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### THE IMAGE OF A PERSON AS A FUNDAMENTAL CATEGORY OF PEDAGOGY

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#### ABSTRACT

The article explores the phenomenon of the image (definiteness) of human spirituality. The image is interpreted as the existence in human nature of the original universal spiritual intentions. The image and its personalization (the "human self") is understood as a self-aware definiteness of the universe, characterized by both immutability and infinite expansion. The image of spirituality is considered as a methodological reference point in education. Non-interference in the process of revealing a person's spirituality, rejection of rationally targeted realities in education, maintaining the understanding of the human "Self", cognition of oneself as a universal spirituality, the formation of a special value-semantic environment for the disclosure of human definiteness are the distinctive features of the presented concept of education. The methodology of the article is the substrate-idealistic reflection of A. A. Gagaev.

**Keywords:** universe, ideal, person, spirituality, pedagogy, image.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is the support of the emergence of the image of spirituality of a person  
in is/her being.  
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In the theory of education, such a category as the image of human spirituality should become fundamental. Without it, one cannot achieve the educational impact on the human soul. The state-of-the-art theoretical and pedagogical thought, basically pragmatic-rationalistic, ignores this category, seeing in it the loss of what can be described with a high degree of certainty - the human personality. It ignores and does not dare to approach the true mystery of education - the birth of human spirituality.

The works on the problem of the ideal in its relation to the human psyche (and this (the ideal) in its relation to the psyche is the object of reflection of the authors of the present article) are not numerous in contemporary *secular* psychology and pedagogy. In psychology, the problem of the psychic as some ideal category has been very carefully posed by V.P. Zinchenko (1991). In pedagogy, the ideal, in one way or another, was addressed in the works of V.A. Sukhomlinsky(1990) and Sh. Amonashvili(1995). The value basis and epistemology of these and other works are mostly perceived in the pedagogical literature as something conservative, focused on the past of mankind, on the unchanging in man and not significant in this regard (George R. Knight 2001).

The ideal as *nonviable* is consistently ousted from education by modern pedagogical consciousness.

## Materials and methods

The basis for the reflection on the image of human spirituality as a basic category of pedagogy are the idealistic views of Plato (2011) and the substrate-idealistic reflection of A.A.Gagaev (1994), according to which the subject of the study retains its single-plural basis and characteristic desire for personification and response.

The correctness criterion of the theses formulated in the present study in the context of the abovementioned reflection of A. Gagaev(1994) is the correspondence of this or that provision about the studied phenomenon to the parameters of the form of the general in substrate reflection (plurality, antinomy, singularity, personification, full-life).

## Results

### *Metaphysics of human spirituality*

Human nature is in the deep connection with the whole universe. A human being is not a planetary being, much less a social one, but a *universal* one. In a person - his/her reflection - nature (the universe) reveals its innermost desire to

keep itself in its own act (movement - the terminology can be very different) and on this basis to create a new reality in itself (worlds of relational reflection). Man is one of the attempts of the universe to realize this attempt, and the attempt is largely successful. Many things are intelligible to man. A human being really can stand up to the universe, develop in his ability to comprehend everything, create spiritual worlds (live in categories of good and evil), dare to change the surrounding world, etc.

This interpretation of the phenomenon of the human being is characteristic of natural scientists of the 20th century: K.E. Tsiolkovsky, V.I. Vernadsky, P. Teilhard de Chardin and some others. This position is most clearly formulated in the works of P. Teilhard de Chardin (2001).

The relation of man to the universe, if society as a purely planetary evolutionary reality does not adversely affect him, reveals itself already in the very early stages of an individual's life. Out of direct dependence on the external environment (society), each person discovers in him(her)self questions (semantic formations in the psyche), which are his/her connection with the universe. The authors believe that these questions include: awareness of oneself (one's "I") as being peer to everything and everyone; sympathy (complementarity) for all living things, the desire to comprehend everything and everyone, to keep everything in oneself, to respond to all the irregularities in the world, to take responsibility for everything, to serve the unity of everything, to create the good and longed for in the world, etc. (see more about this in [A.A. Gagaev, P.A. Gagaev 2017, 174-179]).

The strongest experience of childhood and youth is the sense of importance for a person of *thinking*, and thinking *complementary* to all living things (this term is borrowed by authors from L.N. Gumilev [Gumilev 1992, 330]). In thought and reflection a (young) person *justifiably* guesses the middle for the whole universe. Thought (reflection) is *involved* in what is happening in the universe. This is experienced in varying degrees by all people (myth, poetry and philosophy testify to this; for example, the text of Goethe's 'Faust' [Goethe 1969, 403]).

