

## THE BIOLOGY OF KNOWING AND THE BIOLOGY OF LOVING

# Education as viewed from the biological matrix of human existence

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## The responsibility for education: whose court is the ball in?

It seems to me important to reflect on questions that arise around the task of education. I propose to do so from an understanding of the relational dynamic of the biology of knowing and the biology of loving, or the biological matrix of human existence.

We live in a culture centered on relations of domination and submission. We are exposed to high levels of demand in the search for success. It is with alarm that we note the extent to which violence has increased in schools and universities, both public and private. Violence that is exhibited both between young people and toward their professors. Drug use has penetrated the school environment that was before "an area of safety for children" as well as universities that were "areas for research and creation" for the young. These are signs that something serious has damaged our living together.

Let us think seriously: What are we doing? How are we doing it? And who is doing it? Upon reflection, we see that we are immersed in a way of doing things in this patriarchal-matriarchal culture stemming from distrust and control. Control that submits ... submission that demands obedience ... obedience that generates fear and insecurity. From this emotional backdrop comes the lack of respect for oneself and for others. Parents, teachers, the State ... we try, from this environment of mistrust to do what we do and obtain what we wish through control. Control is the relational dynamic from which oneself and others arise denied capacities and talents, narrowing viewpoints, intelligence, and creativity, generating dependence, from which autonomy and self-respect are not possible.

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In this ambience of dependence, children and young people have no presence and disappear. In this culture we exercise control with sanctions and physical and psychological punishment: "spare the rod and spoil the child", an old patriarchal-matriarchal saying that still applies in thought and in action. Sanction and punish, punish and sanction; fostering violence and unlove. How do children and young people escape from so much unlove? Is control the way to generate areas for sane living, open to creation and reflection? Do we recognize that we are living immersed in a network of conversations that emphasizes success, control, that submits us and submits our children to high levels of demand, generating in them despair and frustration due to not being seen? Is not this relational space what one sees in most schools, universities, and organizations? What are and what have been the consequences of this way of relating to each other? It leads us to being trapped in constant pain; to suffering in different aspects of our lives. Teachers, parents, guardians, and all of those who participate in the educational process have lost the confidence of being able to generate a different kind of relational venue, from which could emerge responsible and ethical conduct in the mutual respect of collaboration. In this environment of despair, the responsibility for the task of education is passed from one to another, without anyone assuming responsibility.

And who is responsible for education? We are all responsible for and co-creators of this process. All adults who respect themselves and live autonomously with social and ethical awareness, should know that we are part of the continuing generation of the world and cosmos in which we

live. The pain and suffering here present, and the distrust and control come to be part of a natural way of doing things, generating a way of living that we do not desire. Nevertheless, it doesn't have to be that way.

It is not enough to declare that education is the transformation of the way we live together. We must feel ourselves to be invited to live and to live with others, responsibly answering all of the questions that arise: What does it mean to educate? How are we educating our children and young people? What do we want from education? What do educators want from the educational process? Is education only the task of schools? Who are the committed actors in this process? Who is responsible for the task of education?

Only through an opportunity for reflection that reveals to us our relational multi-dimensionality can we generate a new look at ourselves, converting ourselves into adults on the cutting line of change, taking upon ourselves responsibility for the task of education: "*educating is a transformational process in how all involved actors interrelate and, if we wish our children to grow up as autonomous beings respecting themselves and with a social conscience, we must live with them respecting them and respecting ourselves in the continuous creation of a relationship based on mutual trust and respect*" (H.M.R.). It is not enough to say that the future of humanity is not the children, but rather the adults with whom they live, entering seriously as individuals into a conscious process of continual change that leads us to transform ourselves into adult persons with whom children and young people wish to live and respect. This is our task as a human community.

## WHAT DO WE DO when we educate?

To educate is to do in an artificial manner something that should occur spontaneously within the family and community. Hereafter, we will refer to educating people who educate themselves.

