

## Materials of Conferences

**RELEVANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
EDUCATION AND ITS ESSENCE**

Bespalov A.M.

*Biysk State Pedagogical University  
named after V. Shukshin  
Biysk, Russia*

The problem of ecological education was acknowledged and became the subject matter only in the second half of XX century. It is then, when the warnings of philosophers about the destructive action on the universe, inclusive of the human himself, by the anthropo-centrist ideas of the world became urgent. Modern Russian educational conceptions in its overwhelming majority are based on such ideas. That is why it is necessary to find out those approaches and foundations to the ecological education, which will be adequate to the subject itself.

The idea of a human as a social creature has solid grounds under it. It is the society, where a human child, because of joint activity and communication with other people, can become a human. But the human activity, by means of which a human stands out of the natural world, opposes it to the last, alienates it and its essential forces from the universe. That is why it is practically impossible to solve the problem of keeping balance between the natural world and the human only at the activity level. The activity itself is not a comprehensive reason for the human existence. Rendering a considerable influence on the other levels, it is defined by them in many ways. By the way, as Batishchev G.S. noticed, "no matter how great the achievements are, there will always be found such reality levels, which, because of their far greater complexity, will prove to be so far ultramundane, back-breaking difficult for an adequate penetration of human activity in them. Such subject-matters, remaining for the time being historically unapproachable, lie beyond the boundaries of subject-matter-ness" [1]. It shows that not only changes of nature, but also knowledge of possible changes, have its own limits within the bounds of reality. Also, it underlines the need for the acknowledgement of the fact by the human that, beyond activity, he is in special relations with the world, himself, his and its past, present and future, invariably *ultramundane* for historically defined activity, in the relations of "deep attachment and involvement" [2].

Such an acknowledgement is possible only in the state of integral perception of the world, inseparability of the Human and the Universe into a subject and object, i.e. in the state of subject-object relations overflow. In such relations with the world the human is at the pre-activity (in psyche – it is the unconscious and subconscious) and over-activity (it involves meditation and creative work) levels.

However, it should be noted that none of the levels in itself is not able to provide an effective and full-blooded enough human existence. Without a sufficient development of all the mentioned levels the human remains a unilateral, one-dimensional, incomplete person. This imperfection, unilateralism was caused by various reasons in various historical epochs, but eternally resulted in one thing: the domination of one or another level of human relations with the world, and so – the alienation from it.

One more important definition of the human should also be noted. As a Kazakhstan philosopher Khamidov A.A. points out, "a human becomes a subject inasmuch he stops practically assimilating to a finite (and that is why adaptive) creature, inasmuch he stops being closed on his qualitative and quantitative definition, on his specific measure and essence" [3]. A human as a subject is constantly becoming, is being in the absolute movement of becoming, as he acts not only in accordance with his logic, measure and essence, but also in accordance with the logic, measure and essence of the object standing against him (in this very fact the foundational importance of activity in the human becoming consists). And even being a representative of a particular social group, a bearer of a special status, etc., he is never completed with these definitions. Certainly, a measure of the truly human (i.e. corresponding to the tendency of absolute movement of becoming) is defined both by a general type of the social medium, where the individual lives in, and his own life intentions and ambitions. Thus, only going beyond his own finiteness, definiteness of the present human existence conditioned by the cultural-historical level of human society development, an individual becomes a real Human, Personality. A topically parallel outcome is possible in the acts of creativity, deep involvement into the existence and real inter-subject mutuality. Together with that, creativity supposes a radical coming into the situation principally uncontrollable from the outside. That is why a demand for the formation of a talent to personally-inner mental self-control in a human grows today. That is why modern education should be filled with ecological, humanitarian, moral, axiological, spiritual content. And it is referred not only to the training of humanists, but also to the comprehensive school, to the training of any specialist, in one way or other coming to the level of creative relationship with the world. But it has a special value for those, who concentrate creative potencies in themselves: teachers, therapists, public figures, scientists, litterateurs, art representatives, etc.

