

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW SOCIO-POLITICAL TRENDS AND MIGRATION OF CITIZENS

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Abstract. The article analyzes the role of education and the challenges faced by the domain of philosophy of education nowadays. Civilization owes its existence to the development and formation of education. The philosophy of education considers the most general foundations of education, its development and functioning. The main aim of this article is to critically undertake the value of education and analyze how it has developed from ancient times up until nowadays along the philosophy of education. One of the major challenges is represented by the increased costs assigned to education, which has become one of the most expensive and most valuable commodities and, consequently, has affected the development of countries. In fact, one of the major premises of this study is that educational resources, rather than economic ones, definitely impact the raise and evolution of a nation. A particular focus will be devoted to the correspondences and contrasts between different European educational traditions and some Russian paradigms reflected by the philosophy of education. The European liberal understanding of the philosophy of education and its reception in the Russian philosophical thought have both differences and common aspects. Both support the idea that the philosophy of education has a pronounced interdisciplinary character which should be kept as such. A special place in the field of education is occupied by the international market of educational services, which is designed to improve the demographic situation and positively influences the labor market of recipient countries, as well as contribute to the development of the general level of education of the nation. A second argument that will tailor the current research will plea for accepting the competition of talents in the modern world, which is designed to attract educational migrants. The export of education requires freedom of movement, which underlies the free competition of educational services and the worldwide exchange of knowledge. Thus, the free exchange of knowledge and its transfer will contribute to maximize innovations in the field of education, which consequently

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will directly support both the modernization of the educational systems and the preservation of national educational traditions.

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“Education is the most powerful weapon with which to change the world” (Nelson Mandela)

1. Introduction. Knowledge transfer and education

Modern philosophy is a part of the social life of our society; therefore, it is implemented as an active force, both in society and in education. Education, in turn, as a form of knowledge transfer and a rational activity for the ordering and structuring of experience, plays a key role in the development of human civilization and, consequently, represents an enduring universal value (see Fokina, Logunova 2021).

At the end of the 20th century, up until the beginning of the 21st century, education was increasingly becoming a strategic domain for modern societies. Since it was a fundamental condition for a person to exercise their civil, political, economic and cultural rights, education was considered a core factor in the development and strengthening of the intellectual potential of a nation, but also a tool invested in supporting its independence and international competitiveness (Bryzgalina, Kurbanov, Sungatulina 2012). Currently, the philosophy of education is a domain with a dynamic development, independent from the field of scientific knowledge, closely evaluating the functionality of various theories applied in different educational systems.

For this reason, education offers the main resources for what we call the world economy. For a long time, it has been the most expensive and valuable commodity, and played a key role in tailoring the development of various societies. The problems reflected by the philosophy of education concern the role of education in the system of social values, the foundations and methodology for assessing the educational results, the quality of education at various stages of educational practices, and the particularities of subjects revealed throughout and by educational interactions.

The foundations of the Western European educational tradition were laid by the system of educational institutions of the ancient Greek *polis*, which had a serious impact on how pedagogical issues were solved. A special place in its formation belongs to the sophists, who tackled education as a special sphere of human activity, aiming to form citizens of the *polis*, free from the “shackles” of the past. They subordinated the task of “knowledge transfer” or teaching, to the needs of a particular person, thereby grounding the principles of a humanistic educational paradigm and, subsequently, of a powerful pedagogical tradition. Sophists educated their students in order to train skills of dialogical communication and oratory, which, in their opinion, was a necessary condition for a successful political career as an independent person and a full member of society. However, there was also an enlightened side of sophistry: the most famous sophists of the “golden” generation, Protagoras and Gorgias, taught their students not only the skills of the practical art of rhetoric, but also matters of philosophical nature.

It can be said that the sophists were the first to put forward and justify a new ideal of a free person, depicting the individual as capable of doubting, without worshipping the generally accepted ideas and norms of morality. Following them, Socrates, Plato, Epicurus, and Aristotle also noted the value of education as an opportunity for the formation of a full-fledged personality. Due to the clash between sophistry and the Socratic attitude of disinterested knowledge for the love of truth, problems of education and questions related to the extraordinary relevance of education in the life of the ancient *polis* raised a conflict in which the resources of what we call philosophy of education are deeply rooted (see Kryuchkova 2013).

