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Doubtful rationality.

Forgasz, Helen (ed.) et al., Towards equity in mathematics education. Gender, culture, and diversity. Berlin: Springer (ISBN 978-3-642-27701-6/hbk; 978-3-642-27702-3/ebook). Advances in Mathematics Education, 351-367 (2012).

Summary: The paper addresses the following two questions: (1) How can we conceptualise possible socio-political roles of mathematics-based rationality? (2) How can we conceptualise possible the socio-political roles of mathematics education? Together the two questions might help to shed some light on how mathematical rationality might assume different forms and become integrated into social and technological development. It is pointed out how mathematics-based rationality forms part of the fabrication of possibilities, strategies, facts, contingencies, and perspectives. There is, however, no inherent quality to be associated with such mathematics-based fabrications. It is considered to what extent the school mathematics tradition could establish a prescription readiness by submitting students to a school-mathematics absolutism; and to what extent this tradition could facilitate differentiated labelling of the students, as well as endorsement of an ethical filter. These aspects could be important functions of the school mathematics tradition in today's knowledge society. It is considered to what extent mathematics education could prepare people for critical citizenship, which includes a potential for 'talking back' to authority. I do not see such preparation as being related to the school mathematics tradition, nor do I see it as linked to the very nature of mathematics. Rather, I am proposing it as a possible function of mathematics education. This article is a reprint of [ZDM 39, No. 3, 215–224 (2007; ME 2009e.00196)].

Classification: D30 A40 C60 D20

Keywords: mathematics-based reality; mathematics education; technological development; socio-political roles; school mathematics traditions

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