Those being educated transform themselves in their relationships with adults. Now, families and communities do not provide all of the experience that the person being educa-

ted must have in order to be an adult able to support himself or herself as a member of the larger community to be joined. Adults are not prepared only within the family. We require a special environment: schools, whether kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, or universities. When we refer to schools we mean the educational environment in general.

Learning is transforming how we live together. Those being educated become adults of one kind or another according to how they have experienced this transformation. They do not learn only mathematics or history, but rather they basically learn to live with their teacher of math and history, and learn to think, react, and see with them. They make up their psychic space with their teachers, and at times do so by rejecting that which teachers want them to learn.

If we want education to mean creating opportunities for relating together, in which those being educated are transformed into adults able to live democratically as beings who respect themselves and are not afraid of disappearing in the collaboration, then they must live with teachers who live this kind of life and live with them in an environment in which different subjects are only particular modes of carrying out this living together. Our task as adults is to create these opportunities for mutually relating.

The student who spends time with a biology teacher who uses his "biologizing" in terms of respecting and giving attention to the difficulties that his students may have will spontaneously incorporate the outlook of biology into his life. Biology will be the instrument of relating and through which he will transform the student into a socially integrated, self-confident adult with

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the capacity to collaborate and learn anything without losing his social conscience and, therefore, his ethic.

The task of education is to produce democratic adults. One must create a school venue in which teachers have the skills appropriate for this task. For example, in order to make



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mathematics an opportunity for relating as described, the teacher must master much more than the mathematics which the children are to learn in their school experience. The same is the case for physics, history, natural sciences, or biology. In order to guide the transformation of students into democratic adults, a teacher must possess resources of reflection and action with the children within a relationship in which they will not be afraid to be challenged by the momentary difficulties that they may encounter. This is possible only if teachers have reflexive autonomy, and respect for themselves and their students.

Education as a phenomenon in transformed personal relations is a relational venue in which the student does not learn a subject, but rather learns a way of living with others.

The student learns a way of being a human being. This relational transformation is not exclusive to human beings. It happens to mammals, and depending on the species, to a greater or lesser extent with all animals. The difficulty of returning to the wild an animal of a species threatened by extinction—for example, a lion, a cheetah, a small gorilla—lies in re-establishing the animal in its world so that it is a lion, cheetah, or gorilla, and not a semi-humanized animal. This is so because it is a lion, cheetah, or gorilla not due to genes, but rather based on living in the animal community to which it belongs.

Genetics is the initial condition, a point of departure. From this point of departure it is possible to grow in one way or another, depending on the environment. This is particularly visible in the diversity of human forms that can be assumed. For this reason, education is the most fundamental aspect of

current human relations; specifying the venue for training children to be adults and that which they will reproduce with their children when they are adults. On the way that children relate will determine the kind of adults that they will be. Children are not the future of the human community. It is we adults who are. We are the future of our children because how they will be depends upon how they live with us. The future lies in our present.

For this reason, it is important to decide now if we want democratic relations in

our future: a future of collaboration and mutual respect, with participation in common projects linked to the well-being of the community to which one belongs. Only by living like this can students grow as beings able to generate this kind of world, by making our present their future. In order that they be guided in their training as citizens, it is essential that teachers recuperate their dignity, to once again respect themselves and their profession, even in the difficult circumstances in which they live.

## **DEMOCRACY: work of art in living together in mutual respect**

Self-esteem is often mentioned as being important to students. We exchange the notion of self-esteem for that of acceptance and respect for oneself. We believe that esteem is an evaluative opinion, and an evaluative opinion about oneself is not the key. What is important is to focus on acceptance and respect for oneself in order not to have to question ones' own legitimacy nor that of others. Collaboration exists only when relations are based on legitimacy of being, which implies respect for oneself and respect for others.

Collaboration and autonomy do not involve the negation of the other; one does not become a complete individual in opposition to others, but rather finds creative freedom in collaboration because one is autonomous. Being autonomous in regard to parents and teachers doesn't mean opposing oneself to them. One is autonomous from within. Autonomy

is centered on respect for oneself, being able to have opinions and disagree, without such disagreement being an offense. Rather, it is an opportunity for reflection. Autonomy is essential in the social relations of adults in a common project because it is the basis for collaboration. Adults generate opportunities for relating in which it is possible to collaborate because the different participants exist within an autonomy that involves respect for themselves, with no excuse necessary for being so.

