

TO A NEW CONCEPT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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In the last decades, a passage to a New Millennium has been provoking a series of interpretations and reflections by the intellectuals in the world, exactly to offer ways not always expected for the translation of the contemporaneous world. Actually, it is a magical moment, which in a certain way propitiates studies of contextual tendencies in all areas of the knowledge and human action. It is also right that there is a generic theorization surrounding these punctual analyses and that no doubts they show several expectations, each one of which matches the viewpoint of its formulator. Thus, from a historical perspective, we cannot forget Eric Hobsbawm's division of the 20th Century in three Eras (Catastrophe Era, Gold Era and Collapse Era). He established that the world is crossing now the "Collapse Era", when everything breaks up, so that another reality might emerge. From the perspective of his Theory of Democratic Revolutions, Perruchon de Bouchard states that after Mankind has gone through revolutions for the democratization of ideas and property, the next step to take place is the revolution for the democratization of knowledge and information, and Internet is right there, leaving no doubts. The bestseller Alvin Toffer follows this positioning as he presents the Theory of the Waves, when it shows that after the agricultural and industrial waves the technological wave arrived to modify everything on Planet Earth. Edgar Morin, to his turn, explains the definitive rupture of Cartesianism by the arrival of complexity, through which linearity is replaced by nets of complex relationships.

There are other apocalyptic theories evidences, other skeptical explanations of the reality, such as Gilles Lipovetsky's essay about contemporary individualism, which characterizes contemporary days as the "Void Era", and Guy Debord's interpretation, according to which he identifies a "Show Society", where the media take the power through "show business" professionals who have invaded all the areas, and according to the author, have convincingly and systematically started organizing modern passivity itself.

In all those theories, one can arrive at a common concluding point as to what the cause might be: the remarkable progress in the means of communication, a result of the accelerated technological process. The revolutionary concept introduced by the chips, followed by the arrival of satellites, mobile telephony and the Internet substantiate this statement.

On the other hand, there were consequences that changed the forms of perception of the reality. The definitive replacement of a previous consensual society for a dissenting society is the main effect of this new *modus vivendi*, why not to say, of the human coexistence itself. Undoubtedly there are several reasons for the same matter. Another unquestionable consequence of this new context, no matter what is the referenced theory, is the absolute need of re-conception of all social action and human knowledge fields. Thus, for example, Education, Health, Housing, Sport and all the other concepts have undergone deep modifications, among which the most relevant change has been the increase in their range of action. The concept of Education, previously tied to the completion of the educational process, was seen at the light of Continuous Education some years ago, when UNESCO started the movement for the Permanent Education. Sport was previously regarded only from the perspective of performance, but then, after the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport by UNESCO (1978), enforcing the rights of all to Physical Education and sporting practices, Sport was also understood from educational perspectives (sport - education) and from the conquered right to free time (sport - leisure or sport - participation). The Performance Sport itself became a privately instituted practice, having also become business.

It is evident that Physical Education could not continue as that part of the educational process exclusively designed to teachers in the fundamental and intermediary levels, discussing that eternal doubt whether it was a discipline, or just an activity. Actually, for the entropy of its stagnated pedagogical processes, for the growing devaluation of Physical Education professionals, and for the difficulty of conceptual change, the crisis in Physical Education grew widely; it was even stated that its future was already committed as a consequence of its discredit and decadence. Paradoxically, physical activities and sporting practice grew more and more relevant.

Fortunately, the magic of the passage to a new millennium reached the world crisis of the Physical Education. The international organisms primarily responsible for Physical Education, mainly the Fédération Internationale d'Éducation Physique (FIEP), the International Council for Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE) and United Nations for Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO), discussed and deepened the new concept of Physical Education in three consecutive events from October 1999 to January 2000. The new concept was ratified in the World Manifesto of the Physical Education FIEP 2000.

When promoting the World Summit on Physical Education (Nov/1999), ICSSPE presented the conclusions of this important event on Agenda Berlin 1999, occasion when effective actions and the precepts for a Quality Physical Education were indicated. The premises for this Quality Physical Education evidenced a new understanding in this area.

When organizing the Third International Conference of Ministers and Officers in charge of Physical Education and Sport – MINEPS III (from November 30th to December 3rd, 1999), UNESCO issued the Declaration of Punta del Este and MINEPS III Recommendations. In these two documents, Physical Education is treated as a privileged educational field to human development, reinforcing the prescriptions made by Agenda Berlin.

These two international encounters delineated the bases for a new concept of Physical Education, which would turn out to happen during the FIEP World Congress of Physical Education in Foz de Iguazu (8th to 13th of January, 2000), when the World Manifesto of the Physical Education FIEP 2000 was issued, and a new concept of Physical Education was introduced in its Second Article.

To explain better the new concept of Physical Education it is important to settle down a logical sequence of reasoning that will facilitate its understanding, as follows:

1st) The concept of Education, as it has already been mentioned, moved from a completion perspective to a continuous education perspective; it no longer constituted a program designed to education only during a period in people's lives.

2nd) Although Physical Education was conceived as an educational component, it remained for a long time limited to childhood and adolescence, applied in formal school processes. This means that only the children and adolescents at school were entitled to Physical Education, although it is known that in the so-called underdeveloped world a great part of the children and adolescents are out of school. Thus, the first thing to do, based on the right of all to a Quality Physical Education is to break up this delimitation. This rupture has led Physical Education into a process of Education along the people's lives, that is, it is no longer only for children and adolescents, it now reaches youths, adults and senior citizens, no matter where it is developed.

3rd) Physical activity continues being Physical Education's specific vehicle and it can be used for educational purposes, in the forms of gymnastic exercises, games, dances, sports, adventure activities, relaxing activities and many others;

4th) If it is Physical Education, it has to educate for some purpose that can render meaning to it. According to that new conception of Physical Education, it constitutes a means for an Active Lifestyle during people's whole existence.

5th) To be Physical Education for an Active Lifestyle, it will have to be simultaneously Education to Health and Leisure. In this process, Physical Education will develop habits, attitudes and knowledge.

It is evident that this Physical Education provided with much more sense replaces former Pass Time or Functionalist Physical Education, because the essential point, according to FIEP Manifesto, will be the process of development of a lifestyle that will lead people to a desirable Quality of Life and to the entertainment opportunities considered healthy; it will also make human beings more holistic and contribute to a better human coexistence.

As a conclusion, I think that Physical Education — taken as a wrap-up of the convergence of reflections in the last half of the 20th century, a result of the document synthesis expressed in Manifesto of the Physical Education – FIEP 2000 — I think it is already possible to state that Physical Education, taken as such, will be one of the most important fields of action in the set of movements that it will seek people's development at the beginning of next millennium.

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