-19 pandemic (accompanied by fear, panic and uncertainty) and the hard lockdown which technically suspended democratic processes, civil and political rights indirectly through quarantines, curfews, and social distancing; politically-exposed businesspeople, big pharmaceutical behemoths and the global corporate oligarchy identified a window of opportunity to capitalise on catastrophe. The flooding of wealth up to the ultra-rich and away from the underclass and working class was justified as preventing the further spread of the virus. In other words, providing disaster relief through highly inflated no-bid contracts awarded to politically connected service providers (Klein, 2007; Davis, 2020). This demand for PPE and other health-related services was intended to equip the ill-prepared

public health sector and combat poverty and unemployment; however, the opposite occurred through a litany of PPE procurement corruption (Farrell, 2020; Mahlangu, 2020). Leach et al. (2021:5) note that “state-led responses to a disease outbreak therefore often replicate biases within development, reinforcing alienation, marginalisation and stigmatisation.”

Case Vignettes

The chief financial officer (CFO) of the Department of Health (DoH) in the Gauteng provincial government, Kabelo Lehloenya, alleged that then-premier David Makhura failed to fulfil his duties and responsibilities as the executive head of the provincial government. Lehloenya made these submissions at a Special Tribunal instigated by the SIU to recover public money unlawfully paid to service providers Ledla Structural Development and Beadica 430. Lehloenya espoused that under David Makhura’s watch, the PPE procurement process had been perverted by improper interests amounting to R42.8 million. In the stage-managed PPE procurement process, the two service providers mentioned above were awarded the contract because of their close ties to Chief Thandisizwe Diko II, the late husband of Khusela Diko, who was on special leave (or suspension) from her position at the time as presidential spokesperson. Chief Thandisizwe Diko II had close ties to Bandile Masuku, the Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) of Health at the time the unlawful procurement process unfolded (Koko, 2021). Khusela Diko’s decision to take special leave was encouraged by “allegations that her husband received part of R2.2b personal protective equipment tender awarded to 75 companies by the Gauteng Health Department (Medical Brief, [n.d.]).”

The PPE procurement corruption scandal highlighted above involved price inflation, which resulted in an 800% profit margin for the front companies alleged to be linked to Chief Thandisizwe Diko II. The SIU acquired an order which froze assets worth R36 million, allegedly purchased from distasteful gains involving Diko’s front company Ledla Structural Development and the Gauteng DoH (Medical Brief, [n.d.]).

South African Government (2021) reported that the SIU, working collaboratively with the Hawks’ National Serious Corruption Investigation, arrested an unnamed man from Mpumalanga on 9 August 2021 embroiled in PPE procurement corruption. The man attempted to offer a bribe worth R50 000 to an SIU investigator to make the investigation into the questionable financial transactions related to the awarding of a tender to disinfect

buildings (in the Ehlanzeni district) evaporate. The SIU investigation found irregularities in the procurement process from the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in the district mentioned above. The irregularity emerged after the declaration of a National State of Disaster on March 20, 2020, which necessitated a multitude of healthcare services such as disinfection. The service provider was paid a total of R4.8 million post-disinfection, which was made in multiple instalments. After the first instalment of R1.3 million was paid, a series of large transfers were made to individuals and entities, including two department employees and a law firm based in Mpumalanga. The law firm proceeded to purchase a property worth R2.2 million, which was registered in the name of a departmental official’s daughter (Ibid).

The Hawks arrested two employees in August 2021 from the National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS) who were alleged to have engaged in theft, fraud, and contravention of the guidelines of the PFMA. The two suspects (former employees) enabled the unlawful awarding of a PPE contract worth R14.4 million from the NHLS. The two suspects would appear in the Palm Ridge Specialized Commercial Crimes Court soon after their apprehension to answer questions related to alleged tender fraud. Hawks’ spokesperson, Colonel Katlego Mogale, stated that some suspects in the investigation into PPE tender fraud led by the SIU had already resigned from their positions. The call for a comprehensive investigation into Covid-related corruption in the public sector was made in 2020 by President Cyril Ramaphosa (Makhafola, 2021).

Ayanda Matinise, the former messenger of axed Eastern Cape (EC) MEC of Health Sindiswa Gomba, was prosecuted on fraud, forgery, and uttering charges. Matinise forged the signature of the director of supply chain management to unlawfully award a PPE contract worth R23.4 million to a favoured service provider, Falaz Protection Services. Matinise appeared in the Mthatha Specialized Commercial Crimes Court, where he was released on R1000 bail. (Dayimani, 2021b). Matinise was sentenced to a decade behind bars in early 2023 (TimesLive, 2023).

The relaxed public procurement measures introduced by the government shortly after declaring a state of disaster in March 2020 created a window of opportunity for senior government officials and politically connected businesspeople to go on a looting spree during a life-threatening pandemic. The headlines in the media were painted colourfully by a series of PPE (face and surgical masks,

sanitisers, gloves, and disinfectants) and other COVID-19-related corruption at different levels of government. This carried adverse effects on the overburdened public health sector. The looting spree was made possible by the government’s gamble to relax already weak procurement policies in South Africa (Thinane, 2021:5; Vaughn, 2021:6).

Gürcan and Kahraman (2020:56) affirm that the sheer scale of the economic impact brought by the COVID-19 pandemic is one never witnessed before. The thirty-day hard lockdown in 2020, which was emulated by the Chinese government, carried severe economic consequences, including a decline in the fiscus, the shedding of 2.5 million jobs, a seven-percentage point drop in the yearly gross domestic product (GDP) and other associated social costs. Despite this, senior government officials, political office bearers, and politically exposed service providers engaged in cost inflation and non-delivery or delivery of sub-standard PPE and other COVID-19-related services, regardless of the risk of losing human lives (Mahlangu, 2020; Mmakwena and Moses, 2022:987).

Mmakwena and Moses (2022:987) argue that “the combination of the breadth and complexity of the crisis, the need for a rapid response, and a lack of sufficient state capacity has led to a perfect storm for increased opportunities for corruption.” Sebake and Mudau (2020:490; 462) concur that emergency procurement regulations provided gaps and opportunities for the corrupt in both the public and private sectors to go on a looting spree. It is not public procurement policies that do not exist, but it is the administrative and procurement officers that have mastered the art of manipulating the process of bidding with the intent of personal gain. Mahlangu (2020) reported that the Public Service Regulations and the Constitution clearly speak to ethical (integrity and honesty) standards applicable in the procurement process, the conduct of procurement officers, the quality of goods to be procured for the state, and safeguarding those goods.

It is, however, the non-existence of policy probity in South Africa, which contributes mainly to high levels of corruption in public procurement; policies regulating this aspect still need to be revised. Political office bearers and public office holders in the South African government should create a space of competitiveness regarding the awarding of COVID-19 PPE procurement contracts and refrain from cronyism, which ultimately leaks money out of government coffers into the private pockets of businesspeople intricately tied to the political elite. A fight against corruption cannot only

be fought by law enforcement agencies. It also requires ethical practices in the procurement process, which will not permit room for society’s undesirables (Farrell, 2020; Mahlangu, 2020).

Conclusion

The main thrust of this paper is the instrumentalisation of the COVID-19 pandemic by the political and business elite, which is enabled by the national state of disaster and emergency procurement regulations, which provided windows and gaps for misconduct and wrongdoing by both unscrupulous public and private actors. The findings and analysis indicate that out of disaster profiteering, poverty and unemployment worsened, and the socioeconomic circumstances of the underclass and the working class deteriorated, while the opposite occurred for politically connected businesspeople. This line of argument was framed by the theory of disaster capitalism, which enhanced our understanding of PPE and other COVID-19-related tender corruption in South Africa.



Prof. Dr. Armin Bernhard
GERMANY

Not Being Prepared for War - A New Virtue* -

Wolfgang Borchert would be stunned if he heard one day that a Social Democrat defense minister was calling for Germany to develop its capabilities for war. Just after World War II, the experiences of the war had already permeated into the author's flesh and blood. The disgust and horror of war penetrate the thoughts of the seriously ill writer, and all these thoughts are recorded in writing: His drama "Outside, in front of the door," his poems and aphorisms, his "manifesto" of the 1940s - these works, often counted with contempt in the literature of rubble, contain not only a bitter outcry against war as a crime against humanity, but also an unequivocal call to prevent and overcome all attitudes that make wars possible.

