

From the idea of good life towards social resilience

Studies about the psycho-history of life style

A view onto the whole issue (introduction)

On the one hand, the book title refers to the subjective wish of the author that the ancient Greek philosophical idea of “good life” (eudaimonia) which goes back to the ancient Greeks (Wolf 1999) may evolve into a collective, possibly global force of resistance (resilience) against the growing adulteration of life (resilience from Latin *resilire*: jump back, bounce back). On the other hand, it refers to social, objective, political and material processes of protest and change which offensively confront disrespect and disdain of good life (peace movement, environmental and climate protection movements, human right movements).

The term resilience was formed and discussed in Pre-Covid times but as a “broadly formed head term” (Fathi 2014) it can claim further validity, especially in psychohistorical connotation which cannot escape the participation of individual experience. Following the here presented argumentation, resilience is a citizen virtue which should always be demanded and contributed, always with proper names which could be very different from each other. The subtext of this research concerning the terms life style and resilience are full of questions for the readers about their own experience and future perspective.

The leitmotiv with both, historical-social and individual relevance, is *challenge and response*. It was coined by the British historian Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975) who referred it though to only cultural - historical processes. In continuation and widening of Toynbee’s thought formation, the term pair *challenge and response* is used as a signpost into the turmoil of development-psychology processes which apparently inspired Toynbee himself unconsciously.



*Abb. 1: Resilience–
Visualizing a very important
factor in the tension field
among history, personal
history and society*

The single chapters – a rough overview

The first chapter interprets the European philosophy of the 18th century as a challenge for globalized present and future which need another enlightenment in a scientific and secular sense without the trap of turning into a substitute religion.

The second chapter deals with ways and meanders of psychohistory like it has been considered until now and, at the same time, draws the path we're following here. Two letters of the renowned psychologist Charlotte Bühler (1893-1974) written to me, in 1972 a freshly promoted professor with a dissertation on "education of thinking in history teaching", and these letters were an example for the power of psychohistory: I hadn't responded to the letter but as one can see, I never forgot it.

The third chapter is laid out in education theory, didactically. It offers proposals for the creation of teach-learn-processes which could and should contribute to the fact that through engagement with history in issues related to the present, a critical consciousness of the present originates.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to the above-mentioned British historian Arnold Toynbee who demonstrates with his work and his life how common political history and individual biography interconnect psycho-historically. The limitation of the discussion about what is factually "right" in his work and what can be doubted is necessary but one-sided and ends in blind alleys.

The fifth chapter is dedicated to three significant personalities because of their cultural and historical importance (Montaigne, Valéry, Davis) and the question how the factual tension between psyche and history can overcome or at least integrate the formation of a unity within the I ("identity"). In this respect, Montaigne's life (1533-1592) and work offer an endless reservoir of stimuli.

Chapter 6 is dedicated to the development dynamics and tentativeness of the until now developed thoughts. There are quite a few statements I want to hold on to even after a critical retrospect over a few decades in the past. There are other statements which need to be corrected, enlarged or eliminated. Interwoven with historical and social experience and the respective spirit of the time, psychohistory, as it is presented here, withdraws itself from a methodologically secured systemization.

Bibliography

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Das Buch „Von der Idee des guten Lebens zur sozialen Resilienz“ wird zunächst als Online-Publikation auf meiner Internetseite erscheinen.