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Universal Human Values in the World Educational Heritage

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ABSTRACT *This article observes the role of universal human values, which are roughly defined as aspirations to educate young generations as industrious, humane, honest and having other positive qualities. Historically speaking those values were represented in folk pedagogic, religious education and in the Enlightenment ideology. Nowadays many countries have established free, accessible and compulsory education systems although the main challenge of the second half of the 20th century is to create schools with no barriers between primary, lower and higher secondary education.*

[要旨] カドリヤ・サリーモワ，世界の教育遺産にみる普遍的・人間的価値。

本稿は，普遍的な人間的価値，すなわち，勤勉であること，ヒューマンであること，正直であること及びその他肯定的な質を有するものという，若い世代を教育する時の目標として大まかには定義できるものを論じる。歴史的に言えば，これらの価値は民衆教育・宗教教育のなかに，及び啓蒙時代のイデオロギーにおいて表わされていた。現在，多くの国では無償の，大衆的，義務教育システムが既に確立しているが，20世紀後半の一番重要な課題は，小学校，前期中等学校，後期中等学校の間に障害のない学校を創ることである。

World history of education is not featureless process: it is concrete and derives from the activities of distinct peoples, each of whom has its own characteristics. At the same time the significance of historical events—including those in the sphere of education —which may seem to belong to the history of one people, fully comes to light only through understanding of the common history of education of the whole of humanity.

Today, almost all countries of the world are confronted with the need to solve similar, if not identical problems in the process of educating young generations. For example, the necessity to maximise the use of a country's《human resources》has become very acute, because the role of educating all the population for the progressive development of society is becoming more and more evident. It is obvious that primary and even secondary education is not enough. The time for《permanent》or《life-long education》has arrived.

One very acute problem remains, that the abolition of illiteracy—real and functional —even in highly developend countries. Others include search for new content and methods of teaching, for raising the standard and quality of knowledge to a new level. These and many other significant tasks confronting school education now show that we should speak today not so much about the **reform** of education (which has been coutinuing throughout

the history), as about creating a new **pedagogical paradigm**, or new model of education for the young generation. In creating this paradigm the importance of such a source of scientific information as the history of education grows, i.e. **world history of education**, the pedagogical heritage of all countries and peoples of the world. The world educational process is the product of the interpenetration of national educational heritages.

Contemporary pedagogical theory is the result of a long historical development—from ancient to modern times. Each new generation, in the course of educating children and youth, stood as if《on the shoulders》of former generations, continued positive experience which survived trial of the time, or, rejecting these, found new solutions which met the requirements of their time. Each epoch gave its own answers to eternal questions of education.

In our time the solution of the eternal, actual problems of education run up against serious social-political contradictions. On the one hand, the necessity to solve general ecological, economic, social and other problems requires all peoples of the world to unite their efforts, to know more about each other, to exchange positive experience and knowledge in all spheres of activity as well as in education of the young generation. On the other hand, these positive processes run into aggravation in some regions of ethnic and religious collisions often turning into bloody wars. The strong measures of the societal group to which an individual person belongs have been weakened and give individuals the possibility to live concerning his own ideas. This individualism can lead to aggressive behaviour and to egocentric attitudes.

How to protect the young generation from these evident controversies? How to inculcate in them respect for the culture of other people? How to bring them up to respect the people of other nations, their religions? Educators of all countries today confront these and many other questions, which require new forms of communication, new opportunities for contact between nations and the development of neighbourly relations.

Knowledge of the history of education of other peoples can play a positive role in this: it gives information about the culture of other peoples, about their objectives in educating new generations, in which much that is common with humanistic aspirations of our own people is evident.

Histories of education of these different peoples show common aims and goals, their aspirations to educate young generations as industrious, humane, honest and having other positive qualities which we call today《**universal human values**》**.**

Understanding the history of education from this point of view helps to reveal common spiritual links between people, the common elements which unite them, that are a necessary component of national culture and at the same time of the culture of the whole of humanity. The history of education most clearly reflects inter-ethnic links which are not possible without national links. So world history of education forms, on one hand, international qualities of future teachers and, on the other, respect for one's own nationality, for its contribution to the world heritage of educating young generations.

