

EDUCATION

An article by Uladzimir Matskevich first published in the *World Encyclopedia. Philosophy* (2001) edited by Alexander Gritsanov.

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Below is a full version of the article with a foreword of the editor in chief from the *Obrazovatel'naya politika* journal (vol. №1–2 (39–40) 2010).

Nothing is less evident than self-evident truths, statements, and definitions. We often talk about education, moulding, teaching, and culture as if they were obvious and stop noticing that we read different meanings into these concepts. And only leaving behind the arenas of heated discussions and broken lances do we suddenly realise that we have been thinking and talking about different things, using the same word to refer to different and sometimes disjoint realities.

*That is why, to understand each other fully, we are opening a section "Our Encyclopaedia" in the *Obrazovatel'naya politika* journal. The section will feature articles reflecting the place of certain key concepts in the contemporary thinking culture.*

Admittedly, the editorial board had no doubts as to which article should open the section. It is the article "Education" by methodologist Uladzimir Matskevich. We are grateful to the author for agreeing to publish his paradigmatic paper.

A. Asmolov

Education is a function of society serving reproduction and development of the society itself and social activity systems.

This function is fulfilled through culture transmission and the implementation of cultural norms in changing historical situations, based on the new fabric of social relations, by generations of people that continuously replace each other.

As a function, education is distributed throughout the system of human relations. As an organised process, education is carried out by specialised social institutions. For some institutions, education is the ultimate exhaustive framework for their existence that defines goals, values, subculture and self-identification of people: schooling of all levels, teacher's profession. The purport of existence of other institutions is not limited to educational function, but without it they are unthinkable: the family, the state, the church. Placing the educational function exclusively in the institutions responsible for its implementation reduces the adaptability and viability of the social system as a whole, limits its development, and can lead to cultural decline, regression and degradation.

In viable and dynamic societies, all structures, institutions and social agents are involved in implementing the educational function in one form or another. The challenges of education become

the defining topic of public communication at the turning points of social life, in crisis situations, under the development direction changes. In the 20th century, developed and dynamic societies adopted the paradigm of continuous education (1960-1980s) or lifelong learning (1990s), thus turning almost every person into an agent of the educational function. Education is fulfilled as a social human activity. The system of educational activity is represented in knowledge in different ways for various participants of the educational process and is described differently by various approaches.

Within a single process and one generalised function, at least five separate functions and processes need to be identified:

1. narrowly defined education – the function of laying the basis and foundations of culture with a focus on the current state of culture and activity;
2. training of skilled workers – the function of integration and centering the requirements of developing and reproducing technologies around educational institutions;
3. teaching – the function of the technologisation of epistemic activity;
4. moulding – the function of preserving cultural diversity, regional uniqueness, reproduction of economic patterns, natural landscapes, national traditions, etc.;
5. literacy is a function of ensuring equal initial rights and opportunities to all groups and strata in society, the technologisation of lifestyles.

In education as a sphere of socio-cultural practice, basic educational processes are implemented through the cooperative interaction of the functional, methodological, scientific, programme, research, and managerial positions of its representatives.

An event in the integrated activity practice of two ontologically disparate subjects serves as the challenge and paradoxical nature of both education and the reflection of educational activity, its theoretical descriptions, interpretations and understanding. One side is represented by the normative culture and society personified in the figure of the teacher. The other one is the spontaneous, arbitrary, creative individuality of the student. Phenomenologically, this eventfulness of the two activities appears either as cooperation and collaboration or as a struggle or confrontation. Mutual violence and suppression of freedom and will, love and surges of creativity, dogmatic adherence to the canon and destructive heresy are intertwined in the interaction and eventfulness of teacher and learner (society and individuality). The result of education is the student's personality with its qualities, abilities and characteristics, but this result is achieved as a compromise of interaction of the two parties. One of them is culture and society represented by the teacher – it expresses the need, obliges, demands. The other is represented by the student – it can, but either wants or does not want. Thus, the state of culture and society, their development, their future is in the hands of the individuality, they are fully dependent on the capricious, wilful, creative student.