Adults are not afraid to listen and to participate with others in the grand common project that is living together democratically. Democracy is the only way of living together that provides the possibility of fulfillment of humans as autonomous beings able to act socially through collaboration in a common project. This is the great task of education: that *teachers, parents, and social actors, as adult beings, guide those being educated in a process of being transformed into adults who respect themselves without fear of losing their individuality in collaborating in a common project of living together in mutual respect.*

If we consider human history, we will see that democracy is the art of living together in the fulfillment of oneself in community with others based on respect for oneself and for others. Democracy leads to self-realization as an adult, something that happens in no other form of social relations.

More than a political system, democracy is the venue for fulfillment of human beings as autonomous, collaborative, responsible, imaginative, and open, with the possibility of generating opportunities for living together in mutual respect and collaboration. For this autonomy to exist, it must begin from the womb. Respect for and acceptance of oneself have to begin in the family, starting from the love that surrounds a new arrival, in the acceptance of his or her total legitimacy, and not in negation, criticism, or demands. The new being must be received within an atmosphere that is based neither on expectations of what he or she will be, nor what will happen to him or to her.



These needs to be the case throughout life, if we want to live together democratically. Living together democratically does not assure that we will not experience pain or suffering, times of struggle, or occasions of competition. But it means that competition will not be the emotional center of living together. Love is the emotion that constitutes and makes possible living together democratically. The subject of democracy in the area of education is not arbitrary; it is central. What we want from education at this historical moment is not to teach skills or knowledge for a technological, mercantile, or political future. Rather, it is to generate a transformation of students in their progress toward adult life so that they become autonomous adults who respect themselves, who collaborate and learn, and that they transform all things into social, ethical, and creative opportunities for living together democratically.



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## **DO WE EDUCATE FOR SELF-CONTROL, SELF-DEMANDS ... or for well-being?**

In the introduction to these thoughts, Ximena Dávila says: *"Upon reflection, we see that we are immersed in a way of doing things in this patriarchal-matriarchal culture stemming from distrust and control. Control that submits ... submission that demands obedience ... obedience that generates fear and insecurity. From this emotional backdrop comes the lack of respect for oneself and for others. Parents, teachers, the State ... we try, from this environment of mistrust to do what we do and obtain what we wish through control. Control is the relational dynamic from which oneself and others arise denied capacities and talents, narrowing viewpoints, intelligence, and creativity, generating dependence, from which autonomy and self-respect are not possible."*

From an emotional environment based on control and distrust, we require of students self-control of their emotions and actions. This involves reducing their demands to legitimately express their emotions and hinder their possibilities to question, make mistakes, and explore their multi-dimensionality in order to discover their own answers. It is not control or self-control of their emotions that they should acquire in the way to adult life; but rather awareness of their feelings, reflections on their activities, and responsible actions in the tasks that they assume in living cooperatively and with mutual respect with others in the community. We want students to become adults who are spontaneously ethical in their daily

conduct; that their ethical conduct does not stem from the control of a possible non-ethical one. Giving a child responsibility for his or her self-control is a terrible demand because it places an external reference on his or her conduct.

Children must be granted autonomy. That is, provide them with the means and circumstances for them to act from within themselves, seeing and understanding what they desire in order that they may learn to be spontaneously ethical and socially responsible.

Children learn to see, listen, smell, touch, and think or not think with their parents, siblings, teachers, and with social actors of the community to which they belong. Upon being autonomous, they themselves become referents for that which is proper or improper in their conduct, *"saying yes or no from within themselves and not from others"*. Demands and expectations are negations of autonomy because they foster dependence on the judgment of others regarding what one must do in order to satisfy expectations and demands.

