

From Spirituality to Technontology in Education¹

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1. A WORLD THAT IS CERTAINLY MODERN BUT STILL BARBARIC

Following the traumatic earthquake caused by the wave of terrorist attacks in France in 2015 and its aftershocks in Belgium, Germany and Great Britain, many people questioned the possibility of spirituality in education.

For many, a concern on the interest and the possible place of the spiritual in the educational processes found its source following the traumatic collective earthquake caused by the wave of attacks in France in 2015 and then by its aftershocks in Belgium, Germany and Great Britain. These dramatic events have rekindled existential questions that professionals had previously put to one side by lack of a dedicated institutional space and time to reflect on educational bodies aims and modes of operation.

This concern is motivated by the idea that our world ought to be passed these behaviors. Indeed, the immense advances in modern technology and the easy access to information it provides, combined with worldwide available primary education seem far from being up to the level we would hope for.

This concern is therefore based on an appreciation of a contemporary humanity and state of the world that seems far from being up to the level that would have been hoped for by the immense advances in modern technology, including access to information, combined with a very large scale of primary education across the planet. According to UNESCO's 2013 figures, 92% of the world's population had a mobile phone (55% in developing countries), and 82% of the world's population had completed basic education, the equivalent of primary school (74% in developing countries). Seven years later, the *Digital Report 2020* produced by *We Are Social* and *Hootsuite*, based on data provided by the UN and government sources, counts for a world population of 7.75 billion people: 17.2% of women and 11.2% of men over 15 are illiterate; "103% (of) mobile connections as a percentage of the total population" (due to the possession of multiple devices by some owners and/or of multiple-users for each device); 49% of people are active on social media; 59% of internet users, for an average of 6h43 min, i.e., 40% of the daily waking time. For all that, the overall global situation of humanity still does not seem to have improved, as if, according to the findings of the *Complexity Intelligence Network*, global connectivity has not resulted in a global human consciousness. Despite these incredible advances, it seems as if the overall global situation of humanity still hasn't improved. In the words of *Complexity Intelligence Network*, it looks as if global connectivity has not yet resulted in a global human consciousness. It is still being seen as such because of the lack of access to clean water for more than two billion people in 2019,

massive displacement of populations for economic, ecological or armed conflict reasons that are not decreasing etc.

A central hypothesis of my work is that if the spiritual dimension is in some way already present in schools' curricula and in the common base of schools and colleges' knowledge, skills and culture (especially through the humanities and relational psycho-social skills), then spirituality would never be exercised in a way that is sufficiently conscious. From this, I argue that spirituality's positive effects can never be fully realized because it would never be exercised in a way that is sufficiently conscious for it to be beneficial

This state of affairs, linked to a kind of repression, would slow down the capacity for the formation and emergence of a person who is responsible and acts in a positive manner towards himself, others and the planet. Therefore, the ongoing objective is to try to better understand and accompany the multi-referential process of our humanization through education, insofar as, as Erasmus stated in the Renaissance: "We are not born human beings, we each become one".

2. THREE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR MAKING THE SPIRITUAL OPERATIONAL IN

The main concepts and epistemologies that I mobilize to enable this type of work and to develop usable proposals in Education and Training Sciences are based on three areas:

1. Firstly, Transdisciplinarity (Nicolescu, 1996), with complex thinking (Morin, 1992), systems theory (Bertalanffy and Chabrol, 2012) and the issue of consciousness (Guillemant and Morisson, 2015).
2. Second, Transpersonal Psychology (Descamps, 1993), on the issues of freedom, responsibility and ethics.
3. Finally, Digital Humanities, from technological artifacts and educational technologies (Bourgate, Ferloni and Tessier, 2016) to technontology (Lemos & Kern, 2009): the technical merged with the ontological.

Technontology is defined as:

- all artificial devices of any type related to corporeity of any kind (biophysical, psycho-emotional, neurocognitive),
- which in individual or collective contexts generate by bringing together, bringing into close or distant relationship, juxtaposition or interpenetration of human environments and non-human environments,

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- one or more lasting qualitative and/or quantitative changes in people, compared to their natural state,
- concerning their modalities and capacities for action, analysis, sensitivity and/or awareness towards themselves, others and/or the World.

Consequently, technontology is linked to human nature and needs more exploring giving its announced and supposed intentions, especially concerning ethics.