The history of education is the history of victories and defeats, agreements and compromises between the two participants of educational process. Reflection upon and comprehension of this interaction accompany the entire history of philosophy. One of Socrates' impetus to philosophising was the question of virtue transmission. If virtue is the main attribute of a politician, of which Pericles was the model, then why were Pericles' children deprived of this attribute? Apparently, virtue is not automatically inherited, neither naturally (by blood, by birth, genetically) nor socially (inheritance rights, primogeniture, etc.). Such doubts disqualify traditional social foundations, hereditary aristocracy loses the basis for its existence, the ability of democratic polis to survive is also challenged. The problem does not have a speculative solution, so Socrates deals with it in a

practical way (with his disciple Alcibiades), but even there he does not succeed, as he did not with his own children.

Ancient philosophy was characterised by a narrow understanding of educational problems in theoretical terms due to Socrates' idea of dividing educational activity into a holistic one, with respect to a selected student, and a reduced one, with respect to teaching philosophy. Philosophy instruction was conducted in a public exoteric form (Socratic dialogues in the Agora, Plato's Academy, Aristotle's Lyceum), while holistic educational practice was a private matter and had an esoteric form (Socrates – Alcibiades, Plato – Dionysius the Younger, Aristotle – Alexander the Great).

Chinese philosophy developed in a different way, quite the opposite – education was reflected upon in exoteric texts for public use, while philosophical teaching itself was often passed on to close students as esoteric knowledge. In ancient China, two opposite versions of educational practice developed within the comprehension of the nature of education and the dependence of culture and society on the student's abilities, arbitrariness, and individuality.

Confucius considered the child and the student as a savage to be cultivated by any available means. Ritual is valuable as the quintessence of culture, and it should be always transmitted. It is better to encourage the student to master the ritual with humanity rather than violence. Ritual and humanity have become the main principles of Confucian educational practice, which have allowed to preserve and transmit "Chinese ceremonies" for almost three thousand years to the present day. Lao Tzu offered a different axiological reflection of educational paradoxes. Be yourself, the student is told, culture and society are strong and powerful with their rituals and ceremonies, they seek to suppress you. To successfully resist them, the path of Tao ("Tao Te Ching") is being developed, the path of self-valuable individuality capable of resisting culture and society.

Three main educational paradigms can be distinguished in traditional societies.

Natural pedagogy. It is characteristic of societies that have not developed into nations. This educational practice is based on a rigid division between the world of adults and children. The former are admitted to rituals, bear all responsibilities and enjoy all rights available in this culture, while the latter are deprived of all this. The boundary between the worlds is set by the initiation ritual. Before initiation, the child learns everything necessary for adulthood naturally; having passed the tests, having performed all the necessary feats in the initiation rite, they are admitted to the world of adults. The content of this educational practice is expressed in the eastern proverb, slightly different in various cultures, "Under 7 years old, the child is a king, under 15 they are a slave, after 15 they are a friend".

Esoteric pedagogy (pedagogy of the ideal). It is widespread in training neophytes for difficult and rare activities (priests, scientists, philosophers, artists, rare and sacralised crafts). Education in this practice is based on the hyper-motivation of the neophyte student which comes from the idealisation of the teacher, and on imitating the teacher in everything without exception, without distinguishing into important and unimportant aspects, because neither teacher nor student can distinguish what is important and what is not in a difficult and sacralised activity. Studying in this paradigm is accompanied by vivid cathartic and ecstatic experiences, which, on the one hand, imply and, on the other, form a distinctive character and a pronounced individuality of the student.

Pedagogy of mass socialisation and enculturation. It is represented in any traditional society by a system of norms and rules defining permissible and impermissible behaviour. This educational practice is very simple – some actions and deeds are encouraged, others are punished. The teacher points out to the correct behaviour and actions or demonstrates them, the student imitates. Sometimes admissible and encouraged actions are difficult, they require special knowledge, skills, and abilities, so the aspiration to master them is specially encouraged. Socially approved behaviour

may differ greatly for different social groups and strata, therefore education becomes a social sign which generates qualitative inequality. Individual uniqueness and creative impulses in this pedagogy belong to punishable actions. The ability to “be like everyone else”, typical average behaviour, the fulfilment of a ritual, protocol, and propriety are encouraged.