It is impossible to deny the fact that throughout the entire development of mankind, the study of the education phenomenon and the methods of education themselves occupied a large place in the works of not only philosophers, but also scientists of various fields. Acquiring knowledge is a constantly self-developing process that requires searching for answers to questions. Even Descartes, an outstanding mathematician, physicist and philosopher, noted that doubt leads to the search for the right solution, for which additional knowledge is needed. In his treatise, *The Origin of Philosophy (lat. Principia Philosophiae)* Descartes (1983) tried

to comprehend knowledge as such and noted that doubt is a first step in shaping a reliable method to understand the world.

For the founder of German classical philosophy, I. Kant, “the concept of education plays a central role in answering one of the fundamental questions of philosophy: what is a person? Education is a means by which the rational abilities that define our humanity are actualized and cultivated” (Kornilaev 2021, 1077). For, according to the great philosopher (Kant 1980), only through education a person can fulfill their potential as a human being.

The philosophical German tradition was flourishing in regard to the philosophy of education. One of the most important scholars in this field was Hegel, who argued that the comprehension of an object occurs through the operation of “analytical understanding,” a process which will be completed only if the subject will have the capacity to isolate the object from empirical reality. Previously, Kant explained the purpose of education as the ability to make public and private use of our reason, a process that implies a certain freedom, which, according to Kant, owes its causality to immutable laws – the laws of morality (see Kant 1997). And this is absolutely true, because independent judgment is impossible without the courage to think critically. At the same time, a decisive step in education occurs when the individual apprehends the object of study from the point of view of abstract rationality, performing what is recognized as theoretical knowledge (see Hegel 1959). Heidegger summed up this tradition, advancing the perspective that education is an eternal process, which is characterized by its incompleteness, its constant formation, dynamics and development (see Heidegger 1993).

In the Western modern neoliberal philosophy of the second half of the 20th century, most philosophers began to interpret the philosophy of education as applied philosophy, whose task was to clarify the goals, content, methods and dissemination of education appropriate for a suitable modern society (Hirst 1974). Knowledge is divided into “knowledge for myself” and “knowledge for society,” *e.g.*, “I want to become an engineer or a doctor, so I need knowledge in certain areas, not in any general field” (see Entwistle 1990).

When it comes to the Russian tradition, the founders of the philosophy of education are V.V. Rozanov and S.I. Gessen. According to Beregovaya,

“The intensive allocation of education problems as a special subject of philosophical research in Russia started at the end of the 20th century, which was associated with the reform and modernization of the educational system and the needs of domestic science in the philosophical understanding of education.” (Beregovaya 2017, 32)

This shift coincided with the beginning of perestroika and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Russian philosophy of education is characterized as it follows:

“A problem-aspect approach, where the aspect approach is associated with a multifaceted understanding of education as a sphere of theory and practice, a public institution, the sphere of personality formation, whereas the problem-solving approach allows you to build conceptual schemes and theoretical models, which are centered on one or another educational problem.” (Beregovaya 2017, 34)

A high level of development registered in the field of education, facing the challenges of modernity, complements the progress of modern society, in which high-quality education contributes to the formation of a stable political culture and constructive overcoming of social contradictions, also being one of the basic conditions for the creation and multiplication of the so-called “human capital.” Modernity depicted philosophy of education as an area of interdisciplinary research, where the main principle and condition for its construction and development is the interaction of related scientific disciplines. At the same time, “the philosophy of education is not only a theoretical field of study of education and its problems, but has also turned into a practice-oriented science” (Mikhailina 2009, 104).

As rightly noted above, the philosophy of education has a pronounced interdisciplinary character, since it utilizes the achievements of various fields, such as the philosophy of psychology, philosophy of history, philosophy of culture, anthropology, mathematics, as well as issues of ethics and social philosophy. Therefore, the philosophy of education at the present stage should focus on the application of a socio-cultural

approach to philosophical problems of education, paying attention to cultural, humanistic and psychological, methodological and other aspects.