"Take off your helmet, take off your helmet," says Borchert in "Our Manifesto," "We have lost! [...] We will never again be ready with just a whistle and shout "Yes, sir". We'll cry, shit and sing whenever we want to [...] And no general will ever call us as You before the battle. Before that terrible battle. We will never again have sand between our teeth out of fear (not the sand of the steppe, not the sand of Ukraine, not the sand of Cyrenaica or Normandy - not the bitter and evil sand of our own homeland!) And there will never again be that warm, wondering feeling in the brain and gut before battle"¹.

The contradiction between Borchert's statement and the German Defense Minister's declaration, which fell far short of the author's vision, could not have been sharper. "We have to increase our belligerence. We have to improve our defense. And to do this we have to organize the federal army and society", these were the words pronounced by the minister in October 2023² apparently unaf-

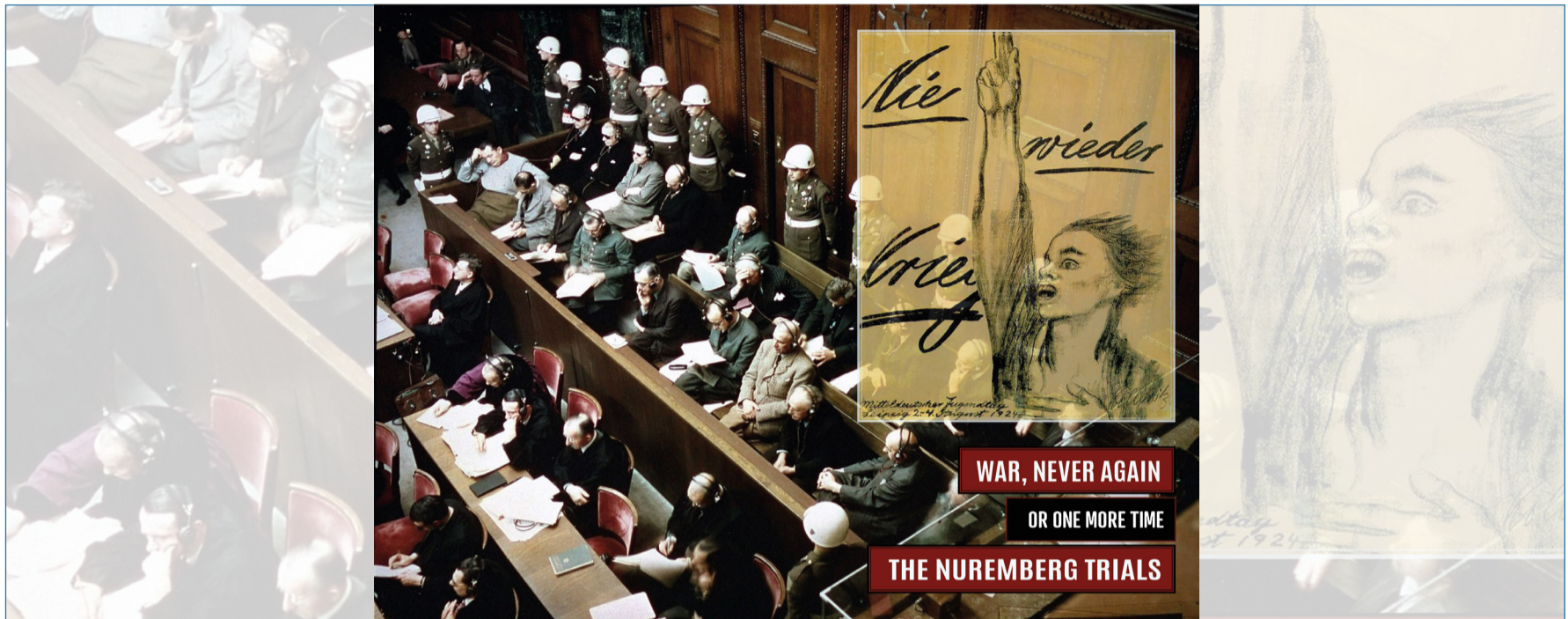
ected by fascism and the atrocities of the war. In fact, Defense Minister Pistorius succeeded in drawing public attention to what Federal Army Chief Inspector Carsten Breuer, who was responsible for the 2016 Federal Army White Book, had called for in July 2023: Increase in belligerence³. In December 2023, the Chief Inspector becomes more explicit. We are being told from the outside when to increase our belligerence. And to me that means: We have to increase our belligerence as soon as possible"⁴. The General contemplates armament for this purpose, as well as the first carrier column: The change in the mentality of society, which is endlessly cited, and the "combat readiness of personnel". The overall goal is to strengthen the resilience of society as a whole, which is already at the heart of the 2016 White Book's security policy strategy. To further enlighten us, the Foreign Policy Society defines resilience as "the preparedness and capacity of a society to withstand the constraints and losses of conflict." Social resilience -mental and physical- is essential to maintain morality and coexistence.. This covers securing infrastructures (transport, energy, digital environment, healthcare), but also the public manifestation of faith in the sense and the ability to deal with conflicts"⁵. Such militaristic statements are part of a series of statements aimed at the strategic goal of definitively destroying the culture of military restraint that Germany rightly developed after World War II. There is discussion about the exhaustion of the benefits of peace, about the need for Germany to leave the comfort zone of peace and increase its defense capability. The military and society must be more resilient to cope with the "modern" management of war. The "absence of hostility" (Gauck) between nations is also seen as highly

problematic, because it is supposedly based on false trust-building measures, while general distrust and suspicion are the order of the day.

There is a history policy that has accompanied these militaristic statements for years, a policy that takes the lessons of the two world wars and fascism and turns them upside down. The culture of military moderation is replaced by a defensive mentality that finds its ideological justification in the German past. After all, from the crimes committed by fascism "can not be obtained the right for Germans to close their eyes", says historian Heinrich August Winkler 8. 5. 2015 in the Federal Parliament⁶, on the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II; no, Germany's Nazi past brings Germans the moral responsibility to send its army around the world in virtuous wars, justified on humanitarian grounds. Everything that could block public opinion on the need for military engagement must be eliminated. The war fought by the Federal Republic of Germany against Yugoslavia represented the original historical sin after the fascist experience and the Second World War, but it was only a step on the way to the establishment of a public consensus on the militarization of the country. Therefore, the Potsdam Treaty of 1945 rightly foresaw the systematic demilitarization of Germany - it not only banned the establishment of an army, but also the creation of its own armaments industry. The society known as post-heroic⁷ society, which is the nightmare of the policy of militarization, armament and deterrence, is under continuous ideological fire. Former President Gauck, in his speech at the Federal Army Staff Academy in 2012, soundly condemned the *happiness-addicted society*⁸ which, with its hedonistic thoughtlessness and indifference, suppresses the fact that

it owes its existence to the selfless actions of soldiers, "brave citizens in uniform" who, - all over the world - risk their lives in defense of our freedom. In the opinion of Gauck, these are traitors who stab Germany in the back, but this time they do it in a different way, by preventing Germany from pursuing its legitimate peaceful ambitions, which is to say, by preventing it from confronting human rights violations around the world with military means. According to Gauck, these are people who have not yet understood the challenges of the new times and who abuse "Germany's historical guilt" to "hide their detachment from the world or their self-complacency." Gauck did not by coincidence stated these fundamental sentences at the Munich Security Conference 2014 under the title "Germany's Role in the World"⁹. Germany's new definition of its global political role has used a term often abused and devalued in political jargon: The word responsibility with a positive meaning. Germany finally assumes its responsibility and fulfills its obligations to meet future military challenges. The desire to attribute a positive meaning to wars, associated with the word "taking responsibility", not only mitigates the contamination of the war phenomenon, but also accuses of irresponsibility those who oppose military "engagement" for the deterrence policy and peace. By referring to history, anti-militarism, anti-war attitudes and the struggle for peace are branded as irresponsible. People who support trust-building measures and oppose the delivery of arms to Ukraine belong to the genre of the pacifist lumpens, traitors¹⁰, conspiracy theorists and admirers of Putin.