In Modern Age Europe, the destruction of traditional forms of life leads to the need for new understanding of educational activity and the whole body of social relations associated with it. The institution of the individual emerges. An autonomous and free individual needs education to overcome social inequality and for self-fulfilment. Two new educational paradigms sprout and develop: egalitarian and elitist pedagogies.

Egalitarian pedagogy. It emerged during the Reformation in Protestant communities (in Belarus also in fraternal schools of Eastern Orthodox communities). Of greatest importance for the development of Modern Age education and egalitarian pedagogy is the theoretical and practical work of J.A. Comenius, the bishop of the Anabaptist community of the Moravian brethren. According to Comenius, individual self-fulfilment is determined by reading the Bible and faith unmediated by the church. Not only the initiated, not just anyone willing, but everyone should be able to read the Bible. The distinction lies between *must be able* to read the Bible and *must* read it. “To read or not to read” is determined by the individual, but it is the duty of society to provide the individual with the ability to read. This is why Comenius’s pedagogy emerges from the Protestant Christian imperative, but develops as a secular one. The requirement for everyone to be able to read the Bible implies continued education, since special skills for reading the Bible are taught at universities. Comenius solves all these problems by offering holistic organisation of educational process, linking together mass literacy for all, the possibility of continuing education within coordinated programs from elementary school to university.

Comenius designed the school through the standardisation of teaching material at all stages of education, thus creating the first humanitarian technology. According to Comenius, technology of education implies equal opportunities for all students, allows interchangeability and consistency of the main technological elements of education: teachers who are trained in like manner, textbooks, programmes, educational institutions. The student gets the opportunity to continue education despite changing schools or cities, skipping a year or more, from the same stage where they stopped. The practical implementation of egalitarian pedagogy required a lot of work and stretched over three hundred years. It was completed only in the 20th century, when mass education completely eradicated illiteracy in all developed countries. Unified technologised activity is productive and stable, but conservative and maladaptive. That is why the implementation of egalitarian pedagogy is accompanied by regular crises of national educational systems which are repeated every 15-20 years in the 19th-20th centuries, and after World War II developed countries initiated permanent reforms of both educational system and its content.

Elitist pedagogy. The technologisation and standardisation of educational sphere naturally create problems for alternative educational demands and needs, whatever their motivation is: interests of students, specific social needs, or philosophical attitudes (Locke, Rousseau, James Mill).

Elitist pedagogy emerges as compensation for the shortcomings of mass humanitarian technological education, never becoming a technology itself, seeking to solve its specific problems by specific means. The latter, however, are not very diverse, most often they are variations of homeschooling and self-education.

A different matter is pedagogical practices that borrow Comenius’s technological principles but implement them in particular situations: for special groups of students (oligophrenic pedagogy for people with intellectual disabilities, surdopedagogy for the deaf, blind and mute, Makarenko’s pedagogy for delinquent teenagers, etc.), for special educational content (Waldorf education based

on Steiner's anthroposophy, the Project Method based on Dewey's instrumentalism and Pierce's pragmatism, etc.). In the 19th-20th centuries, with the increase of scientific knowledge and the diversification of scientific and philosophical approaches, new pedagogical paradigms emerge (psychologistic – Mannheim system (named after the city of Mannheim) with an emphasis on testing, cybernetic – programmed learning), but they remain experimental. Occasional crises in educational sphere always end with palliative solutions, and permanent reforms are extremely inconsistent. This is due to numerous unsolved problems of ontological and moral character. Ontological ones are problems of concept, nature or creation of man, problems of the educational content and methodological problems. Moral ones are problems of axiology and law.

The idea of man. Definition of education depends on the approach to the idea of man, although the possibility of education as a practice already dictates a certain approach to the idea of man. The etymology of the term "education" includes "an image" (Belarusian "adukacyja" – Greek "eidos", German "bildung" – bild), shaping the image, i.e. if education is possible, it is understood as work on the form, entelechy of a person. But does it affect the content, essence, nature of man? - this is one of the main questions of the philosophy of education.

