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SPIRITUALITY AND FAITH AS THE BASIS OF TEACHER'S HUMANISTIC WORLD OUTLOOK*

SUMMARY. The article deals with the problem of combining the scientific and nonscientific blocks of human knowledge in the formation of a teacher's spiritual culture from the perspective of hermeneutics. While interpreting educational phenomena, the application of scientific methods of study with artistic and aesthetic view on the teaching process is not enough if you want to gain spiritual vision and cognitive tuning as spiritual creativity. The article draws the readers' attention to the fact that spiritual component in contemporary education is frequently neglected. The author shows the focus of the classics of pedagogy on the study of a child's internal nature and spiritual elements of a teacher's activity. Productive humanistic ideas to apprehend pedagogical phenomena represented in the world religions — Judaism, Christianity and Islam — are revealed.

The role of interfaith dialogue in real life from humanistic point of view is explained. The author justifies the necessity of syncretic link of different methods of creative understanding of pedagogical reality in the educational process and warns against the absolutization in the official pedagogy of gnoseology and arbitrary application of related science tools to pedagogy.

KEY WORDS. Spirituality, faith, scientific and humanistic outlook, hermeneutics, religious and philosophical cognitive practices, religious and mystical traditions, interfaith dialogue.

State educational standard [1] general requirements for the education of a modern teacher include “mastering the system of knowledge and understanding of man primarily as a spiritual being”, mastering scientific and humanistic outlook, as well as different ways of studying the surrounding world. These ways should include means of interpretation of knowledge about a person proposed by hermeneutics which is the theory and practice of understanding the phenomena of humanitarian culture (art, language, religion, folk traditions).

Considering various forms of the reality perception, we cannot ignore a peculiar, extremely delicate issue which is generally not researched by the traditional science. *This is religious and mystical traditions of spiritual comprehension of the vital reality.* While interpreting pedagogical phenomena and processes, the application of scientific

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methods of cognition and artistic-aesthetic perspective of pedagogical process is not enough to *gain spiritual vision and to determine understanding as spiritual creativity*. If a teacher, being a person of spiritual culture and spiritual search, in order to help a child reveal his innermost self, turns to mystical Oriental culture and Western spiritual traditions, he/she will discover a lot of valuable and attractive ideas for the theory and practice of education.

The problem of the relationship between faith and knowledge, religion and science has always been topical. The synthesis of Mind and the Irrational is inherent in humans. It is called today a key that can open the door to the future of mankind (N. Moiseev). Other much more bold statements presupposed that science, being the ideology of the scientific elite, should be deprived of its central position and equalized with mythology, religion, and even magic (P. Farebend). However, a genuine dialogue between science and religious-mystical worldview still has not been established, although such a dialogue is ripe, and the creation of a truly integrated science is inevitable. [2; 6-7].

As for the theory and practice of education, such concepts as “soul”, “spirit”, “spirituality”, “transcendence”, “mystery”, “contemplation”, and «enlightenment” are not presented there today. The spiritual component of pedagogical activity is minimized. Paradoxical as it may seem, but even psychology designed, according to the etymology of the term, to study human soul, does not consider the latter to be a matter of comprehension. However, religious anthropology as a part of human being, singles out soul and spirit as well as the body, and insists on the holistic perception of human nature. V.I. Slobodchikov and E.I. Isaev use M. Scheler and his followers’ humanistic ideas and try to coin the definition of a spiritual person as the one that feels independent from all the organic (bodily) and free from coercion. The scientists comment on Scheler’s ideas and emphasize that it is the concept of “spirit” that expresses the true human nature. According to M. Scheler, this concept is similar to the ancient Greek notion of “mind”, but apart from the ability to think, it presupposes the ability to contemplate basic phenomena, absolute values and includes such higher emotional manifestations as kindness, love, remorse, free will [3].

At the same time, the classics of national pedagogy paid a lot of attention to the spiritual principles of pedagogical activity, although during the Soviet period of pedagogical and educational development most of these ideas remained in the background. According to K.D. Ushinsky’s work “The benefits of the didactic literature”, mentoring and educational activities urgently need constant spiritualization; besides, “if the objective of natural sciences is to study natural phenomena, then how the phenomena of the human soul can be thrown out of the realm of nature? Can we really find the borderlines of this realm?” [4; 170, 342].

