

THE PERSONALITY OF A “FAIR SOCIETY CITIZEN” IN THE VIEWS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

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Abstract

Purpose of the Study: The article looks at the issues connected with civic education of personality that was discussed by several generations of the Frankfurt School theoreticians.

Methodology: The authors have conducted an analysis of the main papers devoted to the topic of character education of citizens written by representatives of the Frankfurt School.

Main Findings: The analysis has shown distinctive features of the views that theoreticians developed during different periods of scientific activity. Apart from that, the evolution of ideas about citizenship and problems faced by civil society expressed by philosophers, as well as their differences, which emerged over time, have been identified.

Keywords: Character Education, Frankfurt School, Citizenship Education, T. Adorno, E. Fromm, H. Marcuse.

INTRODUCTION

Analysis of socio-pedagogical processes in European countries and the usage of pedagogical theories and practical methods as spiritual and moral factors taking part in maintaining social stability are areas of current interest.

The experience of the modern education system definitely requires an analysis of socio-humanitarian knowledge in order to use it in the Russian education system and to implement the framework of citizens' social development ([Fedotova and Nikolaeva, 2014](#)). Therefore, the issues connected with the development of civil society should be analyzed within pedagogical research taking into consideration philosophical movements, such as the ideas expressed by representatives of the Frankfurt School.

The Frankfurt School came into the spotlight in the 1960s and influenced the social and political life of Europe against the backdrop of protest movements, especially the ones with the participation of students. In view of this, it is important to analyze the scientific work of the “first generation” of theoreticians, as well as followers of this movement that represented its “second wave”.

In the modern scientific community the subjects of civic spirit, education of citizens and development of civil society in democratic states are gaining relevance ([Khoronko, 2015](#)). The number of publications and citations on these subjects is increasing in such journals as the International Journal of Civic, Political, and Community Studies, Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, and European Journal of Political Theory.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The empirical basis of the research consists of the following materials:

1. The works “Negative Dialectics” (1966) ([Adorno, 2003](#)) and “The Authoritarian Personality” (1950) ([Adorno et al., 1950](#); [Adorno, 2001](#)) by Theodor Adorno as a representative of the “first generation” of the Frankfurt School”;
2. The works “Eros and Civilization” (1955) ([Marcuse, 2002](#); [Marcuse, 1960](#); [Marcuse, 1994](#)) and “One-Dimensional Man” (1964) ([Marcuse, 2002](#); [Fromm, 1941](#)) by Herbert Marcuse as a representative of the “second generation”;
3. The works “The Sane Society” (1955) ([Fromm, 2005](#)) and “The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness” (1973) ([Fromm, 1977](#)) by Erich Fromm who also represented the “second wave” of the Frankfurt School.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND LOGIC

The research was carried out in two stages in accordance with the chosen objectives and the following hypotheses.

In this research, we use the following hypothetical views that determine its plan and methodology:

1. Formation and development of views held by the theoreticians can be studied by researching the following resources:
 - Texts of works written during different periods of the Frankfurt School evolution;
 - Texts of works by theoreticians that contain the authors' vision and evaluative judgments on the issues of civic spirit and character education ([Davydov, 1977](#); [Wiggershaus, 1994](#); [Smith, 2002](#));
 - Sources confirming facts that influenced the worldview of the “Frankfurters” ([Funk, 2000](#); [Habermas, 1965](#); [Wolin, 1992](#); [McLaughlin, 1999](#); [Markov, 2018](#)).

In order to accomplish the research objectives, the following methods were used: content analysis, cluster analysis, comparative analysis, interpretation, and generalization.

At the stage of content analysis of group materials, the following approaches were used:

1. At the first stage of the research, we carried out an analysis and comparison of the works “The Authoritarian Personality” (1950) and “Negative Dialectics” (1966) by Adorno.
2. In the second stage of the research, we carried out an analysis of the works “Eros and Civilization” (1955) and “One-Dimensional Man” (1964) by Marcuse.
3. At the third stage of the research, the works by Fromm, a theoretician representing the “second generation” of the Frankfurt School, “The Sane Society” (1955) and “The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness” (1973) were analyzed.

RESULTS

Results of the first stage of the research

In order to carry out a more detailed research into the subject and identify the mindsets that characterize personality, we used content analysis of the main terms in the works “The Authoritarian Personality” (1950) and “Negative Dialectics” (1966) by Adorno by calculating the definitions connected with the issues of civic spirit and citizenship education. The results are presented in Figure 1.