If human nature is not affected in the process of education, the diversity of educational practices is determined only by cultural and historical perceptions of the image or model that man is being fitted into. In this case, discussions develop either around interpretations of concepts such as the harmoniously developed personality, kalokagathia, junzi (Chinese for "noble man"), "true Aryan" and so on, or around the conceptualisation of specific examples (the image and likeness of God, "take after Comrade Dzerzhinsky", Che Guevara, etc.) If education can influence human nature, educational practice becomes anthropotechnical and falls into the realm of moral law and categorical imperative. The Soviet and Chinese cultural revolutions setting the task of moulding (creating) a new man, as well as F. Galton's eugenics and its totalitarian variants become possible.

Christian theology presents two opposing principles: traducianism, the one-time act of God's creation of man, followed by the reproduction of the once-created, and creationism, implying God's creation of every human soul anew. Creationism (Augustine the Blessed, Calvin) is accepted in Protestantism, it would allow radical interference in human nature if it was not limited by the dogma of predestination. Comenius's pedagogical technology is based on Protestant theology and ontology of man. This allows for radical interference in the formation of man because it does not affect their soul (essence, destiny), whose existence is predetermined by God.

God continues to create the soul (to determine the destiny and essence of man), but this takes place in a sphere of religious practice outside education. In particular, for the Anabaptists (rebaptists), a current in Protestantism to which Comenius belonged, the radical rebirth of man takes place at the moment of adult baptism (re-baptism) and in less radical forms during the rite of confirmation of teenagers, which goes back to ancient rites of initiation. The secularisation of Comenius's pedagogical technology breaks its integrity and harmony, so the review of the egalitarian technology foundations occasionally recurs throughout the three centuries of Comenius's programme with a varied extent of acuteness.

The non-theological version, which admits the creaturehood of man and the incompleteness of man's creation, is represented in the interactive approach, in particular in Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory of development. The main premise here is man's non-identicalness to themselves in natural history (phylogeny), social history (ontogeny), and individual history (biography or actual genesis). Man's non-identicalness to themselves during their formative process denies the pre-determination of their development, making it impossible to predict development stages and to some extent, make diagnostic assessment in the way it exists in psychology, pedology and pedagogy of Vygotsky times. Without prediction and diagnostics, mass education cannot become

technological. According to the cultural-historical theory, this obstacle is eliminated by introducing the concept of the zone of proximal development (of the student, child, person), which is created in the interaction of the teacher and the student through anticipation, individual problem solving and joint solution of these problems. Thus, the ontological problem of man turns into a methodological problem and is solved by methodological means, rather than philosophical speculations about the essence of man.

The content of education. Most acutely the problem of educational content is revealed in the opposition of activity and naturalistic approaches (see Activity, Approach). In Comenius's pedagogy, the content of education was defined sensualistically. The student was introduced into the world of sensual objects. One of the main principles of Comenius's didactics was the principle of visualisation, which is a reinterpretation of the "esse est percipi" thesis – "knowledge is acquired when introduced through senses". For Comenius and Berkeley, sensualism was not a problem because education was supplemented with Bible studies, the contents of which are certainly not sensual. But following the complete secularisation of schools, transcendental noumenal objects virtually disappeared from educational content. Even the ideal objects of mathematics are presented as graphic images.

The content of education is fundamentally different in phenomenology, transcendental idealism and in activity approach. So far this content, if transmitted in education, in rare cases becomes the property of individual accomplishment, but beyond schooling and educational institutions. Professional teachers understand the content of education as knowledge, skills, and abilities (so-called KSA) in their sensualist interpretation. The intraprofessional critique does not raise fundamental questions of the content of education. It keeps to replacing KSA with subject or reasoning categories, e.g. abilities, individual mode of activity, or personal knowledge. The problem of educational content is localised in the institutional system of mass education, since education with different ontological content (religious, activity-based, philosophical, esoteric, etc.) coexists with the mass school.

Methods of education. The challenges of teaching methods arise from diverse activities of different participants of educational process and ontological status of their interaction and eventfulness. Integral process of education is defined through individual activity of participants (the teacher teaches, the student studies) in subject-object schemes. Both the student and the teacher are active subjects, and their activity is directed at objects that are external to them: nature, knowledge, texts, etc. Besides, for the teacher, the student is an object of teacher's activity.