Everything said above determined the following tasks which we need in researching and teaching the world history of education:

- to reveal common roots of the educational heritage of different countries of the world;

-to show the transnational and universal human content of educational ideas and practice together with national peculiarities and national traditions;

- to observe the constant enrichment of educational konwledge and school experience in national school systems from ancient to the present time;

-to analyse this histrical experience and the possibility of using it to solve modern problems of education of the young generations all over the world.

Personality is both a product of historic development and its creator. That is why each epoch makes certain specific demands. Personality adapts to these demands; however, it influences the social context and changes it. Education is therfore one of the most important elements in adapting the personality to the given social structure, and at the same time the means of changing this structure. This explains, from our point of view, the constant progressive movement, innovations in theory and practice of education, and, on the other hand, discontent and criticism of the contemporary level of education which accompanies these innovations.

The educational aims set before each generation of particular nation, as a rule, are not the same as those set before the youth of another nation. This is closely related to the uniqueness of the conditions under which the culture and traditions of a given nation was formed. At the same time **the role of national features should not be over-estimated. The pedagogical heritage of many nations bears many common features.** This reflects the closeness of ideals, interests and **needs of mankind, expressed through national features.** We should know these common features—they can help us to find the foundations of ideal educational paradigms.

Universal human values in the educational heritage of different nations can be traced from the early period of the human history. We can speak of **folk pedagogic.** The primitive society made first empirical steps in understanding aims and means of the educating the youth. These reflected the successes and failures in educational practice and tended to be repetitive, stable and fixed. They were expressed in concrete maxims and advice. Prehistoric times leave to humanity a unique experience of the equal, public education of the young. It was very effective because it reflected the everyday life of youth.

All children and teenagers acquired skills and knowledge that helped them to manufacture tools and food; they acquired a team spirit and were ready to provide mutual help. They expressed esteem for the elders,were disciplined; they developed character, endurance, and physical strength. All these were the main conditions to attain success in work and become a member of the society.

All religions developed in the anceint times borrowed moral maxims from the educational practice of the people. In the Bible, Koran and other religious books many moral

norms were understood as covenants with God and bore the sacred meaning, regulating **the relations between God and believers.** Specific religious morality came to the being: fidelity and attachment to the《native》God of gods, intolerance towards aliens, awareness of being part of the chosen race, outward humility, patience and on. At the same time the sacred texts contained norms of morality, formulated long before in people's education. The norms regulated **the interpersonal relations.** They are not of a strictly religious nature (for example《respect your father and mother》;《do not kill》and others). They deal with matters of everyday life and are the quintessence of popular wisdom, contributing to the positive upbringing of new generations. The fact that the sacred texts contain in the same pages religious commandments and simple moral precepts make them elastic, applicable in every situation and at every social level.

The predominance of religious education in the Middle ages was a universal process. The moral maxims of folk pedagogics were gradually replaced by norms defined by religious authorities. At the same time the development of trade relations between countries led to demands to secularise school education. The majority of medieval schools were opened in mosques, churches and temples. The main subject in these schools was reading of the holy texts, very often in foreign or unspoken language. In Europe it was Latin, in Middle East—Arabic and Farsi, in the Far East—Chinese The ordinary people did not know these languages, that was the reason why leading scholars of Renaissance and Enlightenment demanded that the native language should become the language used in schools.

The period of the Enlightenment in Europe (17th-18th centuries and later in East) is of special interest and provides instructive examples bringing to light universal patterns and universal human values.

Capitalist relations born in feudal society stimulated the development of educational experience, awakening an interest towards the action oriented personality. At that period the forms of educational institutions from pre-school to university were moulded. During the following centuries the structure of the organised and purposeful education system were defined. At the same time the process of detachment of pedagogics from philosophy began, and pedagogics acquired all the characteristics of independent science. All these facts made apparent a new ideology based on the concepts of freedom, equality and brotherhood. They call it the Enlightenment, an ideology that was hostile to feudal society and expressed the universal human values of a New Epoch.