The discovery in one's psyche (consciousness) of these questions radically changes a person's life. The "Self" expands immensely. It wants to go beyond its limits, the limits dictated by the social environment (it only catalyzes the process of the emergence of "Self"). The "Self" wants more than the roles, actions, movements, etc. offered by society. The "Self" wants more than the personal existence as a purely *social* reality (interpretation of personality in experimental psychology of the 20th century). The "Self" of a person wants to become a demiurge of something elevated, something that will demand from him/her everything (going beyond social) and introduce into the world of some *absolute* values (tasks, etc.).

Everyone remembers how characteristic the intentions described above are for the age of childhood and adolescence, how significant their impact is on the spiritual life of a person.

The unity of the human psyche with the universe is continuous throughout a person's life. A person never forgets the feeling of oneness of his unity with

something elevated experienced in childhood. It will always be not enough for him/her to be a successful doctor, official, military officer, entrepreneur, etc. (and even member of a family). The absolute, which cannot be expressed by something visible (social), will always attract a person. It will be attractive even when society and the person's own maturity put barriers to (universal) questions resounding inside. It will be attractive and move him/her to *supersocial* intentions and actions. By those in the context of the present study, the authors mean the intentions that do not correspond to the socially adopted ones and refer to *absolute* values. These intentions and actions are sacrifice, altruism, mercy, heroism, sobornost (spiritual commonality), etc. Though only a few have these intentions and act this way, still the majority of people (and this is significant) understand and accept those who decide to respond to the appeal of the universe that sounds in the psyche of every person and throw their lives into the unknown.

The thoughts of A.S. Pushkin about youth confirm what has been formulated above. Youth with its high intentions is the homeland for the poet and his friends. This is proclaimed by the poet, and with him by all people. The elevated is the true being of man. The elevated, for which the surrounding social environment is not enough (the poet's soul languishes in this) and what makes up the *metaphysics* of human spirituality (see the poem "October 19").

The presence in the human psyche of universal intentions - movements that are not caused by the social and take the person to the path beyond the limits of life as a planetary form of life of acts - are regarded by the authors as *spiritual* in people (universal-unreal).

### *Metaphysics of an individual's entry into life (the primordial)*

A human being comes into our world as a creature with a *certain* outlook on the world and the experience of resolving important issues. This was once clearly articulated by Plato. According to the philosopher, our souls, meeting with those around them on a life journey, recall how they sang in the choir of the gods before their birth (Plato 2011, 244-245). In the language of modern science, this may sound like a thesis that a person has a priori experience and a predisposition to a certain personal attitude to him(her)self and surrounding world. Both the first and the second are proved by philosophers and psychologists. An example of this are Kant's views on the presence of a priori experience and C.G. Jung's thesis about the presence of *a sketch of a person's personality* in the very early stages of life. I. Kant argued that the mind is inclined to think unconditionally, by what is given to it *a priori* and without which a correct judgment on the subject of research cannot be made (Kant 1999, 39-41). C.G. Jung emphasized that "every individual is born with a holistic personality sketch presented from birth, and the environment does not at all give a person the opportunity to develop, but only reveals what has already been incorporated into it" (Jung 1998, 616).

A person is originally him(her)self. A person does not create him(her)self through various social roles, the development of various abilities and dispositions in relation to society, but *discovers* in him(her)self a certain *image* of the world and

his(her) place in it. The image of the world of an individual person is a *special* ontology, anthropology, axiology, epistemology and psychology (Gachev 1993). This reality is immanent to a person. It cannot be escaped under any (life) circumstances. This reality is the genuine person. All social experience of a person (including personal being) will be introduced into this reality and processed by it.

When a person encounters an external influence, he/she discovers his/her true self, exposes it as opposed to the external, his/her boundary in interaction with the environment (the latter acts as a catalyst for the discovery of the internal).

The reality under discussion is not static. Having appeared after the birth of a person in the form of a sketch (outline, contour), with growing up it emerges distinctly, expanding at the same time within its borders. Expansion is possible to infinity (not bad infinity, but creative).

### *Meeting with oneself, cognition of oneself, returning to oneself*

The metaphysics of an individual's entry into life presupposes a *meeting* with one's own self. In his "Self", a person unexpectedly meets with one's own self as a given phenomenon, and a phenomenon *as certain as unexpected*.

A person, carrying him(her)self in the movements of his soul, unexpectedly feels his/her own self, and then reflects on his/her self (spirituality) as a certainty (the authors use the term in the epistemology of Aristotle [Aristotle 1976, 443-444]). The person's complete "Self" (spirituality) is perceived as something developed, with an internal structure, with distinct value-epistemological attitudes and intentions.

How does a person meet with one's own self? By focusing on oneself. By immersion in oneself. By the discovery in oneself - in the psyche - of certain meanings and semantics. The meanings and semantics discovered due to the abovementioned questions referring to the spirituality of man as a universal substance.