This approach is resisted by supporters of subject-subject interaction schemes. Here activity cannot be viewed as individual or labour-related transformative one which can be reduced to a system of individual activities. Rather, it is viewed as a collectively distributed activity (V.V. Davydov, V.V. Rubtsov). Such educational activity is understood as a game or communication which can never be individualised. To understand educational activity as a game or dialogue creates more problems than solves them. In a game with many participants or in communication (which is unthinkable with less than two subjects), there is and no and cannot be an a priori externally assigned result.

This means that the result of education can no longer be controlled by the teacher and the society the teacher personifies, society loses control over the state of culture and the status quo itself. The individuality of the student and the society with the world culture represented by the teacher are equal in contributing to the result of education. But this makes Comenius's pedagogical technology (and most other pedagogies that claim to be technological) absurd. Egalitarian pedagogy guarantees equal rights to all students, but the teacher and the student are not equal. The former knows, the latter can only potentially know or should know. To understand education as a game or communication (dialogue) requires reconsidering the idea of society and culture. This means to reject rigorous rhetoric version of culture (Averintsev) and historicism (Popper) in the interpretation

of history and social development. Only a fundamentally open society (Bergson, Popper, J. Soros) can assimilate educational activity as a game and dialogue, accept an entirely different function of education as self-development, rather than reproduction and conservation. Thus, methodological problem of education lies in the development of philosophy and methodology of social development. The professional pedagogical definition of the methodological problem of education requires systemic and methodological research and development in the field of heterogeneous, heteronomous, heterochronous and heterarchical systems of activity, which is what modern education appears to be for pedagogical thinking. However, such research cannot be carried out by means of pedagogy itself.

The axiology of education. The pluralism of modern societies creates multiple goals and models of human development in the sphere of education. Even traditional societies offered various options of education of younger generations, though models and standards were limited. In traditional societies, the individual, the student, the child were limited in their ability to choose from the offered options. The choice was predetermined, dictated by a person's origin, abilities, stability of institutional forms of the traditional school.

A modern student is much freer to choose the type of education that society can offer him. They are less bound by origin thanks to the social dynamics and individual mobility. They are less bound by limitations of their abilities thanks to highly technological and diverse teaching methods accustomed to a wide range of abilities. They are less dependent on their native language and ethnicity thanks to the globalisation and standardisation of education and the internationalisation of languages of culture. The student's choice of education is limited only by their orientation in the world of values. The student encounters these limitations at a very early age when choosing a school or even a kindergarten. Any choice both expands opportunities and narrows them. Choosing a bad school can predetermine one's entire biography and career. Institutionalised education and egalitarian pedagogy which provides equal opportunities and rights to all students are unable to ensure its implementation.

Navigation in the world of modern values becomes an independent task of educational activity in the present-day world, unlike past historical periods when values were transmitted in the process of education. But the functionality of the navigation is achieved beyond the institutional school: in the family, media, among peers, etc. When one of the most important tasks of education is taken out of the sphere of responsibility of educational institutions, there is a need to turn the whole society into an educational society where everyone – students and teachers alike – is for each other, and not bound by professional ethics, parental responsibility and authority, moral and political censorship.

Previously, the child and the student received dosed information from society, it was measured by the circle of friends, home library, school curriculum, the customs of the community. The Internet has removed the last barriers to sharing information with everyone, and the freedom of choice has become limitless.

Contemporary axiological problem is not to limit the freedom of choice in the situation of values diversity, but to be able to use it. Most social institutions and groups, professional, ethnic and confessional communities, not to mention individuals, find themselves unprepared for such a situation. For some communities and subcultures, this negligence is fraught with the risk of dropping out of world communication altogether. Nations, congregations, and professional communities turn out to be functionally illiterate because they are unable to navigate the value system of the modern world, to develop and adopt a modern educational policy and doctrine. A group of perpetually "developing" countries has emerged on the planet, forced to constantly catch up with the "developed" ones, with no chance of ever finishing this modernisation race.