Moreover, in “Psychological monographs” the father of Russian pedagogy marks out a special advantage of the pedagogical science. It is the possibility for a teacher to directly see the truth, to observe the phenomena of the psychic nature of a child without using any peculiar tools (knife, microscope, weights): “This direct observation is the supreme advantage of the science, not its disadvantage. Does it make any

difference if an idea passes through a microscope or goes directly to the court of mind? Is it more correct if it goes directly?" [4; 343]. No wonder, these ideas of the great scientist were not popular during the Soviet period of pedagogy: they go counter to the canons of classical science, welcome the idea of a direct observation of the truth, traditionally perceived only in the context of religious and esoteric literature.

K.D. Ushinsky, being a recognized classic in the international scientific community, nevertheless, rejects the idea of finiteness of child's psychic nature, thereby questioning the possibility of one's spiritual nature development compliance with the fixed laws: «In every phenomenon of spiritual nature ... we will certainly observe the infinity because it is everywhere and in everything! If we fail to see it, it's a sure sign that we haven't gone deeply into the phenomenon, ... turned away from the revealed infinity and, being encouraged by impatience and pride, turned it into the finiteness, grouping some facts correctly, while harassing and forsaking others with the typically human enthusiasm » [4; 347].

The founder of the Russian pedagogical science drew attention to the defectiveness of the hasty use of psychological terms (such as "the ability to represent", "consciousness", etc.), thus warning against forced and artificial definitions of the complicated concepts of the human soul.

The concept of spirituality is also present in N.I. Pirogov's works. Thus, in his article "Being and seeming" the scientist exclaims dramatically: "... should we remain indifferent to the spiritual world of our children?". After all, scientists are interested even in the spiritual part of life of the mentally-challenged; it is revealed that these "outcasts" also have their own logic and consistency of actions. It is very important to get in touch with the child's spiritual world. According to N.I. Pirogov, when a teacher pulls a child out from the latter's own spiritual existence ..., the child becomes forced to see the world in an adult way. As the result, we get the wrong perception of the child (the consequences of false understanding) [5; 95, 97].

Listed evidence confirms the urgent need for more close reference to the religious and philosophical cognitive practices and mystical spiritual tradition in order to find the sources of spiritual understanding of human life and reality. Initially, it is important to understand that there are no fundamental contradictions between the world's major religions. Thus, Christianity, as well as Islam, both spiritual successors of Judaism, share a common goal of spiritual and moral perfection of the individual, preach kindness, compassion and love to one's neighbor, and consistently point out to the decisive role of the written culture in the improving of human spirituality. It is noteworthy that many religious ideas coincide with the approaches of hermeneutics, the science and art of book texts interpretation and vital reality understanding.

Christianity, in particular, recognizes Faith as the supreme form of cognition and a special form of the reality perception, due to which a person sees, feels and understands everything that cannot be perceived by the external senses. Faith makes perception and comprehension of grace possible. Love is given the leading role in Christianity. Without Love even the gift of prophecy and knowledge of all mysteries is of no value. Love in Christian religion is superior to any knowledge. It seems that true spiritualization of pedagogy is not achievable without accepting this idea.

The revelations of Islam are also valuable for the theory and practice of interpretation and comprehension of the pedagogical realia embodied in the texts. Religious and philosophical concept of “zahir” (from Arabic - open, visible, accessible) and its antonym - “batin” (from Arabic - secret, hidden, requiring deep personal reflection and spiritual purification) are directly related to the problems of humanitarian hermeneutics.

The idea of dialogic spiritual reading of the religious text, based on a combination of emotional and sensory perception, rational interpretation and spiritual comprehension of the moral truths is useful and productive for pedagogy and the humanities in general. O.A. Andreev writes about this as follows. The Koran is difficult to perceive because of its polemical character (Prophet Muhammad got revelations as responses to the current issues). The Koran contains only Muhammad’s comments, while the questions he asked are not given. Thus, the Koran often represents one part of the dialogue. For a complete understanding it is necessary to restore the whole conversation. To do this the following can be done: read surahs spiritually delving into the content, imagining pictures and, more importantly, the hypothetic interlocutor of the Prophet [6; 238]. H.-G. Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics calls this reader-interpreter position the development of hermeneutical situation which is meant to find the right way to ask the questions implicitly stated in the Islamic scripture.