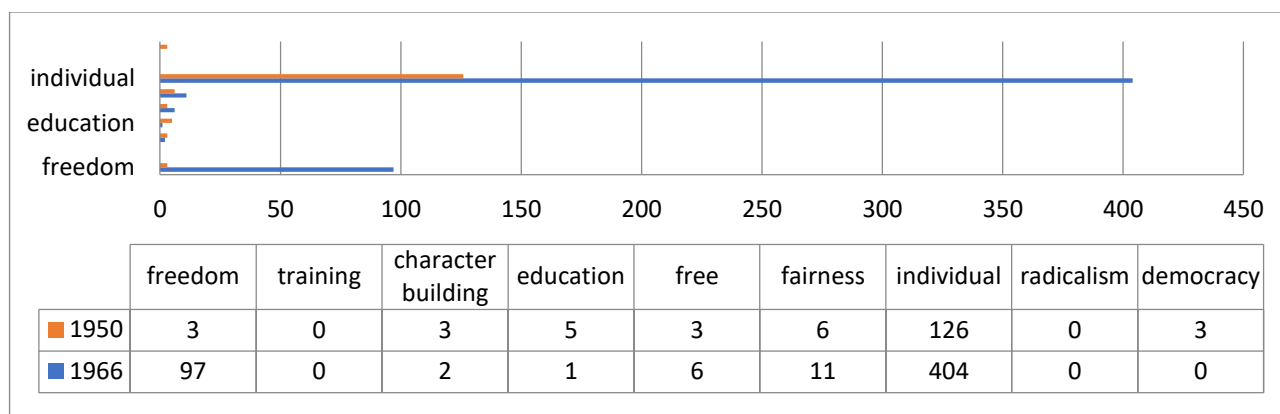


Figure 1: Usage frequency of terms in the works dated 1950 and 1966

The diagram suggests that Adorno did not use radical ideas in these works that were written over a decade. The philosopher was more interested in such terms as “freedom” and “individual”, he studied the questions of internal contradictions within a personality, but did not use such terms as “training”, “education” or “democracy”.

It should be noted that the questions of freedom started to prevail in the later work (1966) almost by 100%, as well as the issues connected with an individual — 404 mentioning in 1966 versus 126 mentioning in 1950.

Results of the second stage of the research

Results of the second stage of the research devoted to a comparison between the works “Eros and Civilization” (1955) and “One-Dimensional Man” (1964) by Marcuse are presented in Figure 2.

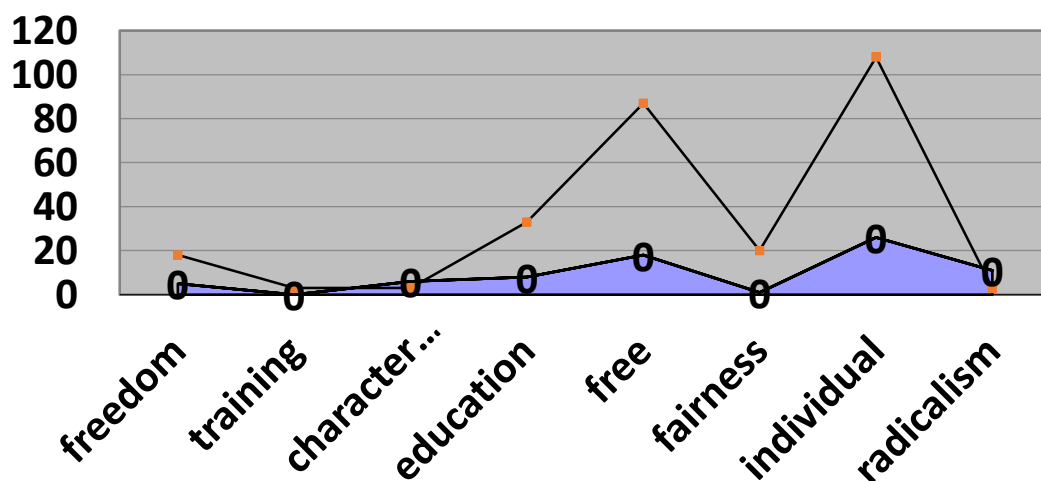


Figure 2: Comparison of the works “Eros and Civilization” (1955) and “One-Dimensional Man” (1964) by Marcuse

The diagram graphically demonstrates the transformation of the author's views over time, since the books were published with an interval of ten years. It should be noted that such categories as fairness and training were not mentioned in the 1955 publication and the author did not rely on these concepts. However, as far as the work "One-Dimensional Man" (1964) is concerned, although these categories did not hold the leading positions in this paper, they were used quite widely, and the author underlined their significance within this work.

Theoretical analysis of this publication has shown that the established technological civilization is the main problem for the society that hinders the development of civic characteristics by shifting personal needs to basic instincts that demand satisfaction of the pleasure principle (Tsurtzilina and Horonko, 2018).

The radicalism of views expressed by Marcuse can be clearly observed in his earlier work "Eros and Civilization" and outnumbered the frequency of this category in "One-Dimensional Man" several times. It is important to point out the position the writer took regarding pedagogical categories that are essential for this research: training, education and character building. The philosopher did not try to make a choice between "training" of a personality and their "character building" — they remained in the same positions over time, while the issues of "education" came to the fore and were three times as common as the same categories in the later work "One-Dimensional Man".