Frequently, one speaks of acting responsibly and seriously in terms of self-esteem. It is better to speak of respect for oneself in regard to autonomous and responsible conduct. Esteem is valuing something with an external justification, a judgment. Self-esteem is valuing oneself using a criterion external to oneself; it is a judgment about oneself. Self-respect is not a judgment, but rather an emotion from which one may



act without questioning ones' own legitimacy and without feeling that one must justify ones' conduct to others. It is only possible to act in respect toward oneself and toward others based on the well-being that self-respect brings with it.

Well-being is the sensation of being in coherence with one's circumstances. It doesn't have to do with having the latest model car, or possessing this or that. It has to do with being comfortable within the circumstances in which one lives. According to our "well-being" or "unease" we fashion the world in which we live with our conscious or unconscious conduct. For our well-being we follow the path of conserving this sensation; as for unease, we follow strategies that seek to change its circumstances. We are agents of change of the world in which we live, and we will generate a world of well-being or of unease according to whether we generate venues of autonomy or dependence in our students.

## **WHERE DO WE EDUCATE: at home, in school, in the community, the biosphere, homosphere, cosmos?**

In this generation of worlds, humans have so much changed the natural world that we are taking it to its destruction. The biosphere is finished; now we live in the homosphere. We are destroying our environment and transforming it so that living in it will be impossible. Caring for the environment means respecting it, not exploiting it, not contaminating it as if it were a trash bin. Forests, clean water and air, ecological areas proper for humans and for other beings, are no longer self-sustaining. They do not have the autonomy of the biosphere; they now belong to the homosphere of transformations generated by our emotions according to what we want consciously and unconsciously to preserve in our lives. Well-being means being in harmony with the circumstance in which human as well as world creative, aesthetic, well-being is possible, and where that which is natural is part of human well-being. In order to conserve this well-being we must respect ourselves and respect our responsibility in the generation and conservation of well-being as a part of human ecology in harmony with other living beings.

Environmental awareness and responsibility are learned spontaneously in a relationship in which ecological awareness and responsibility are present in the conservation of the human habitat as one that we generate continually with our actions. Home, school, the community, biosphere, homosphere,

cosmos, spontaneously become educational contexts of the conservation of living together with ecological awareness and responsibility.

Any educational context can be a prison as well: the family, the classroom, and university if they exist in an atmosphere of demands, distrust, and control. Only if in the family, the classroom, or in any educational context there reigns a climate of respect, these places will not be a prison. Children require the company of adults in order to grow to be adults; for this reason they seek out adults who take them in, show them the dimensions of a desirable world, open a welcoming space where the child does not disappear in the relation, but rather in which they have a presence until the time that they arise as autonomous and responsible human beings.

The home, when there are no conflicts and without extreme poverty, offers operational dimensions that children need in order to integrate themselves into the human democratic community. Schools, universities, and communities to which they belong should offer these same conditions. If this were the case, children would learn the basic tasks for adult life in these relational contexts in respect to themselves that permits them to be responsible and happy democratic citizens. But it is not enough to learn tasks in order to live in mutual respect. That is learned living and relating in mutual respect, living thus in all parts, primarily during infancy, at home, the school, and the street.

Schools, being a broader world, offer relational dimensions that homes do not. The dimensions of the home are set by family and possibly neighbors if nearby or accessible, and now by television or radio. Still, schools provide a much broader world. There we find children, adults, and venues for reflection and questioning the wider world, such as laboratories and libraries, as well as other fundamental aspects of the life of citizens. Whether or not a school is a prison will depend on the adults that make it up. In the face of insufficiencies in the educational venue, the solution can only come from loving human relationships, not in replacing adults by machines.

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We may believe that the internet can replace libraries or museums. Everything that we call information in daily life can be found there. But the emotional multidimensionality of the relation with adults that children respect is not replaceable in human training. Education does not consist in delivering information. Those being educated acquire information (data, tasks, operational notions) in their relations with human adult worlds, for it is they with their conduct in any domain, who give to these data, tasks, and operational notions their informational character. Those being educated learn to be human beings with human beings with whom they live. If we wish to live in a world of mutual respect based on respect for ourselves in honesty, spontaneous ethical conduct and social responsibility, we should live that way. Adults as socially and ethically responsible educators are not replaceable if we wish to create a biologically human world of socially and ethically responsible persons.