It follows from this that ecological education cannot be defined as a "system of social norms, rules, knowledge, skills and institutions aimed at the provision of long-term interests of the human in the Biosphere" [4]. *Ecological education – is a deep onto-*

*logical cultural-cosmic phenomenon grounded in the existence, the appropriation of modes of being in the Universe by the human, the modes providing maintenance of the balance in the interaction with the Universe.* Thus, it cannot be restricted by definite scales preassigned by the society. For, who learns, *learns*, first of all, *to be*, and not only to know. And, who teaches, *teaches* not knowledge as it is, but *modes of being in the Universe*, “he being and knowing at the same time” [5].

But the human is always mentioned as a concrete-historical subject constantly finding certain definiteness, finiteness, appears as an accessory of the social medium. That is why education is understood as the formation and introduction into a special mode, as well. Thereat, those, who fall out of the defined frames of the mode specified by the society, are alienated by the society. Together with that, one of the present-day world's features is the acceleration of social processes causing global changes in the arrangement, functioning and development of the society and nature within the limits of one generation life; the acceleration being conditioned by the technological revolution. Moreover, one generation can outlive several changes alike. They are the changes of natural and climatic, technological, informative and ideological character. On the one hand, they scale up the abilities of human influence not only on social processes, but on the entire world surrounding the human himself, and on the other hand, they reduce the abilities of culture mass reproduction traditional forms geared to the transfer of its external manifestations. The mode strongly preset by education fails to touch a new reality. A human, when finding himself in new existence conditions generating both positive and negative destructive influencing factors earlier unknown for him, feels ever-increasing physiological helplessness, psychological discomfort and intellectual overpressure. Life itself makes us develop more fundamental levels of the human essence in the process of education today. It is, first of all, the creative workability enabling to provide both an adequate response to the time challenge and preservation of self-definition, thereat. It is also the ability to self-control, self-preservation, self-purification and self-recovery of one's own vital forces.

The modern education system is mainly built on the teacher-students communicative intercourse, in the process of which the assimilation of verbally formed images of the object world by the students takes place. Beyond the framework of school programs there remains the perception of the real object world. Partially this disadvantage is pieced out at practical classes, when learners directly make or correlate various object verbalization systems to their own experience and already defined image verbally organized by their own consciousness. But, in the first case, school is short of time and tangible assets (it is impossible to reproduce the way of object-

transforming activity passed by the mankind for thousands years of its history in conditions of school). And in the second one - there required a coming out beyond the communicative intercourse framework in the problem situation organization, where the “choice”, “finding” the “right” image from already ready images of the object world, even if these images are not given during the classes directly, to the deep ontological communication, when a new image “is built”, is produced. Besides, for the perception of nature the coming out beyond not only the communicative intercourse framework, but also beyond the framework of the deep verbal intercourse proper, is needed. A direct deep communication with nature is necessary to form an image notional perception, beyond which “nature is deprived of its real fullness” [6]. A dialog here is simply indispensable. Thereat, the subject-matter-ness of “other” senses by means of the rational way often remains the problem of organization of a dialog with nature unsolvable, as various logics are met here. That is why the development of not only rational thinking, but also irrational abilities, which, having no use in the rationalized world, are generally blocked and exist in the human only at the virtual energy level, is so important in the present-day world.

In connection with the necessity of turning to the deep forms of attitude of the human to the world (first of all, creative attitude) resisting outside control, there emerges the problem of formation the ability to personally-inner mental self-control in the human, as it was mentioned earlier. As creative attitude, according to the correct note of M. Bakhtin, “doesn't accept any ethic estimation and aesthetic appearance of existence, drives off them, ...performing by this the purity of its uniqueness” [7], as a similar estimation is possible only when realizing the creative attitude itself as an act, as inclusiveness of the creator-human into the Universe. And this realization is open to the philosophic reflection, first of all. Only at the philosophic level not only the world itself in its all integrity, but also the relations with it are problematized in their axiological-conceptual aspect. It makes the introduction of philosophical education into the educational process, starting with the elementary school, topical. Ecological education without philosophical understanding of the reality – is flawed.