The followers of the “cognate” religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) consider the Book to be the receptacle of the universal ancient wisdom. Such an attitude, born many centuries ago, is extremely valuable. It is noteworthy that, according to the Islamic canons, a Muslim’s best friend is “the man of the Book” (i.e. the person of the Scripture, or the man of the Bible).

Umberto Eco, a famous Italian writer, semiotician and literary critic, wrote about the importance of books in the intellectual life of his contemporaries, about the advantages of the traditional paper books over the computer, in particular. The author intertwines the ideas of the spiritual needs with the notions of practicality. It is significant that in order to prove his ideas, U. Eco cites the scientific facts from the history of the Jewish and early Arab civilizations’ development: “Computers are spreading a new form of literacy (writing), but they are not able to meet all the intellectual needs they stimulate. Let us recall that Jewish and early Arab civilizations were founded on the book, and it did not depend on the fact that they were nomadic civilizations. The ancient Egyptians could carve their stories on the stone blocks, while Moses and Mohammed couldn’t. If you want to cross the Red Sea or to go from the Arabian Peninsula to Spain, the scroll is a more practical means to write down and transport the Bible or the Koran, rather than stone obelisks. That’s why these civilizations are founded on the book, in which writing is preferable to images” [7; 98-99].

The Buddhist ideas are also useful and attractive for hermeneutic understanding of humanitarian and pedagogical phenomena. A Buddhist does not see himself apart from the surrounding objects; a person and an object do not exist separately, but there is a “man who sees the object”; there is no sun, no “self”, but there is “myself looking at the sun”. Therefore, in Buddhism a subject and an object are continuously united

[6; 207]. Obviously, if a teacher-humanist grasps this principle of the Oriental worldview by referring to the Oriental (e.g. Japanese) poetry and grows up spiritually, he/she can get a complete understanding of the idea of refusing from fatal and suppressing objectification and withdrawal in interpersonal relationships, learn more than just familiar Western polarities, more than just to manage and direct, but also to listen to the surrounding world and oneself with respect and awe.

F.N. Kozyrev emphasizes that the interfaith interpretation of the texts common for different confessions is of particular interest in terms of both instructional and educational purposes. It provides more than just cultural dialogue and religious tolerance. "Interfaith dialogue always encourages the internal dialogue within a confession. The latter, by its urgency, social and personal significance is much more important than the former. Almost everyone who has ever participated in the interfaith dialogue, agrees that the main result of this experience is a deeper understanding of their own, and not someone else's tradition... Under close examination, the school of the cultural dialogue turns out to be the school of identity formation» [8; 318, 319].

We understand all the responsibility a scientist bears, but, nevertheless, in addition to the hermeneutic interpretation of the common religious ideas, believe it is necessary to draw attention to some of the approaches of unconventional religious and mystical tendencies that contain interesting and ambiguous experience of the human spirit perception. The mystical spiritual tradition accompanies the entire human history; this is an ancient and permanent layer of culture. One cannot imagine the original ascent to knowledge without secret knowledge, as well as modern times without theoretical description of the mystical experience. It is obvious that without such a form of spiritual life as mysticism, the worldview cannot be complete. It is noteworthy that the greatest Russian philosophers N.A. Berdyaev, K.N. Leontiev, V.S. Soloviev, P.A. Florensky considered mysticism to be an ancient form of universal comprehension of life, the way to perceive the original unity of the world.

Intuitive principles, along with the rational-logical ones, help interpret and understand everyday and educational reality. To study them it is useful to examine (very carefully and critically!) the characteristics of such a complex and mysterious phenomenon as mystical experience. W. James highlighted some of its specific features: 1) ineffability of mystical experience, the lack of opposition of rational and emotional, 2) intuitiveness (remember N.A. Berdyaev: "There is spiritual boldness and initiative of the inner man, the deepest depths of the spirit in mysticism"); 3) fugacity; 4) passivity of will [9; 8].