At times it is said that a new human being is necessary. We don't think so. We need to recuperate the awareness that we are beings who exist in a unity of body and spirit, and for whom loving is the basis of autonomy and social relations. Therefore, we propose a change in the basic question, from the question of being to the question of doing, that carries with it epistemological and ontological consequences.

## **EPISTEMOLOGY?**

In order to recover the understanding of what is human and that we are body and spirit, we require an epistemological-ontological basis that allows us to understand human beings as biological beings. We must abandon the belief that I came independent of myself. Renouncing this, without understanding from where I do it, generates fear. We need to open a venue for reflection for teachers about the biological and cultural bases of what is human so that they make or preserve this epistemological-ontological effort with understanding of why it is so and guide their students so that the new vision appears in them naturally because they understand its bases. If this happens, training these children as adults with the characteristics that this effort implies will be the normal, natural and spontaneous way of being.

The great enemy of democratic relations lies in someone thinking that he or she knows more than others how things are and is thus not disposed to reflect. The enemy of reflection is the knowledge that we know. If I know, I don't look because I already know. Democratic relations demand that I am always



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willing to look, to reflect, and to not appropriate knowledge for myself. Since in democracy one is disposed toward mutual respect, one is open to examining the bases from which one affirms what one affirms. Knowing in democracy is not looking at things as such, but rather knowing the bases from which one affirms that something is and being willing to show it. That is, reflection. The key to this is to abandon certainties in order to look and assume what one sees from the standpoint of its doing, without supposing that this vision is independent from what one does. Democracy means opening oneself to reflection that makes it possible to see the bases from which one affirms that which one affirms. The emotion upon which democracy is based is loving.

Accepting as valid the statement that we are transformed according to the human relational space within which we live means that we learn to make our own distinctions and correlations of this relational space. The body is transformed according to the skills that we acquire, whether physical, psychic, or spiritual. If we jump and run, we acquire skills in jumping and running. If we play the piano, we acquire skills in playing the piano; if we interact with the computer, we acquire this skill. And this modifies the distinctions that we make in other dimensions. The human relational problem arises when we think that one or another of these skills is the most important, and we depreciate the others.

The nervous system functions by distinguishing configurations in the relational life of the organism. And what configurations of living to our students learn to distinguish? Those that live in the relational space within which human beings live. These configurations have to do with three fundamental aspects of living: **to feel emotions, to reason, and to do.**

We live in a world that emphasizes the use of technology in education. The consequences of this emphasis are not unimportant. There are many sensorial-effective skills that one can learn using computers. We learn sensorial-effective correlations that can be applied to any domain required, for their consequences belong to the area in which they are applied. But working in a virtual venue also changes the emotional factor of those who do so, experiencing the joys

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and fears evoked by doing so. However, emotions are never virtual, and most of our emotions are unconscious. Television, films, and video games are virtual environments that evoke emotions that change the non-emotional flux of our experience of living. Through these media we learn, in the best of cases, to manipulate virtual realities that provide operational skills, but always provoke emotional changes that have an impact on our living in other areas.

## **VIRTUAL EMOTIONS or living reflections in the classroom?**

We can speak of virtual realities in terms of the manipulation of space because one manipulates sensory factors and because the space arises in the sensorial-effective correlations proper to the meeting of the organism media and the media that makes it possible. Emotions are not virtual because they correspond to what occurs internally in the organism as a relational basis. If we see aggression, we live aggression and learn to live with aggression, unless we explicitly reject it. If we see tenderness, we live tenderness and we learn to live tenderness, unless it arises negated in our experiences with unlove.

Emotions are never virtual because we live that which we see as the presence of the present. It is no good to say, "it's only a movie". We live aggression, fear, repulsion, and tenderness, participating in the aggressive act, the repulsion, the fear, or tenderness as something legitimate for our lives, unless we reject it explicitly with some reflection that shows us that we aren't part of it. For this reason, television is potent, and under the pretense of delivering information or entertaining, manipulates the emotions and with it the relational lives of the viewers.

