The Last Mission of Our Being: On Education and Its Deformation in the Age of Knowledge

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On March 16, 2010, the famous and provocative scholar and critic of the ongoing reforms of science and education in the EU, author of the book Theory of Miseducation, Professor Paul Liessmann, gave a lecture called The Last Mission of Our Being: On Education and Its Deformation in the Age of Knowledge. The lecture, which was a part of the Charles University Faculty of Arts' Wilhelm von Humboldt year event series, was greeted with much applause. The Austrian scholar was introduced by Rector of Charles University prof. Václav Hampl and the chairman of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, prof. Jiří Drahoš.

 A recording of the lecture is available here

Rector Hampl said in his introductory talk that he is "very pleased by the sophisticated discussion present in this book on the current reforms". He admitted that he often feels "that we should maybe stop reforming for a little while, so that we have time to do actual work". In his opinion, the ideas and attitudes expressed in Theory of Miseducation resonate very closely with the attitudes and opinions expressed by Charles University in its consensual stance towards the upcoming White Paper on educational reforms.

Chairman Drahoš criticized the efforts leading to industrialization of education and asked whether knowledge is still the central idea behind the existence of universities and research institutions. In this respect, he pointed out the questionable scientometric system of the The Research and Development Council of the Czech government, according to which Professor Liessmann's book would get mere 40 points.

The lecture on Humboldts's society of knowledge, Adorno's society of the half-educated and also the society of miseducation is available in the original languages (German and Czech), including the follow-up discussion.
P.K.

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