3. A "STRUCTURE-TEMPLE" AS A MATRIX OF THE HUMAN BEING

We have worked on the construction of a hypothetico-deductive ontological model, "being as human being", taking into account the human condition in its spatio-temporal context - "being in the time of human being" - in order to understand its functioning in terms of rootedness, need, capacity, desire, overcoming... up to the spiritual dimension. We represent the Human Being by a metaphorical diagram, called "structure-temple", comprising seven elements.

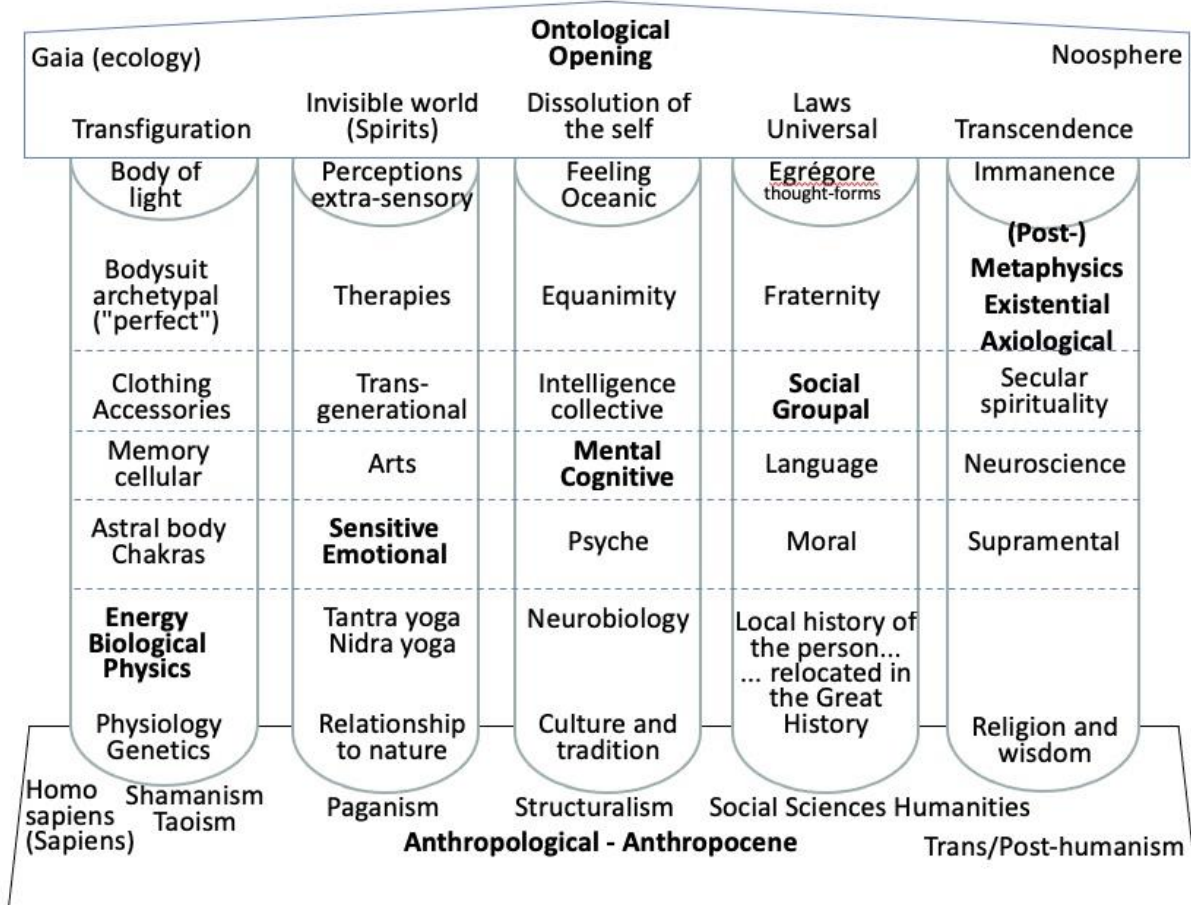


Figure 1: Diagram of the Temple-Structure, Fractal model in "n" elements

The base of the building symbolizes its filiation in the "anthropological / cultural" context of birth, currently the Anthropocene (which begins with the lasting transformative action of human action on the planet, mainly due to technical and industrial actions, Wallenhorst, 2019). The first column expresses the "physical/biological/energetic" dimension; the second, the "emotional/sensitive" part; the third, the "mental/cognitive"; the fourth, the "collective/social" and the fifth, the "axiological / existential / (post-)metaphysical". Finally, the pediment is the "open / ontological" cap of the whole, which invites to an optimistic conclusion according to the maxim from the Greek temple of Delphi attributed to Socrates: "Know yourself and you will know the universe and the gods". Each of these seven elements is found in the other six, according to the

adage that "What is above is like what is below". This model is fractal by its intra-reproducible character.