The world of virtual realities does not invite us to make reflexive correlations because it does not call upon us to examine the emotional bases of the act that it evokes. Virtual realities generate manipulations because the nervous system does not distinguish between illusion and perception, and the manipulation is present in the relational space in which we live, although it is virtual (in the eyes of the other). What we live watching television we live as if it were not virtual, and we associate

these emotions to living (doing, relating), whether this is virtual or not (before others). Emotions, as biological phenomenon, belong to the internal dynamic of the generation of space in the relational behaviors that an organism (animal) can experience at any given time, and are blind to the relational context of the organism in which they arise. Emotions are not changeable by reason. Only emotion changes emotion. We learn emotions from television, as a virtual space, evoked as if it were an emotion of our everyday lives.

Television programs manage the flow of human relations in terms of emotions. Television trains the emotions in a relational virtual space, in the same way that it can train, for example, to type or to drive an automobile without making mistakes. It guides the person in a space in which no errors are committed and one doesn't think about what one is doing, because there is not an adult person to guide reflection or to invite the person at the opportune time by offering emotional alternatives.

If there were an adult person present, he or she would say, "let's stop a moment and think about what happened", thus generating a relational opportunity in which uncertainties would arise in order to show the basis of what is happening. We cannot press a button to see what is the consequence of the reflection that a teacher evokes unless we actually do so. One must experience it with the teacher. They are irreplaceable, because they act from the basis of human emotions and temporality. They generate the temporality that makes possible the operationalization of reflection and correlating separate things. Teachers that live as adults conscious of and responsible for what they do will return time and again to make these reflexive correlations as long as they see that their students do not do so. They will not abandon them. They will continue with them lovingly in the practice of reflection until their students learn to do so.

In teaching via television this does not happen. The key in distance courses (*e-learning*) is not the manipulation of an instrument or of a set of ideas through suggestions made in the televised course or by computer. What are essential are the meetings or direct inter-actions between students and teachers. Being physically present is not only being bodily present: it is body, soul, and time. These are processes. Temporality is not a watch; it is a process. Physical presence is not material; it is a relational dynamic; the soul is not a fantasy; it is relational, reflexive flow. Body, time, and soul are in a reflection; they exist in questioning, in meandering, in making connections, etc. There is a set of processes that take up many minutes and cannot be skipped. Reflection is not a rational skill. It is an operation involving emotions and one learns it by relating to others.



## GLOBALIZATION and relational skills

Relational skills are modes of relating, not knowledge. They are not skills in the common sense of the term, but rather dimensions of social conscience that children should learn in their lives at home and in school, with their mothers, teachers, and with the different actors in the social and cultural space in which one lives. Listening, for example.

Listening consists of hearing and attending to what we hear and in which what the other says is valid. There are two ways of listening. In one, we attend to what we hear to the extent to what the other says coincides with what we think, and so in effect we are only listening to ourselves. The other consists of attending to what we hear when what the other says is valid. Others say what they say always from a domain of validity and legitimacy of their own present. If one does this, one hears what the other says and the other has presence. That which is social and democratic is based on this second kind of listening, from whence it is possible for loving conduct to arise.

We should learn this latter kind of listening at home. When a child says something to his or her mother, she listens not to the form of what is said, but from a perspective of the validity of what is said, and from this acts, understanding what the child is saying. At the same time, the child listens to its mother paying attention to the validity of what she says. In this kind of listening, emotion plays a part because it defines the domain of the validity of what is said. The form of what is said defines what is said as a particular occurrence in the domain of "occurrences" in which the person is speaking. This kind of listening demands respect. Without respect, we can never listen to one another because our judgment interferes.

Listening to others requires confidence in oneself. Only thus can one not be afraid of disappearing in hearing what is said and there is not risk in hearing it. Listening requires acceptance of oneself, a willingness to know that which one does not know. That which we listen to offers us an opportunity to learn and not be competing. In competing, listening is directed at seeing how we can be better than the other. Only if one listens and where what the other says is valid can what is said be an opportunity for a non-competitive relation in mutual respect without aggression.