Based on this logic, the increase in belligerence and the change in mentality represent, at the turning point,



the definitive break with the culture of military moderation. The aim is to achieve a systematic backlash against anti-military thinking and anti-armament policy. It is about going hand in hand with this objective of reinforcing positions that increase the resilience of society in the face of the obligations and burdens that will derive from the new political strategies of "security". The recent statement by war veteran Joseph Fischer that the "basic pacifist attitude" which is "spreading" in Germany is detrimental to peace and must therefore be replaced by a different attitude characterized by mistrust is in line with the desired change in mentality¹¹.

In the pacifist movement and in the pursuit of peace, not being prepared for war must be opposed to that of war-making; since the increase of bel-

ligerence and of the social resilience that sustains it cannot mean anything other than being belligerent. It should be obvious, especially to the Germans, that increased belligerence would lead to a historical gap at all levels. And if in Germany it is possible to speak again not only of fighting, but also of victory, if it is intended to destroy the economies of foreign countries and if the word victory and the will to win (Breuer) celebrate its rebirth, then the alarm bells must begin to ring loudly in everyone's ears.

In the face of easily audible war calls and massive rearmament initiatives, the time to combat the escalation of belligerence definitely arrived some time ago. What Borchert suggests as an unconditional principle is to reject all forms of deterrence, armament

and hostility, to say no with determination. Especially in times like these, not being prepared for war becomes a fundamental virtue. Not being prepared for war is necessary to make civilization possible. Only those who are inept at war can be prepared for peace. Not being prepared for war not only implies deterrence and the absence of attitudes favorable to the violent resolution of conflicts. The ineptitude for war involves a constant mental, spiritual and psychological disarmament, the creation of a capacity of resistance that "immunizes" people against the patterns of justification of non-peace and armamentism. Not being prepared for war is not merely a passive trait, but an active mental activity that seeks to trace the interests behind the calls for a change in the

civil-military mentality and for greater combativity. Not being prepared for war means making an effort to set aside narratives that seek to integrate people into fantasies of deterrence and armament. Not being prepared for war means resisting the images of the enemy that have been installed in the hearts and minds of the people and that politics exploits to impose its interests. Not being prepared for war also means resisting the militarization of words and concepts that have already penetrated everyday life and language. The development of belligerence - this is actually the worst word of the year 2023. It is so far from a civilized world that it is almost disgusting.



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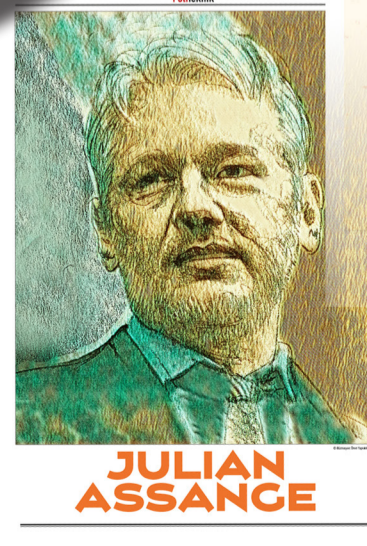
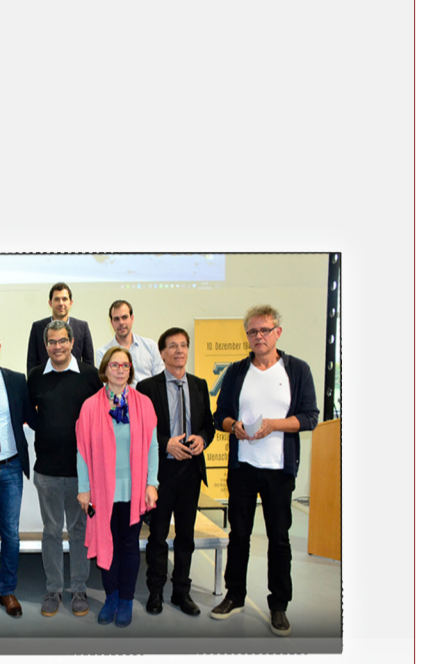
Notes:

¹ Borchert 1979, S. 308 f.
² Pistorius 2023 (<https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2023-10/pistorius-modernisierung-bundeswehr-kriegsgefahr-europa>)
³ Ntv 2023: Mentalitätswandel nötig. Oberster Soldat: Bundeswehr muss wieder kriegstüchtig werden. (<https://www.n-tv.de/politik/Oberster-Soldat-Bundeswehr-muss-wieder-kriegstuechtig-werden-article24260720.html>; Zugriff: 16. 1. 2024)
⁴ Nachgefragt (2023): "Wir müssen so schnell wie möglich kriegstüchtig werden." <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/aktuelles/meldungen/>

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⁵ Christian Mölling/Torben Schütz (2023): Den nächsten Krieg verhindern. In: GFAP Policy Brief. Heft 32, S. 1-10 (https://dgap.org/system/files/article_pdfs/DGAP%20Policy%20Brief%20Nr-32_November-2023_11S_1.pdf; Zugriff: 16. 1. 2024)
⁶ Heinrich August Winkler (2015) Rede vor dem Bundestag am 8. 5. 2015 (https://www.bundestag.de/webarchiv/textarchiv/2015/kw19_gedenkstunde_wkii_rede_winkler-373858; Zugriff: 16. 1. 2024)
⁷ Münkler 2007
⁸ Gauck 2012
⁹ Gauck 2014
¹⁰ So Sascha Lobo in Spiegel-Netzwelt vom 20. 4. 2022.
¹¹ <https://www.augsburger-allgemeine.de/politik/interview-joschka-fischer-wir-koennen-nicht-einfach-nur-auf-das-gute-im-menschen-vertrauen-id69118266.html>

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 * This article is published simultaneously in PoliTeknik Turkish edition, PoliTeknik International and PoliTeknik Español.



Derya Uğur
General Health Workers' Union - TURKEY

THE FUTURE OF THE HEALTH SYSTEM CANNOT BE HANDED OVER TO PRIVATISATION!

PRIVATISATION IS A SYSTEM BASED ON DISEASE, NOT FOR HEALTH

HEALTH IS BEING DESTROYED IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS FOR THE SAKE OF PROFIT!



The government and the capital are attacking the health system in an organized manner with steps of privatization.

The system, which fails to prioritize life, nature and human beings, traps the society between illness and death.

Privatization means the transfer of public goods and services to partisan companies and international capital.

Privatization is being carried out rapidly all over the world and in our country, including the health sector.

Privatization of health services is being carried out through different practices.

Privatization affects both health workers and the public who benefit from the health services.

The inequality in health care is still a prominent problem.

The future of the Republic of Turkey is being destroyed by privatization.

It is clear that the political power is carrying out policies that will liquidate all public resources over the years.

The industry, trade, transportation, ports, oil, cities, tourism, ports and banks of the Republic of Turkey, in particular the right to public health, have all been sold to domestic and foreign capital for a small price through various legal regulations.

During its founding years, the Republic of Turkey, that inherited a public healthcare system in very unfavorable conditions, with its policies and efforts to prioritize public healthcare, created institutions that produce their own vaccines and medicines.

However, the political power has disrupted our health system by turning health institutions dysfunctional, closing them down, orienting towards the purchase of everything and privatizing the system.

The government has established a system that is oriented towards making money from patients which guarantees a patient number for the companies, not preventive health services and ensuring health.



GENEL SAĞLIK-İŞ

Genel Sağlık ve Sosyal Hizmet
Kolu Kamu Çalışanları Sendikası

The government has closed down well-functioning hospitals and left them to rot by taking steps that degrade the institutions and disregard equity and merit, and started to build giant hospitals outside the cities at very high costs.

Hospitals built outside the city through the Public Private Sector Partnership (PPP) model, these hospitals are called "city hospitals".

In this model, the private sector in PPPs demands government guarantees to ensure that all risks are borne by the public sector, and these guarantees are given to partisan companies behind closed doors.

With the PPP model, resources are transferred from citizens' pockets to the capital.

There are many problems with the city hospitals constructed with the financing model called PPP.

Public hospitals are closed down not only in Ankara and Istanbul but all over Turkey and resources are transferred to capital through city hospitals.

