

## **Introduction [...] What is the starting point for this lecture?**

*Humankind is made up by individual beings who live through a certain cycle of existence on this earth before leaving it. And this happens in a way that those who are in this cycle at the same time can be divided into an older and younger generation, with the older being the first to leave this earth. However, when we look at humankind in terms of the large masses that we call peoples or nations, it is clear that over generations, things do not remain the same. Instead, there is a rise and fall in every aspect that would be important to us. However, in looking at the life of a people, we cannot tell exactly whether the first half leads to a zenith and the second half to a low point, or whether we are confusing the two altogether. Regardless, it is clear that any such increase and decrease is based upon human activity. This activity is more perfected the more it is governed by an idea of what should happen—the more it exemplifies a paradigm of action, or the more it is an art [ars, techné].*

*A significant part of the activity of the older generation extends toward the younger, and it is less complete or perfect, the less the aware the older generation is about what it is doing and why it is doing it. Therefore, there has to be a theory that is based on the relation of the older generation and the younger, one which upon the existence of the relation between the older generation and the younger one, and proceeds from the question: What does the older generation actually want with the younger? To what extent does the action [of the older] correspond to the [given] goal, the result? This relationship between the older and the younger, and the obligations of the one to the other, serves as the basis for everything in our theory.*

*The dignity of pedagogy presented in formal terms; seen in itself as a teaching of an Art.*

*So that this [teaching] does not seem unjustified, we have to go back to the beginning. We started by saying that the activity of the older generation toward the young [Erziehung] would have to possess the characteristics of an art. If this presupposition is correct, then there has to be a theory of Erziehung as art—since every art demands its own. At the same time, there are human activities which have little to do with art. So the question is: Are the activities we see as Erziehung an art? Humans are beings which carry in themselves the ground for their development from their start to their completion. This is already in the idea of life, especially in the life of the spirit and intellect. Where there is no such internal ground, there is no change in the subject, or only change of a mechanical nature. However, this does not mean that the changes of a living being must not be shaped or modified through external influence. [...] And it is true for every domain that can be called an art in the narrow sense of the word that practice always precedes any theory. Therefore it would be incorrect to say that practice gains its character and specificity only through a teaching. The dignity of practice exists independently from a doctrine or teaching. A theory only makes practice more conscious. [...]*

*If we have now established [the ground for] the dignity of pedagogy, [it would be] in the following way: Because of the great importance of the influence of the older generation on the younger, we are in need of a teaching in order to regulate our practice; and this theory is connected to ethical considerations as much as it is to the activity itself (i.e. the general moral activity of the older generation): then we have defined the task for our inquiry—only in very general, formal terms. So far, we only know that there is an influence of the earlier generation on the later one, and for this we are in need for a teaching, a theory of an art [the art of Erziehung].*