We live in a culture focused on relations of domination, submission, and competition, with the consequences of isolation and loneliness, and therefore of pain and suffering for whole communities and ethnic groups throughout the

world. It is from this way of living that arises our enthusiasm in talking about the need for globalization. It is interesting to reflect about what we want to preserve when we speak of a globalized world. If we say that globalization occurs as a recovery of mutual respect and collaboration, this means that we wish to preserve well-being. And this is not trivial, given that all human life and relations follow the course of desires.

For this to occur, we must live in autonomy. Being autonomous means that we do not have conflicts caring for the space within which we exist in well-being; where self-respect (autonomy), caring for one's spouse, family, children, friends, does not mean controlling and restricting, but rather being respectful of these spaces and moving in accordance

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with others because we want their company. We know that the notion of globalization seems to point toward the expansion of mercantile space based on the search for profit for one, without much consideration for what happens to others. In any case, the subject is the emotion from which we listen, since it is this that will determine the course of the relation with others.

In order for me to be able to understand the emotions of others I must listen without fear of disappearing, from respect for myself. For globalization not to constitute a source of abuse and dependence, people and countries must be autonomous, being able to say nor or yes, without fear of lost opportunities and being left behind. Collaboration is only possible when based on respect and care for the world and for others. Globalization does not exist as collaboration when the basic emotion is the competitive struggle. Globalization doesn't exist by itself, but is always an individual phenomenon.

The United States, for example, is a very interesting country because it emerged in principle open to globalization, being a country of immigrants and as a world in which everything is possible anywhere. Buy the competitive expansion of this form of living led to the extinction of its original inhabitants and ways of life, because the competitive expansion of a way of life involves the extinction of other modes. The United States is a culture of globalized extension, and its citizens don't feel that they are in Minnesota, Massachusetts, or California. Perhaps there is now beginning to be an appreciation for local feelings. U.S. citizens belong to a history in which it makes no difference where one is born or dies. This "making no difference" is only possible to the

In Chile, for example, the privatization of electric companies and their internationalization through the sale of stock to Spanish companies, from the argument of globalization, says that what happens with electric companies has nothing to do with us, but is rather the concern of Spanish companies. When we say, "we are internationalized because our electric companies are Spanish", we do not recognize that we are conquered from the perspective of electricity. But what guides the activities of these companies is not the well-being of our country or of the Chileans that support it, but rather the interest in the companies as producers of wealth for a world outside of ours. In education, for there to be a collaboration of mutual respect it is essential that there be respect for the world in which we live, in the creation of a world of mutual respect.

## **IN OUR OPINION, what is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education?**

The Ministry of Education of Chile has a reduced capacity of effective action because it has delivered the task of education into the hands of the private sector, municipalities, and the free market. At the most, it can dictate certain general notions, such as the declaration of an education reform that is interpreted and reviewed outside of the ministry by schools that exist as private, business entities. It could create an opportunity for teachers to directly participate in a process of human training. This is done by generating opportunities for reflection and action of the type of human beings that we are and activities that restore to teachers confidence in themselves though a better understanding of who they are and what they do, as human beings, as teachers, and as adult persons. This opportunity should be focused on a process of spiritual and cognitive recuperation during their professional years. Thus, the ministry could guide, not in details of education, but in inspiring the educational process thanks to training in the biological and cultural fundamentals of teachers. **e**

extent that there is a federal State that defines a legality that protects all citizens wherever they are within its globalized space. But, is it thus with the globalization of which one speaks in the world today? If it is not, the dominant emotions will be greed and competition, and globalization will lead inevitably to the path of some exploiting others because in competition, the other does not have a human face; the other is only a threat or an inconvenience.

Globalization as a phenomenon of growth of communications is neither good nor bad. The important thing is the emotion that accompanies this growth. If we experience the globalization of communication from the perspective of competition, ambition, or vanity, it will be destructive for humans and for the biosphere. If we experience it from a perspective of mutual respect and collaboration for generating human well-being, it is possible that we will have a great opportunity to generate a desirable world.



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