In this model, contracts are kept secret, and 25-year guaranteed rent payments are made for the hospitals in foreign currency and over inflation.

The Ministry of Health could build the hospital itself with the huge budget it transfers to the companies that build city hospitals.

Unfortunately, under this model, very important hospitals all over Turkey have been closed down, demolished, downsized or turned into polyclinics.

In this system, easily accessible hospitals located in the inner city were

closed down, making it more difficult for patients to access health services.

One of the most prominent and most propagandized topics during the period of this government has been the city hospitals and the health system.

However, citizens cannot find a doctor to consult at the hospitals and therefore cannot make medical appointments.

If they do get an appointment, only 5 minutes of examination time is seen as appropriate.

Once examined, there are sometimes difficulties in performing many tests, some surgeries have to be postponed due to lack of medical equipment, or citizens are forced to receive services from private hospitals.

The institutions and hospitals, which were the pride of the country, have been destroyed.

The doctors, nurses, academics, in short, all health workers of the country have become unable to practice their profession due to privatization.

Physicians and health workers seek refuge abroad because of the policies that do not prevent the violence they face and because their profession is degraded.

With the spread of privatization practices, fewer health workers are being asked to do more work, working hours are being extended and precarious working conditions are being demanded.

The system called public-private sector partnership is a complete robbery system.

Public resources are being transferred to partisan companies and the state is suffering losses.

The health system is one of the issues that the government propagandizes the most.

We identify the root cause of the current problems as the political power's commercialization of health and its marketist approach to health!

- There is no logic in defending a system where health has become an object of consumption rather than a right, where it has become increasingly difficult to receive health services from the public services, where patients cannot get an appointment and wait for months or fill emergency services.

- A system where all health workers are struggling with countless problems from education to working conditions and personal rights will be corrected not by privatization, but by a public health system.

- The city hospitals model, which is the new form of privatization in health in our country, should be abandoned; a hospital system based on meeting the health needs of the society by using public resources, where treatment services can be provided effectively and holistically, should be implemented.

We, as Genel Sağlık-İş, declare once again that the future of the country's health system cannot be determined by privatization and city hospitals.

We reiterate our demand that the NATIONAL, PUBLIC, and PEOPLE ORIENTED health policies initiated by our Great Leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk be reintroduced, just as it was a hundred years ago, and that all citizens can benefit from equal, accessible, qualified and free health services.

* This article is published simultaneously in PoliTeknik International and PoliTeknik Español.

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CHRONOLOGICAL TRAJECTORY OF INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: TOWARDS INCLUSIVITY

Introduction

Human beings in the society interact with each other at multiple scales and platforms and they develop their social skill to perform in accordance with the social norms and values. This exchange of thoughts and gestures creates a positive learning environment for overall functioning of an individual in the society. This is known as *Socialization*. Socialisation is learning process in which individuals in the society interacts and learns things from each other values and actions and through this process, people acquire certain set of *attitudes, values and actions* being a part of culture or society. It is a continuous process which occurs in every-day activities of people.

John Dewey, An eminent philosopher and educationist says that "*Education is a social process; education is growth; education is not preparation for life but is life itself*." He was convinced with the fact education is something which is equal to life. It means that it gives human beings what they actually deserve for being a part of this society. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the Father of Indian Constitution, says that "*Cultivation of mind is the ultimate aim of human existence*". He was convinced with the idea of being educated in all dimensions. For him, education is the only key which can open all the social locks of the society. Education as a continuous living phenomenon was looked by Swami Vivekananda in his own ways. He says that "*Our work should be mainly educational, both moral and intellectual*."

Socialisation and Education: Primitive stage to the advanced era

Education is a process of putting an individual into a learning situation with in a systematic framework. Ed-

ucation and socialization are complementary to each other as they share the common trait of *learning and human interaction*. An individual gets socialized and educated in the same manner through different mediums and it makes them adjoining factors in the overall learning and growth in the society. This process starts from the very beginning of one's interaction with the society and family becomes the first point of reference through which an individual starts learning things. Family as the smallest unit of the society trains a person through social norms and values which are made in the initial cum primitive stages when the human civilisations used to live within their tribes and clans without having any other social identity attached with each other, they used to connect through each other with the organic dialects. In written form, they used to draw things in symbolic forms to educate each other. The field sites which have been excavated in the different parts of the world have the proof that people used to educate each other by carving different symbols on the trees, leaves, and stones which later turned into major scripts of writing in their local and international cultural interactions.

The Formal education system and Methods of Teaching

The roots of the formal education system cannot be traced exact date, but it is there in our ancient texts and scriptures which we had during the Buddhist period, Vedic age, and other coordinates of history. The Vedas were the actual sources to understand the philosophy of life and system of education during the Vedic period. It consists of the four Vedas i.e. the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda. These were the sources of knowledge about the culture, civilization, life and philosophy of the peo-

ple of Ancient India. The aim of education during the Vedic period was to enable an Individual to understand truth and to attain Moksha. Moksha means 'liberation' and 'emancipation.' Also known as Mukti, it is derived from Sanskrit word '*mukt*' which means to be liberated from the life-death cycle. Vedic education also intended to develop piety and sense of respect; to train the human cognition, intellect and memory; to make one fit to have healthy progeny; to make one live long, and to bring immortality within reach (Dash, 2008, p. 20)

Methods of teaching during, the Vedic period emphasised repetitive recital or avritti. Mostly, three methods of teaching were being used by teachers during that period:

- (i) Sravana (Listening): Students listened to the words or texts uttered by the teacher and memorized them.
- (ii) Manana (Deliberation): It was an advanced method of teaching through which the students were taught how to reflect on the topic taught by the teacher. Intellectual appreciation of truth was the prominent feature of this method.
- (iii) Nidhidhyasana (Meditation): Through this method realization of truth was to be accomplished. The individual was helped by this method to realise the self.

The Buddhist Education System

Buddhism as a philosophical base and religion was established by the teachings of Buddha in and after 600 BC. The basic idea of '*Sangha*' was about sitting together and having discussions and conversations over things to understand them in the way they are and with other attached dimensions to them. Buddhism spread through the '*Monasteries*' and '*Vihars*', where educational activities were carried out by the monks. Only monks or '*Shramans*'

were authorised to impart education to the people. Thus, the monasteries and '*Vihars*' took the places of sacrificial altars and as a result, these places became the centres of leaving as well as cultural life. The aims of Buddhist education were individual as well as social. Under the individual aim, the development of moral character was emphasised; under the social aim, promotion of culture and social efficiency were more focused. The aim of education was to disseminate worldly and practical knowledge (Nayak, 2012). The most important aim of education was to show the path by which an individual can overcome the desires and ultimately achieve Nirvana.

The Modern Indian Education System

The education system in India has always been an combination of multiple sources and methods. India as a diverse country welcomed everyone from the globe to roam around and shared their methods of learning to make positive amendments in their own teaching and learning systems. The modern system of education was started by the Portuguese missionaries as early as 1510. Thereafter, the British Christian missionaries came to India and the education in modern India started with the advent of the British, the colonialism. The education during the reign of East India Company was initially neglected as the company was busy in consolidating its rule over India. When one lakh rupees was sanctioned in the budget for the education in India in 1813 (Charter Act), Macaulay Minutes (1835) was written and submitted to William Bentinck, the then Governor General of India. The minute shaped the destiny of Indian education. However, the significant educational reforms under the East India Company began after the Wood's Despatch of 1854.

Education system in pre-independent India

The major developments in Education started during the pre-independence period, notably from the recommendations of the Macaulay's Minutes (1835). It continued till the independence of India with many other developments in education.

The Macaulay's Minutes (1835)

The beginning of the state system of education in India under the British rule may be traced back to the year 1813 when the East India Company was compelled by the then circumstances, both socio-economic and political, to accept responsibility for education of the Indians. However, it has its real roots in Elphinstone's 'minutes' of 1823 in which it was stressed on establishing schools for teaching English. Subsequently, Macaulay advocated *education of the upper classes in India* and advised the government for the dissemination of western learning through the medium of English. Macaulay's intention was to 'create a class of people, Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, opinions, morals and intellect' (Nayak, 2012, p. 139). The Minute submitted by Lord Macaulay was further endorsed by Lord William Bentinck which paved the way for educational development in India.