An open-minded and unconventional teacher who explores the diverse and controversial methods of comprehension and understanding of human life and reality, and researches the means of mastering the art of pedagogical clairvoyance can use the following material for reflection and spiritual creativity:

— N. Roerich's ideas about "world unity" and "mutual understanding", about spiritual purification and self-improvement;

— R. Steiner's approaches; in particular, his idea that "experience always leads to understanding if a person acts with sensible judgment";

— A.I. Klizovsky's ideas about the purification of consciousness, spiritual enlightenment, spiritual vision and education of spiritualized and sophisticated man;

— H.E. Blavatskaya's teaching on "spiritually trained mind" and Logos which is both mind and speech;

— Books on Sufism that reveal cosmological role of love in the world perception in the prosaic and poetic form, describe the principles of holistic poetic and psychological world perception and the levels of non-rational knowledge, and prove the importance of subtle psychological analysis of every thought and continuous spiritual training;

— G.I. Gurdjieff's books that proclaim rather controversial ideas, but induce a person to self-knowledge, spiritual search and self-improvement;

— P.D. Uspensky's doctrine that strive beyond the limits of logical thinking and defend the ideal of "enlightened spirituality."

It is clear that, moving away from the vulgar materialism, many of our contemporaries get interested in various forms of idealism and mysticism ("pendulum effect"). This attention to the multi-faceted spiritual experience of mankind, and one's own spiritual life is potentially useful. It seems the time has come to consider pedagogy not only as an area of scientific knowledge or a set of methods and forms of practical influence on a person, but as the genuine spiritual activity.

However, the following idea is extremely important: a teacher should be aware and teach the child to consider the idea of Divine revelation and the world Logos and to find the formative beginning and *the pathos of rise and emancipation of a human, encouraging him not to rule the people and the world, or to escape from reality, but to come to genuine humanism and creativity*. Children should be taught not to expect and accept ready-made solutions, truths and revelations (it can result in dangerous emancipation and sectarian dogmas), but to thoroughly and comprehensively interpret the realities of life on the basis of "participatory thinking" (by M.M. Bakhtin) as well as to understand oneself and the surrounding world in a multidimensional spiritual and emotionally sensual way.

Moreover, while recognizing and accepting the distinct humanistic meaning and life-affirming pathos of hermeneutics, there is a warning against radical extremism in the implementation of its principles and methods. To begin with, hermeneutic doctrine doubts the possibilities of scientific perception of man; questions the phenomenon of the theory (V.A. Kanke calls this attitude law-phobia, theory-phobia, method-phobia, which is common among the adherents of hermeneutics [10]).

In this connection, the current state of pedagogy and the approaches within the humanistic concept of education have been assessed, and two important, but contrary tendencies have been found out. We will describe them here (pointing out their lameness), probably exaggerating too much.

The first tendency is connected with the absolutization of epistemologism in the official pedagogy. It results in an excessive scientism, scholasticism of "pure" knowledge that leads to the sterilization of pedagogical science, its separation from real life (epistemological and ontological separation) and, ultimately, to the dehumanization of ideas about man.

The second tendency in pedagogical development is connected with the application of methods and means of related branches of human studies: theology, esotericism, art. Such an approach seems sometimes unfounded and unjustified, and as a result blurs the subject of pedagogy, leads to the loss of its specificity, arbitrary application of the tools and conceptual-categorical apparatus of related fields and its scientific deterioration in general.

To avoid the above-mentioned extremes in the formation, development and interpretation of pedagogical knowledge it is necessary to see the actual mechanisms of combining pedagogical approaches with the common humanistic approaches [11]. Scientific and non-scientific humanitarian blocks, including pedagogical knowledge, are founded on a single empirical basis; they coexist and have great internal opportunities for interaction and complementarity. It is important to study *the scientific laws, as well as, "anti-laws" according to D.S. Likhachev*. Syncretism of the educational activities is an organic combination of various methods of human cognition and reality. It is an effective condition of the creative apprehension of educational reality from the standpoint of beauty and humanity on the basis of optimistic faith in the high human predestination and capabilities.

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