Besides, the issues connected with "freedom", "individual" and a "free" person, or citizen, also outnumbered their mentioning in the 1955 work by several times, and in 1964, they became the most important problems explored by the author, to which he drew the attention of readers and researchers. It should also be highlighted that the term "fairness" was not used by the author in his earlier work, but became one of the main concepts in his book written ten years later.

A conclusion can be drawn that Marcuse came to realize the importance of fairness, freedom of society and person in his later work "One-Dimensional Man" (1964). It indicates that his views about the education of a person in society and about an individual as a citizen in a civic and fair society evolved.

Results of the third stage of the research

To achieve higher clarity and identify features of the evolution of ideas expressed by Fromm, his works "The Sane Society" (1955) and "The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness" (1973) were analyzed and compared. The received comparative data are presented in Figure 3.

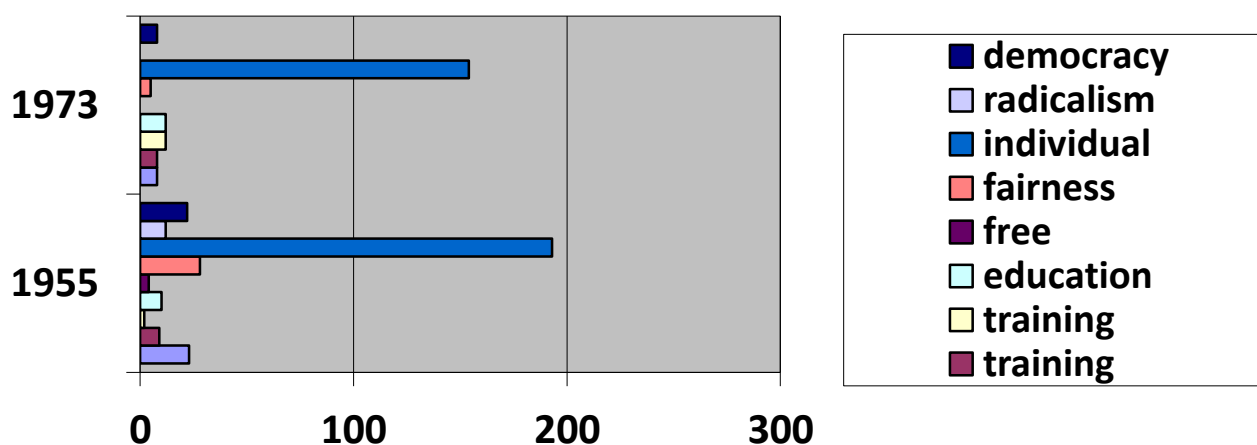


Figure 3: Analysis of the works by Fromm: "The Sane Society" (1955) and "The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness" (1973)

Most notably, the diagram shows the uneven distribution of categories in the first publication "The Sane Society" (1955), judging by which we can identify the author's interest in the issues of civic spirit and pedagogical ideas regarding citizenship education. In this work, Fromm, in the first place, explored such categories as "fairness", "democracy" and "freedom". The issue of radicalism can be called the second most important subject for Fromm, but in the later paper "The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness" (1973), it was not used.

It should be mentioned that questions connected with an "individual" and manifestations of individuality were at a high level in both works, outnumbering others, even the most common categories by 5-6 times.

The topics of education and character building took equal positions in the later work, although in the earlier paper the author hardly took the issues of character building into consideration and did not discuss the significance of this aspect.

Looking at the positions taken by the concepts "democracy" and "fairness" in the work published in 1973, one can say that they were of less interest to Fromm and that he focused on the study of personality and internal resources of the society.

CONCLUSION

As international researchers in the field of philosophy, pedagogics and social studies note, the theoretical legacy of the Frankfurt School is now popular among followers of different political and ideological movements. At the same time, it is a source of productive ideas that are formulated, clarified and analyzed by representatives of modern pedagogical fields.

The ideas of this school of thought are developed and used by various researchers. Probably, there is little left from the original ideas expressed by the founders of the Frankfurt School and their followers. The ideas are developing further along with their own ways independently of the concepts suggested by initial ideologists. However, even this fact indicates the usage and development of such theoretical grounds by modern researchers, which means that these ideas remain relevant and popular in the scientific community.

The results of the conducted research have clearly demonstrated the development and differences between the ideas expressed by the “first” and “second” generations of the Frankfurt School, as well as the transformation of the ideas. However, in order to continue this research, it is necessary to study and compare all works by theoreticians that are considered followers of the Frankfurt School that will help to identify the reasons underlying their philosophy. In addition, it is suggested that studies of philosophers’ personalities, their lives, and career paths can become a topic for in-depth analysis in the future.

AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have contributed equally.

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