The Despatch of 1854, popularly known as the Wood's Despatch, observed the situation and gave a directive for the promotion of mass education. The recommendations of the committee were positively considered by the Board of Directors. Wood's Despatch derives its name from Sir Charles Wood who was the President of the Board of Control for India (Aggarwal, 2011).

In order to achieve the major recommendations, the Despatch suggested the introduction of the following initiatives:

- i) The Despatch declared that in all the provinces, the Department of Public instruction should be set up. Its highest official should be designated as the Director of public Instruction, and he should be assisted by Deputy Education Director, Inspector and Deputy Inspectors of Schools.
- ii) The Despatch suggested for the setting up of the Universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras and if necessary, at any other places too. All the Universities were to be modelled on the London University which was then an examining body.
- iii) The third scheme suggested by the Despatch was the establishment of a *network of high schools* in the country. The Despatch emphasised on the graded schools.

iv) The Despatch suggested the Grant-in-aid system for the institutions which fulfilled certain qualifications. It also suggested that the rules and regulations for Grant-in-aid should be framed on the lines practised in England.

v) The Despatch laid importance on vocational education and to that end suggested the requirement of establishing vocational colleges and schools.

vi) It recommended for the inclusion of Indian Languages and literature during study. In order to secure properly qualified teachers, the desire for opening training schools in every province of India was suggested by the Despatch.

The first Indian Education Commission was appointed in February, 1882 by Lord Ripon with Sir William Hunter (Member of Viceroy's Executive Council) as Chairman with other twenty persons as members, besides the President. The Commission 72 is also well-known as the '*Hunter Commission*'. It was the outcome of an agitation began by the Council in London.

Indian University Commission (1902)

This Commission was set up fundamentally for two significant reasons. *Initially*, the university education system was extremely defective and nothing had been done till date to reorganise the system since its beginning. *Secondly*, the London University which acted as an ideal for the Indian universities had gone through a change in the year 1898. So, it was the correct time for the Indian university education system to undergo modification. Therefore, the Indian University Commission was set up by Lord Curzon on January 27, 1902 and in the same year by the month of June, the Commission gave its recommendations. The Commission's recommendations were accepted in the interest of strengthening and revamping of the present education system. On the basis of the Indian University Commission 1902, Indian University Act 1904 was enforced.

Hartog Committee, 1928-29

In May, 1928, the Simon Commission (An Indian Statutory Commission set up for examining into social, political, and economic developments of India) appointed an Auxiliary Committee, also called as the Hartog Committee, named after its chairman, Sir Philip Joseph Hartog. The Committee arrived at the conclusion that the expansion in the field of education was taking place at the cost of quality and that the immediate need of the hour was to improve the "*quality of education*" rather than to struggle to increase the quantity education. The Committee inquired into all the aspects of education in India and presented its report in September 1929. The Hartog Com-

mittee proposed various recommendations on primary education, secondary education, and Higher education.

Government of India Act, 1935

The Government of India Act, 1935 was an important step towards the advancement of education leading to the attainment of the political freedom. A new system of administration called as the Provincial Autonomy came into force from the year 1937 in eleven provinces of British India. The hopes of educational advancement were not realized as the congress remained in power for a short duration of just three years. The Act of 1919 had made education partly for all the Indian and partly for the reserved category. But the Act of 1935 removed all classifications and brought the whole educational system to be administered by the Central government and the Provincial governments.

Education System in the Post Independent India University Education Commission, 1948-49

After independence of India in 1947, the first major initiative in education taken by the Government was appointment of the University Education Commission 1948-49. The Commission was appointed under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. This Commission is better known as **Radhakrishnan Commission**.

The recommendations of the commission were as follows:

- i) The maintenance of the highest standards of teaching, research and examination in the universities and colleges under their control.
- ii) The courses of study in the universities with special reference to the maintenance of a sound balance between the Humanities and the Sciences and between pure science and technological training and the duration of such courses.
- iii) The standards of admission to university courses of study with reference to the desirability of an independent university entrance examination.
- iv) The provision for advanced study in Indian culture, history, literatures, languages, philosophy and fine arts
- v) The need for more universities on a regional or other basis.
- vi) The qualifications, conditions of service, salaries, privileges and functions of teachers and the encouragement of original research by teachers.

Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53

With the recommendation of an All-India Policy on Secondary Education laid down by the Central Advisory Board of Education made at its 14th

meeting held in January 1948, the Government of India appointed the Secondary Education Commission in September, 1952 with Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice Chancellor, Madras University as its Chairman. The Commission was directed to suggest measures for re-construction of secondary education with particular reference to its aims, organization, content and relationship with other levels of education.

Education Commission, 1964-66

Mudiliyar and Radhakrishnan Commission gave certain recommendations which were followed in the Education Commission 1964. The basic idea was to re-organise and re-orient all the stages of education i.e. primary, Secondary, University and Technical Education. Therefore, the Government of India appointed the Education Commission in 1964 under the Chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari which is popularly known as **Kothari Commission** (Nayak, 2012). The main objective of this Commission was to assess the whole educational system in India. The report comprises recommendations on all aspects of education. It covers education at all stages from the pre-primary through the secondary to the higher. The Commission's recommendations covered different areas such as reforms needed in education including a language policy; structure and quality in education; and various aspects of school education including achieving the universal retention. It highlights not only the present defects in the system at each level, but also offers practical recommendations for eradicating them.

National Policy on Education, 1968

The National Education policy 1968 was aimed to encourage national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture and to strengthen national integration. The National Policy had given its recommendations on the following aspects:

- i) Free and compulsory education
- ii) Status, emoluments, and education of teachers
- iii) Development of languages
- iv) Regional languages
- v) Implementation of three language formula
- vi) Achieving equal educational opportunities.

National Policy on Education, 1986

The emphasis of the National Policy on Education was on the *vocationalization of education*. The term vocationalization was used to align education with areas like agriculture, rural *development* programmes, communication and other areas concerned as they were with the overall

development of the economy. The policy also stressed the significance of Open University System of education to expand faster the level of higher education. The National Policy on Education specified that the nation should produce men and women with skills to use the recent and modern technology so that they can earn their livelihood without much suffering. The National Policy on Education 1986 considered education as a continuum. To earn the maximum benefits of the productive human resources of the country, the best mode is through spreading education. Accordingly, on the 7th May, 1990, the Government of India announced the appointment of a new committee "to review the National Policy on Education 1986"

Revised National Policy on Education, 1992

The National Policy on Education 1986 was modified in 1992 by the Programme of Action (PoA), 1992 under the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. The revised recommendations were implemented on certain aspects like equity, social justice and education; early childhood care and education; adult and continuing education; education and right to work, higher education technical and management education; and resources of education.

Contribution of the Five-year plans

The five years have played a very important part in the operationalization of governance in the country. They were the blueprints which were used by the governments to take idea of good governance from the policy formulation to ground level execution. They were introduced in 1951 are operational till now. In between, there have been many major changes which happened in their structures and functions for better functioning and outputs.

The five year plans in the area of education have tried covered all the dimensions of the education in the country. It starts from the primary level and flows towards secondary, college, university level and technical education. Many schools and universities were opened by the government in last many years. It is followed by the change in the curriculum and class patterns. The overall structure of many courses got changed as per the need of the time and introduced in new forms and patterns. The state expenditure on the education has risen over time and more contribution is given to the education by all the working governments.