The philosophy of education aspires to a certain type of thinking and is based on the most general and essential laws and dependencies of modern educational processes in historical and socio-cultural contexts. Based on this, the philosophy of education is designed to reveal the ontological foundations of education as a socio-cultural phenomenon and its functions within the framework of social institutions of education of a certain type of human subjectivity.

2. Contemporary challenges: talents in educational systems, resources in educational markets

In modern socio-political realities, any national education system should be considered as the most important component that determines the prosperity, security and future of a country, a strategic important tool which increases welfare, a main factor in the development and strengthening the intellectual potential of the nation, its independence and international competitiveness in the context of globalization. Globalization, the rapid development of the post-industrial and informational society, natural and climatic changes, intercultural societies and the human capital required in its formation sharply marked the need to identify new ideological foundations and guidelines in the world educational system, in order to train people to answer properly to all these challenges. This matter is relevant as long as we accept the hypothesis that “an individual develops his political and social point of view within the framework of his inner consciousness or identity and projects it onto and through political and economic institutions” (Gadzhimuradova 2020, 134).

By the end of the 20th century, a significant branch of the world economy was formed – the international market of educational services, where the annual volume of education exports overcomes tens of billions of dollars, whereas the number of students overcomes several million people from all over the world.

It is difficult to deny that “at the present stage of the development of the world economy, countries confront a deep competitive struggle

for qualified labor resources. The possession of scientific and creative potential becomes a strategic value of states" (Voronina 2018, 158).

Nowadays, the export of education performs not only the function of increasing the overall level of human capital, filling the shortage of qualified personnel in the post-industrial economy, thus saving educational and social costs in countries that host educational programs, but it has equally become a powerful tool in improving the demographic situation in the recipient countries.

The UN report "World Population Prospects 2019" states the demographic aging of the European population and "as a result, the reduction of the population and qualified personnel. Elderly people (aged 65 years and older) today make up the fastest growing age group in the world. Worldwide, for the first time in 2018, there were more elderly people than children under the age of five, and by 2050 there will be more elderly people than teenagers and young people (aged 15 to 24 years)"² (2019, 16).

However, contemporary trends reveal that most of the so-called developed countries, despite the background of demographic and migration crises, are in dire need of qualified specialists in many areas of their economy. Their own educational systems cannot cope with the challenge of reproducing a sufficient number of resources in the labor market. Even the hope to welcome immigrants from Africa and the Middle East, for their ability to fill vacant positions requiring certain qualifications, has not been a sufficient trigger for offering a viable solution to this matter.

Therefore, for many developed countries of the world, it is more urgent than ever to preserve and increase migration channels, such as professional and educational migration, business migration, experts and qualified workforce migration, as societies already confront a social crisis raised by infertility or demographic stagnation, elements that, according to the UN predictions, will continue to represent a major concern, until the middle of this century.

² See https://population.un.org/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2019_Highlights.pdf; https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2019/10/un75_shifting_demographics.pdf (last time accessed at November 12, 2022).

According to the 2019 Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) report, global inequality in talent competitiveness is rapidly growing, as the talent gap between rich and poor countries is also fluctuating from one year to another.

Policies and practices that lead to increased talent competitiveness in more developed countries are less susceptible to political and socio-economic fluctuations, and these countries have the opportunity to invest in lifelong learning to strengthen skills, and attract and retain talent from around the world. European labour markets have become increasingly accessible to foreign workers because of increased global migration and the implementation of international labour mobility agreements (see Alecu & Drange 2019).

At the same time, the influx of highly qualified specialists has revealed a problem such as discrimination in the national labor market or the inability to obtain a vacant position in accordance with their qualifications, *i.e.*, the problem of top-down qualifications (see Przybyszewska 2021) or overqualification (see Mukomel 2020), which ultimately leads to the depreciation of higher education or academic degree received by immigrants. Constantly, immigrants who cannot find a job that corresponds to their high academic and professional qualifications lose the right to claim a privileged status based on their skills, knowledge and qualifications. In addition, it often happens that highly skilled migrants who get a low-skilled job that does not correspond to their level of education are likely to lose previously acquired skills and thus devalue their qualifications and waste previous professional experience (see Niraula & Valentin 2019).

Megacities have returned to the talent scene today, as large cities (mainly due to their higher level of resources) have adapted better to the challenges associated with COVID, which partly explains why they generally occupy higher positions in GTCI than in 2019.