Education was considered the important condition for the social development of society and the individual. This culminated in a belief in the possibility of educating of every child regardless of his social, racial or ethnical origin. The Enlightenment demonstrates the following universal traits in the educational heritage of different nations: the social function of education in the development of nations; the dependence of social development on literacy and acquired skills of writing and on the individual's preparedness to participate in the world of work, science and culture.

The great philosophers of the Enlightenment considered the use of the vernacular in shools as the first condition for the formation of **national identity** and the creation of the state. Religion and the church that unified nations in the past could not cope with this challenge and often hampered social-cultural development. The school became saviour guardian of the traditions and culture, handing these down to younger generations. If the Reformation destroyed European religious unity, the Enlightenment destroyed religious education in many countries and facilitated the social-cultural progress of mankind.

In the second half of 19th century, mass primary shools were created in practically all countries of the world and ministries and departments of education were established in many countries bouth in the West and East. So the supervision in education passed from the Church into the hands of govenment, from the spiritual power to temporal power.

One of the manifestations of a universal pattern is that in the second half of the 19th century many countries, with different levels of economic and social-political development, promulgated laws on public primary education. These shools resembled each other. They gave a secular education, free from religious influence, teaching reading, writing and arithmetic in the native language as compulsory subjects. This was also one of the main universal values in the history of mankind.

At the beginning of the 20th century similar processes took place in many countries. Many educationists saw the necessity of extending compulsory education to include the lower high school. At that time many countries experienced a sharp rise of applications to secondary schools. But these schools were not ready to enlist enlarged numbers of students. This lead to the appearance of winnowing out procedures, like the so called **《intelligence quotient》 IQ.** In reality this proved to be a convenient tool to hamper chidren of low-income families from receiving a full secondary education.

Beginning from the middle of the 20th century and especially nowadays the challenge is to create schools with no barriers between primary, lower and higher secondary education. The challenge is that of providing full accessibility to compulsory secondary education, without dividing children according to so-called《abilities》. Further came the demand to cut electives (optional subjects), to expand basic education, to increase class hours and number of obligatory subjects for all students.

Through history, shools developed together with the progress of the pedagogic science. Comparative analysis of modern formal education and pedagogical theories provides the opportunity to understand how a new school paradigm and new scientific paradigm are created today. This is of great importance to educators, because it allows those from different countries to move in the agreed derection in their search to improve national schools. This new paradigm embodies the world's educational heritage.

What are the components of this common movement?

We shall try to define some of them, based on materials of this handbook. It involves a new generation of school curricula; new methods of teaching that develop a critical and creative attitude; the humanisation and democratisation of school life, which needs a new

school curriculum and new methods of teaching and learning.

Each country will naturally choose its own way of reforming shools. This will depend on the country's economic, social and political development. However all the countries acknowledge today the irrefutable truth: the successful development of the community depends on the education of its members, so-called《**human resources**》. Modern life shows that only a highly educated society can play a leading role in economic, social and cultural development. This is shown by research on the development of highly educated nations. Historical experience forced many countries to make education free, accessible and compulsory. This was one reason for the appearance of such charters, as《Universal Declaration of Human Rights》(1948),《Declaration of Children's Rights》(1959),《Convention on Children's Rights》(1989). These documents speak not only about the universal right of every human being to receive an effective education but also about the creation for everyone of the conditions for a continuous educational experience.

These are the universal human values of our time in the field of education.

The world history of education is something like a "round table". Prominent "minds" of all times and all peoples conducted their conversations at this "table" in the course of the whole history of humanity, they shared their painful search, listened to wise thoughts of their neighbours, argued with them, proved their rightness, defended their hopes, that are the hopes of the humanity, that are the universal human values.

P.S. The iedas of this article are written in detail in the "International Handbook on History of Education," Moscow, 1999. You can get more information by contacting Salimova, K.: fax (095) 229-1049.