The National Education policy 2020

The National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of

our country. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, including SDG4, while building upon India's traditions and value systems. Education Policy lays particular emphasis on the development of the creative potential of everyone. It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities - both the 'foundational capacities' of literacy and numeracy and 'higher-order' cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving - but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions. The fundamental principles that will guide both the education system at large, as well as the individual institutions within it are:

- Recognizing, identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each student, by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres;
- According the highest priority to achieving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy by all students by Grade 3;
- Flexibility, so that learners can choose their learning trajectories and programmes, and thereby choose their own paths in life according to their talents and interests;
- No hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning;
- Multi-disciplinarity and a holistic education across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary world in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge;
- Emphasis on conceptual understanding rather than rote learning and learning-for-exams;
- Creativity and critical thinking to encourage logical decision-making and innovation;
- Ethics and human & Constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice;
- Promoting multilingualism and the power of language in teaching and learning;
- Life skills such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience;
- Focus on regular formative assessment for learning rather than the summative assessment that encourages today's 'coaching culture';

- Extensive use of technology in teaching and learning, removing language barriers, increasing access for Divyang students, and educational planning and management;
- Respect for diversity and respect for the local context in all curriculum, pedagogy, and policy, always keeping in mind that education is a concurrent subject;
- Full equity and inclusion as the cornerstone of all educational decisions to ensure that all students are able to thrive in the education system;
- Synergy in curriculum across all levels of education from early childhood care and education to school education to higher education;
- Teachers and faculty as the heart of the learning process - their recruitment, continuous professional development, positive working environments and service conditions;
- A 'light but tight' regulatory framework to ensure integrity, transparency, and resource efficiency of the educational system through audit and public disclosure while encouraging innovation and out-of-the-box ideas through autonomy, good governance, and empowerment;
- Outstanding research as a co requisite for outstanding education and development;
- Continuous review of progress based on sustained research and regular assessment by educational experts;

People who are left out in the journey

Education in India has travelled a long journey from centuries. It changed its courses and actions over time in accordance with the need of the moment. It has been a continuous process which is never ending in its nature and remains with an individual throughout his or her life. The origin of government and governance gave a way to the phenomenon and made it more and more accessible for the people on ground. Various policies, schemes, acts and programs were sketched through which the education can be taken up to the people on the ground level. Especially to the people who were left out in the process. These left out people were the marginalised groups who remained out of the social order due to social exclusion practised by the other communities of the society. These communities were:

- i) Women
- ii) Dalits
- iii) Tribals
- iv) Transgenders
- v) Poor's

These communities were kept out of the social as well as educational system for many centuries. After the introduction of the constitution of India, some

sections of the society got some space in state agencies via reservation policies and other schemes of the state. These schemes have positively impacted their lives and gave them the space they deserve in the state and society.

But, when we look at the flow of education system in the country, there are many aspects through which we can look and understand it. It gave a new path for the human development in the country and opened many doors for the people. It created a space through which people got into many good places which eventually changed their lives and standard of living. The state intervention in the area of education has given many opportunities to the people. But there are certain things which were got ignored by the law makers and implementers who are serving the state.

Relooking at the idea of "Quality Education" and Education as 'Human Rights'

Quality education encompasses several key elements that contribute to the holistic development of individuals. And it is only possible when education must be considered as 'human rights' for all. Here are some aspects that are often considered integral to quality education:

- 1. Curriculum:** A well-designed curriculum that is comprehensive, up-to-date, and aligned with educational standards is crucial. It should cover a wide range of subjects and provide opportunities for both academic and personal growth.
- 2. Qualified Teachers:** Competent and motivated teachers play a central role in delivering quality education. They should not only possess expertise in their subject matter but also be skilled in instructional methods, classroom management, and fostering a supportive learning environment.
- 3. Equitable Access:** Quality education should be accessible to all, regardless of socioeconomic background, gender, ethnicity, or physical ability. Efforts to address disparities in access to education are essential for achieving educational equity.
- 4. Engaging Teaching:** Effective teaching methods that promote active learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity are vital. Interactive and experiential learning experiences can enhance student engagement and understanding.
- 5. Supportive Learning Environment:** Schools should cultivate a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where students feel valued, respected, and empowered to learn. Positive relationships among students, teachers, and parents contribute to a conducive learning atmosphere.

6. Continuous Assessment and Feedback: Regular assessment and feedback mechanisms help monitor student progress, identify areas for improvement, and adjust teaching strategies accordingly. Formative assessments, in particular, enable teachers to provide timely support to students.

7. Integration of Technology: Meaningful integration of technology can enhance teaching and learning experiences, facilitate access to information, and develop digital literacy skills essential for success in the 21st century.

8. Life Skills and Development: Beyond academic knowledge, education should also focus on developing essential life skills such as communication, collaboration, resilience, empathy, and ethical decision-making.

9. Cultural Relevance: Recognizing and incorporating diverse cultural perspectives into the curriculum promotes inclusivity and helps students develop a global mindset, cultural awareness, and appreciation for diversity.

10. Community Engagement: Collaboration with parents, communities, and relevant stakeholders fosters a sense of shared responsibility for education and strengthens the support system for learners.

By addressing the above elements comprehensively, educational institutions can strive to provide quality education that equips students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to thrive in an ever-changing world. And education is being as 'human rights' will automatically create more scope for the marginalised people to get education.

When we look at the country with a marginalised friendly, academic, and sceptical lens, then we can try to connect the locations of the people who were thrown out of the system even after having so many initiatives from the side of the state. When we look at the socio-economic structure of the Indian society in the contemporary times, we will be able to understand that in the name of good governance, multiple development plans and quality education, some people got excluded again. But the interesting scenario is that these people cover the majority population of the country. The education system which we proposed earlier by different governments have not reached them with the expected pace. At the same time, there are other social factors which have played a very important role in their execution as the people who were in power were from the dominant sections of the society and never wanted the marginalised people to come forward in the main stream society.

When we look back and understand the idea of "Quality education", we have to understand with a more compassionate lens. Within the framework of "Quality Education", we need to cover each and every point and understand how it differs from the promise which were made or is made by the new government of their election agenda. The curriculum which is proposed in all the segments plays a very important role in all the forms of education. But, getting access to the curriculum and working with the pace of it are two different aspects.

In India, everything is distributed to the people on the basis of their identities and classes. Getting access to equitable education becomes a bigger task for the people on the margins. It eventually became the major reason why they were and are not represented in the major educational institutions. They have no equal resources distributed among them due to which their access to education becomes difficult. Pedagogy and learning environment plays equally a very important role in the process of education. In the remotest locations of the country where people have their organic ways of living, introducing the pedagogies which are very alien to them and also, the learning environment provided to them is very discriminatory in nature. The dropout rates among the backward sections especially among the SC (Scheduled Castes) and ST (Scheduled Tribes) have increased drastically from 2016 to 2020 due to very nature of caste oppression and discrimination faced by the marginalised students in the educational institutions at various levels. Therefore, education must be considered as 'human rights', only then marginalised will get real justice.

The integration of technology in Education has shifted towards the digitalization which showed during the COVID times from 2020 when the whole education system shifted to the ONLINE mode of education. Here, the people who were having access to all kinds of gadgets and technology took all the benefits of online education system. But people who reside in the areas where there are no internet connections faced a lot of troubles in getting the education. In addition, getting admission and examination process online created a lot of hurdles for the students in rural areas as they have no proper access to the medium of communications and source of support.

But, what is the Way Forward?

The whole idea of providing and getting education flows is to create an individual responsible citizen to making productive asset for the country, so that he or she can serve the nation with the form of education and skill set he or she have acquired over time. In last

seven decades, the education system in India took many turns in order to make it more accessible, affordable and usable. Multiple plans, programs and policies were introduced by the state to include more and more people into the mainstream education system, but there are many gaps we have found in the system due to which many of them especially marginalized or underprivileged are still residing on the margins. The major benefits of the education system have reached the people who were already privileged and were having resources in their hands. It maintained the difference between the haves and haven't in the society. The state based initiative impacted only a selective portion of the society who was the people already equipped with everything or major shares of the benefits.

The pragmatic school of thought who deals with the concept of problem solving can give us a way for solving some of the problems in linkage with the education system in India, which are as follows:

1. Teacher Student Ratio: The Teacher student ratio in the country is facing a lot of imbalances due to the lack of appointments. A lot of qualified people having all the required qualifications for the jobs are not getting employments. In the parallel world, the educational institutions are facing trouble due to lack of qualified teachers in the schools and colleges. The state should take positive actions for raising the status of school education and should work on the recruitment of new people to maintain the student teacher ratio in the educational institutions.

2. Expenditure on Education: The state expenditure on education is very low. It is around 4.5 percent. The low investment in the education sector is one of the major factors responsible for the low output from the sector. The state should invest in the central policies on the education to make it accessible more and more for the students who are residing in the remotest areas of the country.

