CREATIVITY AND SOCIALIZATION

EDUCATION FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The distinction which we make in our treatment of the development of autonomy, and the development of creativity and socialization is no doubt artificial. In reality, the development of creativity contributes to the achievement of independence, and independence facilitates and enriches social relationships and good socialization stimulates both a sense of responsibility and the urge to create. Personal development cannot be cut into slices.

This is so true that although sometimes intellectual difficulties can compromise the affective equilibrium of an individual, inversely, a deeply rooted difficulty in affective development can prove a serious block to all progress in the intellectual field. In fact there is a continuous interaction between the two. The individual feels mutilated if a certain number of modes of self-expression remain inaccessible to him.

The educational system must therefore not only provide the individual with the keys to knowledge and know-how and know-how-to-be. It is for this reason that our project is defined as both learner-centred and open: — in being learner-centred, it is different from projects or systems centred only on the teaching as rapidly and economically as possible of knowledge and automatic skills. It is opposed to those “techniques which teach people to learn well but not to invent”¹ and in general to everything which can lead to a standardization of behaviour and work methods. With Mac Luhan² our plan is on the contrary directed towards a new type of student, who “will create his own educational environment, form his own stock of knowledge, and even invent his own research methods...”

² M. Mac Luhan, Mutations 1990, Mame, Tours, 1969.
Creativity and socialization

- in being open, it differentiates itself from an enclosed type of education dominated by mimetism and competition in which the assignment given to the pupil is set by the teacher and in which the pupil is forced to use problem-solving methods and find solutions determined by the teacher and which are alone considered valid.

There are at least two disadvantages in such a system:
- firstly, in everyday life, a real problem most often occurs in terms of functions to be performed, the means and information required to perform them having to be found. This is just as true of material problems such as organizing a family budget as for intellectual problems such as those which may arise in physics for example;
- secondly, because problems set by teachers are only rarely those which pupils find themselves up against and pupils' problems can be extremely important, at least for them. An open system is intended to develop, at all levels, individual aptitudes for discovery and invention and this depends on a teaching system which enables pupils to pose their own problems, to find their own ways of solving them and their own solutions. This is a necessary condition for the development of creativity which demands an alternation of free research and creation, but also perseverance, sequential thought and discipline.

DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY

Inhibitions and obstacles of all kinds

What do we understand by creativity? We take the definition formulated by Mucchielli: "Creativity is productivity in relation to ideas, invention, intellectual fertility and imagination".

In studying the development of creativity it is interesting to refer to a recent experiment made in the USA by psychologists:

200 students underwent two successive series of creativity tests, with a few weeks in between. Before starting the second series of tests, 50 of the students, selected at random from the 200, were told that they had done exceptionally well in the first tests, whilst the others were told that their results had been mediocre. The results of the second tests showed – and showed very clearly – that the least "rigid" answers were those of the group which had been "praised". This experiment is not unique and shows that very often results, particularly academic results, are partially due to relaxation or anxiety produced in the subjects by the praise or reproaches of the teacher.