The result of ecological education is the ecological world outlook, world perception, world attitude, including not only the system of knowledge, skills and abilities in the area of ecology, but also ethic, legal and other norms, behavior and activity repertoire regulating balanced interrelations with the environment, the readiness to observe them, the ability to percept and estimate one's own relationships with the world, etc.

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#### THE GLOBAL PROBLEMS OF MODERN HUMAN ECOLOGY

Musikhina E.A., Golovnyova T.I.  
Irkutsk State Technical University  
Irkutsk, Russia

The global problem of modern education is to form a person that is of full value and possesses highly developed social and personal intelligence. The person that is able to find a compromise between private “I” by Maslow and social “We” by Gegel; that adequately appreciates both itself and another person; which motto is “I am free as long as my freedom doesn’t do harm to the other’s people freedom” can be acknowledged as the ideal person. It is understood that it’s impossible to become ideal, but why just not keep trying? Our further evolution is unthinkable without moral large-scaled ecological education that includes such disciplines as human ecology, dwelling ecology, regional ecology etc. The concept of the Earth cover as a sphere, that was put by Austrian geologist Zuss and completed by Russian scientist Vernadsky, became classical. Human ecology as a science must be based on the concept of health that is complex in its definition. It includes not only physical health of a human, but also his moral, psychical and matter conditions that all together form the sphere named “human ecology”.

It is proved that one human appreciates another one accordingly to his own abilities. Primitive human tries to adapt a more complex person to his level and thus tries to make that person more primitive. By analogy with this simple example he tries to appreciate his environment, too. He has no doubts in that everything around exists only to satisfy his own needs. On the other side, those who adequately appreciate themselves are able to appreciate the others more adequately and don’t try to think by patterns.

Those who are adequately appreciate themselves and all their surroundings are just unable to do harm to their environment – house, city, region, country and the whole planet. Understanding the value and uniqueness of a human life and human relationships is the way to harmonious natural resources exploitation. If we will continue to be harmful to our environment, the ecological crisis will go deeper. Mankind is coming to a deadlock by itself. Planet resources are not endless, mankind is already contradicting with its environment. Separating himself from the nature, trying to just satisfy himself, a man is acting like a virus, destroying not only his own environment but also himself. We can see this looking through the history of a mankind: wars, conflicts, mindless exploitation etc. The main role in this self-destructions are played by the governments because they make decisions for all their people. Our leaders must be more socially and intellectually developed, they must show the example for their people, they should remember that “the real intelligent man is that one who stays intelligent when he is alone”.

Modern people should understand the simple truth: there is no existence out of the nature. The changes in the natural system inevitably result in the changes in our society. Vernadsky talked about the mankind as geological power that is able to change the Earth’s surface. His theory of noosphere – the sphere of intelligence – is a result of his care for the future and for the development of a mankind. There is a necessity to form ecological mentality in people’s minds independently from their nationality, location, job, interests and culture.

Soils, water and atmosphere pollution by industrial toxins, fluorides and pesticides are the real problem because the mankind is a part of the environment. Protecting and restoring soils is only a part of the problem and is a very important task because all toxins or their combinations in the soils inevitably get in our organism.

The soils of Irkutsk region are significantly different. They are forming in the conditions of the influence of the rocks spreading under them, different relief types and climate conditions. In the general agricultural areas there are the following soil types: grey forest (38,6%), carcaceous, soddy podzolic, chernozem (5,9%), meadow and bog soils. Grey forest soils are located within mastered territories, mainly in Irkutsk, Usolye, Cheremkhovo, Zalari, Zima, Tulun,