3. Youth centric policies: The state should look forward to form youth centric policies as India is Youth populated country. It means that the majority population of the country is youth. It is that states duty to invest more in the youth development programs through their interventions.

4. Skill Development: The leading countries of the world have one thing in common is that they all have invested in heavy industries, technology, and skill development. Skill development is one of the most important aspects which are related with the overall development of the country in linkage with the education system. India is service sector

economy in majority so the Indian state should invest in the skill development programs in addition to establish heavy industries in the country.

5. Professional Courses: The state need to work upon increasing the space for the professional courses in the countries education system in addition to the academic courses. The professional courses are employment oriented in nature. So it becomes easy for an individual to get a job in the market.

6. Approaching grass roots: Majority of the Indian population resides in the villages of the country. Illiteracy and unemployment leads to migration of people from the rural areas to the urban belts of the country which is creating misbalance in the population as the working population is concentrating in some urban areas and the remaining part of the country is having vacuum of the labours in the local areas. The state in this regard should invest in the local educational institutions. In other words, the state should approach the rural areas and invest in the educational institutions in order to make education accessible for all the sections of the society.

7. Inclusion of the left outs: In the last seven decades of independent governance, there have been many policies and programs created by different governments but there is huge population of the country is struggling to get good quality education due to various socio-political reasons which worked time to time. The state should take positive actions in ensuring the inclusion of such sections of the society in the main stream education tend to the social system.

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RELIGIOSIZATION OF EDUCATION AND SECULAR EDUCATION IN TURKEY



Wikimedia common: A 19th-century depiction of Galileo before the Holy Office, by Joseph-Nicolas Robert-Fleury
File:Galileo before the Holy Office - Joseph-Nicolas Robert-Fleury, 1847.png

Prologue

The religiosization of education can be defined as the process of organization and configuration of the educational system in accordance with pre-determined objectives, in which the form, content, methods, lectures and materials used in the teaching-education process are based to a large extent on religious norms and references.

While commercialization and privatization practices are intensifying in education in Turkey, the Ministry of National Education is gradually introducing religious elements into the educational process in almost every field, from the design of the curriculum to practical applications. The steps in the direction of religiosization that have been taken in recent years, in open defiance of the most fundamental principles of educational science, have begun to exert psychological pressure on parents and students.

The Republic of Turkey, since its foundation in 1923, was inspired by the Western world and adopted an educational model based on secular and scientific education. Religious schools were closed, gender separated education was abolished, coeducation was introduced, and a secular scientific approach was adopted in the education system. Interventions to religionize the educational system, in which religious classes are optional and science and culture classes are predominant, have been frequent, but their effects have been limited.

We can start the process of religiosization of education in Turkey with

the coup d'état of September 12, 1980. The official ideology of the September 12 coup d'état was the "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" and the imposition of compulsory religious classes played an important role in the process of structuring the educational system in this sense and all students were obliged to receive religious classes. Religious communities and groups, whether openly or secretly supported, expanded rapidly, and Quran courses and Imam Hatip schools (religious vocational schools) took important and effective steps towards the religiosization of education in Turkey.

The education system in Turkey has been undergoing a major and drastic transformation, especially since 1980, with the impact of the 'market and religion-oriented' policies adopted in all areas. It is obvious that this process implies that the meaning and function of education and child raising are going to be determined by an educational system that is totally market-oriented in one aspect and dominated by conservative religious ideology in the other.

The "Turkish-Islamist Synthesis" approach, which was inherited by the political power of the September 12 regime, has been tried to be implemented step by step in the last 22 years, and has surrounded the whole educational system like a spider web with the direct support of the government through schools, residences, courses, etc. of foundations and religious communities placed by the MEB (Ministry of National Education) in the educational system with projects and protocols.

The AKP, which demonstrates at every opportunity that it is the representative of the oppressive and authoritarian mentality of September 12, has shown that it is the most faithful heir of September 12 with the measures it has adopted in the name of the religiosization of education. By means of the practices of religiosization of education, a single nationality (Turkish), a single faith (Islam) following a certain sect (Sunni-Hanafi) and a dominant gender (male) with a conservative religious mentality have been imposed, which has become an important means of discrimination and marginalization against segments of society whose ethnic identity, belief or sect is different.

The practices of shaping education according to religious norms and references, both in terms of content and form, which have been implemented step by step during the AKP government, have become more concrete in recent years. Non-scientific interventions in the educational curriculum, reduction of philosophy-science classes, compulsory religious education for children with autism and mental disabilities, visits of preschool and elementary school students to mosques, de facto implementation of religious education at the preschool level and even in kindergartens, etc. stand out as prominent practices in terms of the religiosization of education in recent years.

CHILDREN AS THE TARGET GROUP OF THE RELIGIOSIZATION OF EDUCATION

Since preschool education is not compulsory in Turkey, most parents, especially in villages, are unable to send their children to preschool centers for reasons such as transportation fees, ancillary staff fees, etc. Quran courses, which look like kindergartens, were set up throughout the country by the Directorate of Religious Affairs, the official representative of Sunni Islam in Turkey, started to provide 'religious education' to preschool children between the ages of 4 and 6. It should be noted that while the state pre-school institutions require money from parents as fees, the courses provided by the Directorate of Religious Affairs are completely free of charge. The Quran

courses for 4-6 year olds provided by the Directorate of Religious Affairs became the alternative to preschool education by functioning as a de facto religious school. In accordance with a statement from the Directorate of Religious Affairs, some 214 thousand children between the ages of 4 and 6 receive education in Koranic courses under the Directorate of Religious Affairs.

The government, with the 4+4+4 regulation in education (4 years of primary, 4 years of secondary and 4 years of high school), which was implemented 12 years ago, intended to educate the generations in line with its political ideological objectives. But the government not satisfied with this and further expanded his goal and paved the way for religious education activities for the 4-6 age group, which he could more easily 'shape' in a conscious and programmed manner. It is inevitable that this situation will have very dangerous consequences for the healthy development of children. Imparting religious education, for whatever reason or justification, to preschool pupils aged 4 to 6, who are still in the age of play and whose concrete and abstract thinking abilities are not yet developed, fundamentally contradicts the principle of the 'best interests of the child' of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Turkey is a signatory.

Each age has a certain level of mental maturity, perception, reasoning and abstraction. Thus, in order to transmit information to the child, the child must first be able to understand it, and then he or she must not be crushed under the weight of that information and there must be no possibility that he or she will be harmed by a misunderstanding. As is often the case in the practice of "religious education" in Turkey, it is inevitable that religious education that creates feelings of fear, anxiety, hopelessness and guilt in children, and that exposes children to religious education at a time when they are not ready to acquire religious knowledge, will have negative effects on children.

The major disadvantage of religious education without a pedagogical basis is that children are constantly taught fear. Fear is the most important reference in religion for orienting toward one behavior or avoiding another. Above all, the fear of sin is taught. Nevertheless, in childhood it is important for children to make mistakes, to develop their own conscience and social judgment, listening to all kinds of voices coming from within before forming their own truths.

As for the religious education of children who are at the beginning of their developmental stage and in the phase of concrete thinking, it is inevitable that children have difficulties in understanding and internalizing the abstract concepts that they try to 'teach' in an education far from pedagogy and based on fear. For instance, when children of this age learn that they will be punished for their mistakes (sins), they believe that they are guilty even when they think about something, and they believe that the bad things that happen are due to their own mistakes. Over time, this feeling of guilt can cause children to become introverted, develop depressive feelings and experience dangerous behavioral disorders, even to the point of wanting to die.

From the configuration of the curriculum within the framework of religious values by the Ministry of National Education (MEB) to concrete practices through religious activities in schools, religious elements are gradually introduced into the educational process in almost all areas. The religiousization measures implemented over the past 22 years, ignoring the most basic principles of educational science and the developmental processes of students, have begun to create intense psychological pressure on students and parents.

WE MUST NOT DEFEND A 'MARKET AND RELIGION-CENTERED' EDUCATION, BUT A SECULAR-SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION.

Around the world, the education system is based on transmitting to children and young people the basic values of societies. The education system and schools are also places where social and cultural values are reproduced. The peculiarity of the school in cultural production is based on the naturalization of existing social differences through the redefinition of their limits. On the other hand, schools also provide environments and opportunities to question and critique these differences. In this sense, schools are also places where advocates of secular-scientific education and opponents of science often come into conflict.