The Global Talent Competition (GTC) includes a special section dedicated to cities. The rationale for this particular focus has remained unchanged since 2016 and stems from the recognition that innovative talent attraction strategies are emerging in all parts of the world; cities play an increasingly important role in these strategies. Such strategies affect all aspects of talent competitiveness, including education, professional development and retraining, attracting external talent and promoting

collaborative creativity within local spheres, as well as encouraging imported (or returning) talent, accommodated to contribute to the achievement of long-term local goals. By competing for talent, cities gain key advantages over nation-states, primarily reflected in economic growth rates that can be significantly higher than the average national growth rates in their correspondent countries. Cities and regions continue to play an increasingly important (and sometimes leading) role in shaping talent policies and strategies, as well as in trying and adapting creative ways in which talent can be grown, attracted and retained locally.

The top cities in 2021 are still dominated by the USA and Europe, and San Francisco takes the first place. Two other US cities, Boston and Seattle, are in the top 10; while the other remaining 7 are located in Europe (Geneva, Zurich, Luxembourg, Dublin, London and Helsinki). Singapore is the only Asian city included in the top 10, as it follows:

Table 1

Global City Talent Competitiveness Index – GCTCI – 2021. Top 10 Ranking³

Rank	City
1.	San Francisco (USA)
2.	Geneva (Switzerland)
3.	Boston (USA)
4.	Zurich (Switzerland)
5.	Luxembourg (Luxembourg)
6.	Dublin (Ireland)
7.	Singapore (Singapore)
8.	Seattle (USA)
9.	London (UK)
10.	Helsinki (Finland)

* Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) 2021 – Top 10 rating

The globalization of higher education and the growing number of international students have turned international student migration into a daily phenomenon.

³ See the online source available at: <https://www.insead.edu/newsroom/2021-global-talent-competitiveness-index-fostering-green-and-digital-jobs-and-skills-crucial-for-talent-competitiveness-in-times-of-covid-19> (date of application: October 20, 2022).

Statistics show that there is a demand in the world not just for education, but for quality education. Moreover, demands are not limited to certain countries or universities. We can agree on general facts related to the global dimension of the philosophy of education. Nonetheless, it is necessary to understand that only in conditions of openness and trust can the basic principles of the philosophy of education be implemented in raising particular forms of success. By gaining access to new concepts of the philosophy of education adopted and imposed by other universities, the students are introduced to new forms of knowledge that help them to develop a better understanding of the world and to set new goals for their personal and societal becoming. Prohibitions, ideological frameworks, policies of double standards, forms of sanctions that reflect political relationships between states affect all forms of scientific cooperation, students exchange, and professional networking—in this sense, we shall reflect on how European universities will retake their partnerships with Russian universities in due course.

3. Conclusion

Modern education is the historical result of the development of education, culture, and civilization. Education, being the most important component of social networking and knowledge transfer since the beginning of human civilization, has always been at the heart of philosophical reflections. The modern stage reached by our mankind in its civilizational development – in a time of deep significant historical transformations – is characterized by global industrial, technical, socio-cultural transformations at a civilizational scale. Education is, especially nowadays, the epicenter of many political, economic, spiritual, moral and other problems of life. Considered through the lens of specific social practices, education is progressively understood as a domain larger than a service area for sectors of the economy and patterns of the social structure of our world.

In recent years, after the migration crisis, but even before the outbreak of the pandemic, which brought an economic downturn doubled by a high rate of unemployment, the European Union has set an ambitious goal – to increase the demand and supply of qualified specialists in the

labor market (see Potemkina 2021). Global competition for highly skilled migrants has significantly intensified along with the increasingly demanded role of highly skilled migrants in supporting the growth of the economies of developed countries. From a human capital perspective, the countries belonging to the so-called Global North benefit from professional skills of individuals from other parts of the world, in which they were reticent to invest, at least in the beginning. As time passed by, many national governments started targeting highly skilled migrant programs to attract and retain talent (see Bailey & Mulder 2017).

To put all in a nutshell, the value of education in the modern world is not easy to estimate when it responds to social and economic needs of different countries; however, it is necessary to use educational resources to support the development of societies facing contrasting working trends.

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