This approach makes it possible to couple two temporal dimensions: the *big history* or long cosmic history from the *big bang* to the creation of our planet and the development of the biosphere, with the ephemeral human life during which each person will try to accomplish his or her "implied" project (Barbier, 1997). A third timeless dimension completes them: the life of the spirit (Comte-Sponville, 2006). This model constructs a "cosmodern" system of equilibrium (Nicolescu, 2014), testifying to the historical epistemological separation between the world of subjects and the world of objects, which it brings together through the theory of "Transreality" (Nicolescu, 1985). *In fine*, he proposes to go beyond this apparent dichotomy by

adopting a non-dual approach intended to be operative through the "project approach" (Nifle, 1996), particularly mobilizable in education.

4. USE OF THE TEMPLE STRUCTURE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

From an approach in harmonious reciprocity of a triple development, operated on personal, professional and collective levels, emerges a proposal of "Integrative, Implicative and Intentioned Pedagogy" (Pasquier, 2017), the 3iP, within the Hidden Third.

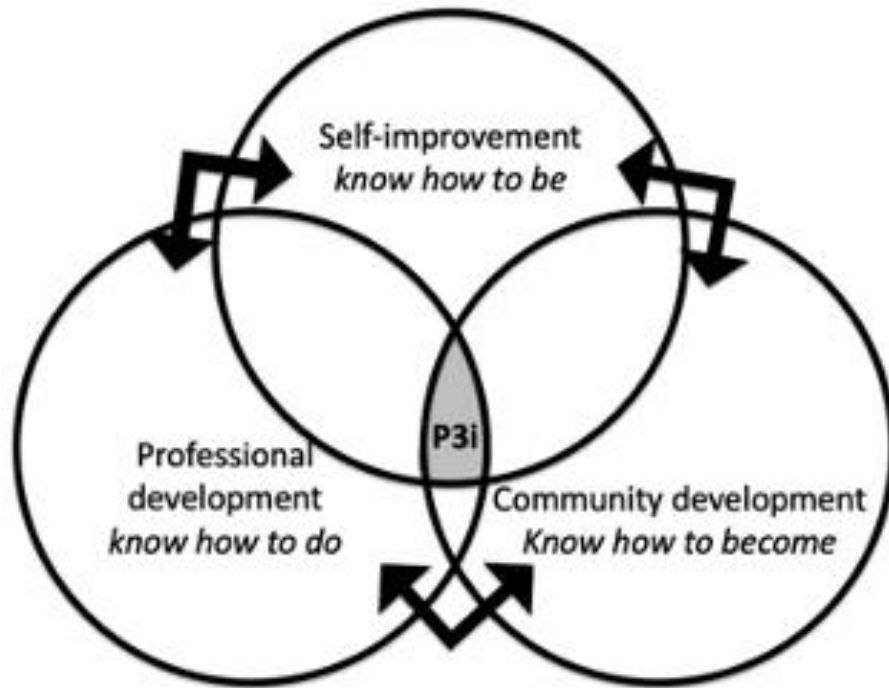


Figure 2: Genesis of the Pedagogy Integrative, Implicative and Intentional (P3i)

3iP proceeds from an integrative theoretical framework and results in an implicative approach anchored in the long history of New Education, which Philippe Meirieu shows in his blog "the beginnings since the eighteenth century". Through the technical updating of the socioconstructivist project approach, 3iP cultivates the fuller consideration of learners, teachers and third parties - staff, parents and other partners - in all their dimensions. This reflection requires discussing the evolution of the teacher's role in acquiring basic learning in primary school, from "reading, writing, counting" to "respecting others", thus moving from *quantitative performance* to *qualitative sensitivity*. It is a question of anticipating the transition from the "integrative" character of educational objects in all their varieties to the "integral" dimension of the subjects in training. The metaphor of the structure-temple is then refined as a multidimensional project that applies as well to the fields of disciplines, peri-, para- and extra-curricular activities as to cross-cutting issues such as eco-citizenship, agency, happiness and well-being, management of emotions, positive education..