The rights of the participants of educational process. Legal aspects in educational relations between people are extremely diverse. This topic has been acute since ancient times in the context of natural pedagogy (see above), which is characterised by complete deprivation of rights of children. Parents managed the child's entire life. Only in societies that attained statehood did norms emerge that forbade the killing of children by parents. But children's slavery, arranged marriages, corporal punishment are still cultivated in many countries and subcultures. The rejection of traditional natural pedagogy in Europe in Modern Age revealed the world of childhood. In the 18th century, proper children's clothes appeared (even Renaissance and Baroque paintings depict children either naked or in adult clothes, which were adjusted in size only in the wealthy strata of society). In the 19th century, children's literature emerged, in the 20th century, children's folklore was discovered. Until the 20th century, children's rights were regulated solely by family law. At the end of the 20th century, the Declaration on the Rights of the Child was adopted, adults committed to guarantee the rights of children as such, not just the rights of individuals as potential adults.

Egalitarian pedagogy discusses different legal issues, in particular equal rights (opportunities) to education for all. During the unfolding of Comenius's programme, the issue of equal rights in egalitarian pedagogy arises every time on a new level. Initially, equal rights are mentioned only in relation to those who attend school. At the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th centuries, after most countries adopted compulsory primary education, the problem becomes more acute due to parents' welfare, children's abilities and their level of development. Methodological advances in pedagogy eliminated this problem in developed countries, but it reappeared during the transition to universal secondary and later to higher education.

In the United States, specific problems emerge with the education of children with physical and intellectual disabilities, who are legally guaranteed the right to study in regular schools. In this case, both regular students and the school might find themselves in a vulnerable situation, where school can be sued for poor quality instruction. In vocational education the problem of the rights of students is viewed differently. If vocational training begins early, at lower levels of education, it reduces the chances of continuing education to a greater extent than expands them. This problem is more acute in countries with a multi-variant system of vocational training. In Belarus, where vocational secondary schools were inherited from the USSR, there are no problems with the right to continue education at higher levels, but there are problems with the quality of both professional training and general education, which leads to the problem of functional illiteracy.

The globalisation of education implies the possibility and the right to get and continue education in any country of the world, and this is impossible without the coordinated standardisation of national educational systems and international agreements on the converting and recognition of education certificates and diplomas (Lisbon Recognition Convention). The standardisation of education raises legitimate concerns about the loss of cultural and national identity in some countries. One more aspect of the legal problem in education, the ethical one, concerns the right of the teacher and the entire system of education to impose on students a picture of the world, a worldview, a model of a person, all of which comprise the content of education in each particular school. Each particular school cannot ensure the freedom of choice of educational options that are declared.

School activities are organised and technologized for very specific educational content. In a sense, the school zombifies, bewitches the student, imposing a picture of the world on them. That is why studying in a particular school (a school of a certain type) closes off opportunities to learn other content, to follow other patterns. A large part of pedagogical community has to put up with this ethical problem as an unavoidable evil, but there are options for solving it.

The solution to this problem is to formalise education, to teach how to study and to get the knowledge, not to teach the knowledge about the world itself. Although this solution simply moves

the problem from the ethical to the methodological sphere (methodological opposition of formal and real or material education), but, unlike ethical problems, methodological problems are fundamentally solvable.

Finally, the last legal aspect of education is to preserve the sovereignty of nation-states over the educational systems of each particular country in the context of the globalisation of education and the expansion of the Internet. Historically the problem is not new. The globalisation of education began with the emergence of world religions and has always met the resistance of traditional societies in various historical forms of fundamentalism. Islamic and Orthodox fundamentalism becomes problematic for the modern times. The problem is solved only through national self-identification. One can trace it in the successive historical programs of renewal of education in Belarus.

The apostolic program of Christianisation (10th-14th centuries). The adoption of Christianity introduces peoples to an ecumenical community, which inherits, in addition to Christianity itself, the entire antique tradition. Culture is complemented by writing, literature, and its own history. The apostolic educational program starts the history of education in Belarus. The Christianisation of Belarus is peculiar due to the coexistence of two programs: the Cyrillo-Methodian programme, which made the principalities of Polotsk and Turov and Pinsk peripheral to the Byzantine civilization, and the Catholic missionary programme on the lands of ancient Lithuania. The competition between the two programmes formed a complex linguistic, confessional, political and anthropological context of Lithuanian self-identification (Mindaugas, Skirgaila and Vytautas were baptised both according to Byzantine and Roman rites, while condoning or even patronising paganism on the whole territory west of Pinsk-Minsk-Vitebsk).

