

The Principle of Meritocracy and the Function of Emancipation in the Context of Pathology within the Sphere of Education (Selected Issues)

The paper aims at investigating selected aspects of pathology in educational institutions (classified by Jan Szczepański into the group of educational and cultural institutions [J. Szczepański, 1965, p.114]; and by Shmuel Eisenstadt, into the group of educational and care institutions [quoted after G.Skańska, M.Ziółkowski, 1998, p. 318]).

Pathology is a notion which cannot be interpreted unequivocally. According to a dictionary definition, it denotes any deviation from the norm. Taking into consideration the criterion of meaning, the term is applied to a set of phenomena harmful to an individual as well as a group, which have a specific origin, social scope and a negative impact [L. Pytka, 1999, p. 175].

In social and humanistic sciences certain typical functions are attributed to educational institutions. They include accomplishing tasks referring to secondary socialization, adaptation, education, imparting knowledge and competence, selection, allocation, holding social control, compensation, reconstruction emancipation [cf. B.Bernstein, 1990, p.33; Z.Kwieciński, 1995, p. 21; T.Parsons, 1969, pp. 172–182; B. Szacka, 2003, pp. 420–421].

School fails to fulfill these functions, as Z. Kwieciński aptly remarks. It reconstructs culture in an incomplete and selective way. Due to dysfunctionality it has created within many local and family environments, which do not aid it in performing its functions, school limits most of its graduates' access to culture. The process of people's adaptation to the established structures and their justification is also incomplete and harmful. The participants of the educational process do not accept the artificial world which is being acted out, pretended at school. They rebel against the division