In the example above, 3iP studies the places, means, methods and tools made available to institutions and teachers; such as philosophical debate and yoga (extended to meditation, Pasquier and Barbry, 2018), to enable a secular approach to spirituality that is compatible with the values and practices, in our case, of the French Republic (Filliot, 2011). As a method of analysis and foresight, it can be mobilized as a multi-layered holographic model to study any issue related to Education and Training

Sciences, from "laïcité" (quite so secularism) or assessment to open access or big data. The structure-temple and 3iP jointly propose a theoretical and practical framework that favors the application of educational "*success strategies*" through the establishment of virtuous circles while developing our human side. For example, pedagogical or didactic notions such as "*class management*", "*adapted learning*", "*support for personalities*", "*learners' skills*", "*the existential dimension*", etc., all considered and taken into account simultaneously or in turn, multiply the positive effects of each of these dimensions. These proposals are in line with the slow education trend (Domènech Francesch, Lepri and Oriot, 2011) and alternative approaches to education. Questions are now coming to light: should we move, out of need or necessity as other countries do (Briançon et al., 2020) towards an educational paradigm shift that truly integrates the spiritual dimension, and if so, in what forms?

5. IN SUMMARY

The objective of mobilizing the spiritual dimension in education and training goes first of all through the question of the understanding of consciousness and its deployment in human activities according to a subject/object/project trilogy, including technological aspects, with the particular question of intention as the first criterion for analysis. From these premises, the spiritual can then take as many forms as the local conditions of exercise allow, thus taking on as many moments as actions that express

the best of human values, such as the spiritualities of the world can inspire in all their varieties.

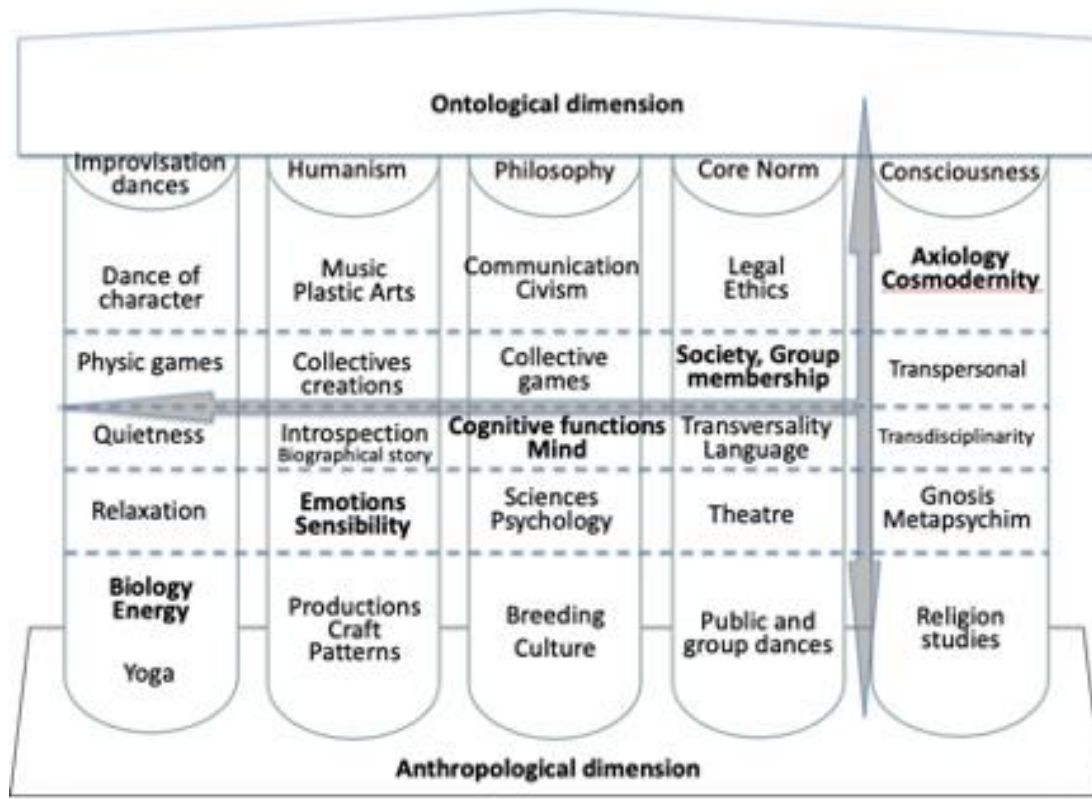


Figure 3: Diagram of the structure-temple in training: disciplines and peri-, para- and extra-curricular activities

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