The consequences of this competition are still seen today. From time to time, they take the form of cultural catastrophes, separating people and languages, or advance to the dialogue of cultures.

The programme of Reformation (16th-18th centuries). In autochthonous forms it originated in "fraternal schools" (secular schools of Eastern Orthodox congregations – brethrens) of the modernising Lithuanian Orthodoxy. The tradition of "fraternal schools" was complemented and enriched by the intensive spread of Calvinism, Anabaptism, and anti-Trinitarianism where education was one of the main components of missionary activity. An egalitarian pedagogy was being formed, largely anticipating Comenius's programme.

The cultural consequences of this program were widespread literacy and book printing, urbanisation and autonomy of urban and local communities, the Bible in national languages, the phenomenon of polemical literature, a unique legal system, fiction and poetry, integration into European culture and cultural expansion to the East, which was stopped by devastating wars with Russia that lasted intermittently throughout the 17th century.

The Counter-Reformation programme (16th-19th centuries). Extensive spread of education was one of Catholicism's responses to the challenge of the Reformation. The most active in this were the Jesuit and Basilian orders (the latter being a Uniate order created under the influence and control of the Jesuits).

The Jesuits lagged behind the Protestants in the mass spread of education and literacy, but offered the quality of education, the status and prestige of being educated. More than 80 collegiums and gymnasiums and two universities (the academies of Vilnius and Polotsk) were founded in a short period. The development of philosophy and science in Belarus (albeit in archaic neo-scholastic forms), the spread of libraries, museums, pharmacies, hospitals, school theaters, etc. can be considered side results of this program. Apostolic Christianisation, the Reformation, and the Counter-Reformation were accompanied by educational globalisation and integration programmes.

Large historical educational programmes can also have a different angle.

The elimination of education in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (19th century). The elimination of all educational institutions was part of the Russianisation of the Lithuanian provinces' population. The deportation of Jesuits and liquidation of the Basilian order led to the mass closure of collegiums and declining of universities. Modernised Lithuanian Orthodoxy and the Unia were annihilated, the clergy and the congregation were subordinated to the Russian Orthodox Church. Together with the abolition of municipal self-government (Magdeburg Law), the foundation of egalitarian pedagogy (community and municipal schools) was undermined. Both universities were closed, laboratories, libraries, archives were moved to Moscow and St. Petersburg, professors and students either emigrated or were exiled to Russia. Only a few educational institutions of higher and secondary education survived (for example, the Slutsk Protestant Gymnasium and the Gory-Gorki Agricultural School).

Higher education was resumed in Lithuania and Belarus only after World War I.

The Soviet educational programme (20th century). Education was based on the technology of egalitarian pedagogy, which was implemented in the USSR most consistently and effectively. However, any technology requires contents. Soviet pedagogy approached educational contents through the pragmatics of industrialisation and the cultural revolution. Technology and educational content are interconnected. To increase the efficiency and productivity of humanitarian technology, Comenius's technology was automatised. The governmentalisation of school was accompanied by statism in the educational content.

The automatised activity led to the dehumanisation of educational content, although the inverse dependence is no less significant: dependence of the activity organisation on the non-humanitarian, quasi-scientific theory and philosophy of Marxism. Formal, classical and humanitarian education were removed from the system of education or replaced by substitutes.

Deprived of its cultural layer (both in terms of people and cultural things: archives, museums, monuments, libraries), of its historical capital, in the 19th century, Belarus implemented the machine-like Soviet technology in its purest and most perfect forms. As a result, by the time Belarus acquired independence, there was virtually no humanitarian knowledge of the country, no understanding of Belarus. The nation lost its ability to survive, reproduce and develop due to the implementation of educational programmes over two centuries. One program implied the full-scale liquidation of the national educational system. The other implied the accelerated creation of an effective, high-tech, but reduced and one-sided educational system.

The programme of educational renewal for an open society. The acute need for a radical renewal of the national educational system in Belarus in the last decade of the 20th century arises against the background of globalisation of education in the whole world. The basis of the programme of educational renewal in Belarus is formed by the analysis and conceptualisation of multi-vector tendencies which are outlined in the globalisation of education and supplemented with criticism and analysis of the country's national problems and development needs.

Uladzimir Matskevich, 2001