The curriculum includes a total of 33 religious classes, one compulsory subject for 9 years and 3 electives for 8 years. It is not possible to find 33 classes of religion in any of the countries of the world with 12 years of compulsory education. Even the Islamic Republic of Iran does not have as many religious subjects as Turkey. Practices such as Imam Hatip High Secondary Schools, Imam Hatip High Schools and Hafiz Schools are encouraged by the MEB (Ministry of National Education), and there is open favoritism towards these schools.

All educational institutions in Turkey have rapidly moved away from their actual functions due to the racist, sectarian, discriminatory and authoritarian practices of the government. The oppression, violence and imposing practices applied by the government in all areas of social life, especially in education, show that there is an open challenge against secular education, egalitarian, free and democratic life.

The relationship between religion and education in societies is largely determined by the relationship between religion and the State. In other words, the stronger the influence of religious issues on the State, the more directive and imposing they are on the educational system. In this regard, it is impossible to think of the impact of religion on education apart from the existing political structure and the relations established with the ruling classes.

In secular education, the curriculum/teaching programs should be based on scientific knowledge and not on religious norms and references. The teaching programs should explain that there is no single, immutable truth, and that even inanimate matter dissolves and disintegrates, on the one hand, and organizes itself into new forms, on the other. In this way, students will better understand that, unlike the religious discourses often used in education, there can be no 'single, immutable' explanation of ever-changing reality.

Since religious teachings are specific to their own times and have local characteristics, their contradictory aspects with universal values have constantly accumulated in the historical progress of humanity. The exclusive definition of the sacred in terms of religion in religious education largely excludes the critical framework of science and the most basic features of social life. Comprehensive and compulsory education, which is the basis of modern society and social development, must respect the equality and fundamental rights of human beings and the best interests of the child, and must be organized in such a way as to enable children and young people to access existing knowledge and acquire critical thinking skills for their self-realization.

One of the important indicators of secular education is 'coeducation'. Coeducation is a practice that is not only related to the field of education, but has multifaceted social, sociological and pedagogical characteristics. It is desirable that boys and girls are educated together from childhood, that the different genders get to know each other, respect each other's differences and raise awareness of gender equality from early childhood. In this way, more balanced personalities are created and respect for others and gender

differences can be taught in the educational process.

What lies behind the desire of opponents of coeducation who want boys and girls to be educated first in separate classrooms and then in separate schools is the belief that, by educating children in separate environments according to their sex, they will be 'kept away from sin'. A similar approach can be seen in values education. Those who want education to be organized according to religious norms claim that girls and boys should be educated in separate schools or classes on religious grounds, and they understand only 'religious values' when talking about values education. This ignores the fact that schools are not only educational spaces, but also socialization spaces for children in terms of their healthy development.

It is important to question whether students will be formed with a critical mental structure or with an educational structure in which they accept the information given to them by memorizing it textually. Since no society is composed of people who share exactly the same beliefs, the State, which should be at the same distance from all beliefs, should not provide education only for a particular religion or belief.

Secularism is a scientific concept and has rules that apply to everyone. Although the implementation of secularism differs from country to country historically and sociologically, the common feature of all of them is that 'the State and religion are strictly separated from each other, religion should not interfere with the State and the State should not interfere with religion, and the State should not impose or direct each other'. The State may not enact laws based on religious norms, nor impose negative restrictions on the religious life of individuals, nor 'encourage' religious life. A secular State cannot interfere in matters such as 'what are the norms of religions, how they worship, where and when they worship'. If it interferes with this, it means that it interferes with the personal sphere of faith.

Secularism is an important concept that contemplates the separation of religious activities from State and economic life, that the State does not rely on religious principles and power, and that it obtains its power directly from the people. In this sense, secularism is not the enemy of religion, on the contrary, it is the insurance for all beliefs to live on equal terms. Therefore, in a secular country, the State must be impartial with all religions, believers and non-believers, and keep the same distance from all citizens.

Secular education, which is an important part of public education and

focuses on the human being, advocates that all human beings are equal, respectable, open to learning and development. Secularism means grounding State administration, education, legal norms and social life as a whole on reason and science, not on religious norms.

Epilogue

It is important to view education as a social phenomenon and to analyze the variables that define this phenomenon within a holistic framework. Education as a whole reflects the social reality in which we live. Observing the problem from this perspective, it becomes evident that the radical transformations observed in the educational system in recent years are not only the product of interventions made by the current government at various levels.

Throughout the world, educational systems are institutions that transmit to children and young people the fundamental values of societies. The education system and schools are also places where social and cultural values are reproduced. The peculiarity of the school in cultural production is the naturalization of existing social differences by redefining their limits. On the other hand, schools also provide environments and opportunities to question and critique these differences. In this perspective, Turkey's education system and schools are also areas of struggle in which those who advocate secular education and life and those who want to shape education and social life according to religious norms and references frequently confront each other.

The transformations of the educational system are neither separate nor independent from the development processes of the economic, social and political system. For this reason, in countries like Turkey the struggle for secularism and secular-scientific education cannot be separated from the struggle for fundamental rights, equality, freedom and democracy, especially children's rights, carried out in schools and society.

Either the education system and schools surrender completely to the dominant ideology or we fight for the kind of education that children and young people should receive and the type of society in which they should live. The reason for the existence of our union and our struggle in Turkey is the defense of public, democratic, secular, scientific education in the mother tongue as opposed to 'market and religion-centered' education.

* This article is published simultaneously in PoliTeknik International and PoliTeknik Español.



THE EARTHQUAKES OF 6 FEBRUARY FROM A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE

A CONFERENCE AT THE BLOCKAGE POINT

25 MAY 2024
START: 10.00-18.00

Türkiye Barolar Birliği
Litai Konukevi Ankara
Registration: deprem@gmail.com

OPENING SPEECHES

10.00 - 10.30

SPEAKER (INVITED)

Mayor of Çankaya Municipality

Arzu Çerkezoğlu

Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions

Mehmet Yeşildağ

United Public Labour Confederation

SPEAKER (INVITED)

Union of Turkish Bar Associations

SPEAKER (INVITED)

Turkish Medical Association

SESSIONS

EARTHQUAKE SURVEY RESULTS
10.40 - 11.00

**THE PROBLEM OF TRANSPARENCY SINCE
THE FIRST DAYS OF THE EARTHQUAKE**
11.00 - 12.00

Av. Dr. Kâzım Akbaş

Union of Turkish Bar Associations

Dr. Tevfik Usluoğlu

ASİ-DER Başkanı

What Happened in Ancient Antioch before and after the Earthquake? What Should Happen?

**ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION and
(PSYCHOLOGICAL) HEALTH**
1st Session
13.00 - 13.45

Kadem Özbay

Eğitim İş Genel Başkanı

İsmail Bozoğlan

Hatay Provincial Representative of
Private Sector Teachers Union

**ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION and
(PSYCHOLOGICAL) HEALTH**

2nd Session

13.45 - 15.00

Dr. Sevdar Yılmaz

Hatay Medical Chamber

Meltem Kılıç

Trauma and Disaster Mental Health Studies Association

**HATAY'S "RECONSTRUCTION PROCESS",
PRESERVATION OF URBAN CHARACTERISTICS AND
DEMOGRAPHICS**
15.30 - 17.00

Prof. Mehmet Tunçer

Çankaya University Faculty of Architecture,

Department of City and Regional Planning

Antakya Planning after the Earthquake:

What was done and what was not done

Dr. Tuğçe Tezer

Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University Faculty of Architecture,

Department of City and Regional Planning

The story of a city that is not disaster resilient:

Antakya before and after 6 February

Prof. Dr. Kemal Dil

Çankırı Karatekin University, Faculty of Humanities and Social

Sciences, Department of Sociology

Earthquake and the Danger of Habitat Destabilisation

**FREE HOUSING RIGHT,
SPECIAL DISASTER ZONE DECLARATION,
DISPUTES DISPOSSESSION**
17.15 - 18.15

Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal (INVITED)

United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing

Av. İbrahim Göçmen

Member of Hatay Bar Association and KADOP

Müslüm Kabadayı

Researcher-author

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