Meeting with oneself moves a person to the *cognition* of one's own self. The cognition of oneself means concentration on the onto-anthropo-axio-epistemological-psychological certainty immanent for one's spirituality. This is expressed in the concentration of consciousness on such aspects of inner being as its general semantics (themes of our being), its axiology and epistemology (the constants of developing the immanent semantics), its specific semantic content (semantic self-acting constructs in the psyche), the strategies of its (being) unfolding in reality (in the external, in behavior; images of the external, images of the world), its semantic organization (structure, stylistics of combination of semantic constructs).

Here is the "Self... Here is what (in value terms) is *the main thing for me*. It is that, and that, and the other, and the third. By this (this epistemology), I will verify everything and everyone. By this, I will construct the hierarchy of my spiritual and behavioral being. In it, I will seek the extension of the boundaries of my spiritual being. In it, I will find bliss for myself ... This is approximately how

we see the person's cognition of oneself as a universal being and the being who originally came into the world.

Cognition *returns* a person to him(her)self. Everything in him(her)self becomes comprehensible. The unexpectedness and unintelligible certainty of one's own spirituality acquire the features of something close. The striving for the highest in its concrete personal (Aristotelian) form (individual spirituality) is perceived as personal responsibility and duty. The person's soul calms down. Calms down and rests. Rests in harmony with itself. Now it has the power to do a lot. It knows itself. It will not betray itself, no matter what obstacles it may meet on the way.

A person, having returned to one's own self (having ascended to one's self), begins to live a full, true life.

### *Metaphysics of education (image of human spirituality)*

Education on a metaphysical (irrational-idealistic) basis involves reliance on such an epistemological reality as the *image* of human spirituality.

Education cannot change a person *fundamentally*. This thesis is the starting point for idealistic (Platonic) pedagogy. Education can - and this is its mission - create comfortable conditions for the *unfolding* of human spirituality in the form outlined above. A person comes to one's own self not as a person, but as an originally designed spirituality (foreseen, programmed - the terminology can be very different; let the representatives of pragmatic-rationalistic pedagogy be busy with finding the right term). Personality is the concept of experimental psychology of the 20th century. A personality is present in a person's spirituality, present as its functional periphery (sufficiently described), and nothing more. The essential in spirituality is its original basis, which connects it with the whole *universe*. The form of unfolding of this basis is the *image* of human spirituality. The image as something *emerging* in spirituality, as something that, on the one hand, has a form (certainty according to Aristotle), and on the other hand, has a potential to open (unfold) in a definite, not formalized, *exhaustive* relation.

An image is the *contours (outline)* of the unfolding of a person's spirituality as a reality belonging to itself and to nobody else. An image is a *visible* movement of a person's spirituality toward itself as originally given both to itself and to the universe.

An image is what is *unique* (unique in its system and concrete universal semantic content) and not definable by any logic. The image is what belongs to *itself* and lives by *itself*. The image is, as far as we can judge, what Plato called *genuine* being (Plato 2011, 71).

An image is what, being true to itself, is constantly expanding and striving to keep everything in itself.

Formally, the image - and this is important in the context of using this reality in theory and practice - is revealed in the postulation by a person (by the spirit, the "Self") of a certain *onto-anthropo-axio-gnoseo-psychology*, or picture of the world,

the postulation of the abovementioned in behavior, in relation to something, comprehension and other essentials in the social world.

This is me! Here are *my* themes (subject of my interests and relationships). *These themes* are me in my intentions and dreams. This is what I use to *verify* what is chosen as my themes and actions. This is my *treasure*, and nothing can make me give it away. This is how (*complementary, skeptically, generally, etc.*) I treat myself, people, the world and something that has no definition, but that perhaps exists with me in this world as belonging to me and addressed to me ... We have given a possible illustration of the formally visible in reality image of human spirituality, which, if seen from the outside, can be "captured" (held) by another person (father, mother, teacher, etc.), *a movement, an impulse, a direction of thought, an attitude towards something*, etc.

It is impossible to formalize the image of spirituality in a rationally instrumental form. The image from the side of the external observer *is perceived as a movement (of a person), an impulse, a direction of thought, an attitude*, etc. This movement, an impulse, etc., can give grounds to think of a certain holistic picture of the world, which incorporates the essential in a person's spirituality.

The image of a person is a reality that determines both his own behavior and the impact on him from outside.

### *The human "Self" and the image of spirituality*

The "Self" and the image (outline) of our spirituality. What is the relation between these realities? We believe that we can talk about the unity and difference of these psycho-metaphysical realities.

The unity of these realities is due to the reflection in them of the aforementioned *definiteness* of the universe.

Spirituality and "Self" are the expression of what the universe wanted for some reason to become by creating mankind. Both spirituality (its definiteness and expansion) and "Self" as the substance operating with it manifest themselves precisely in the onto-anthropo-axio-gnoseo-psychology originally given to us, and in nothing else. The "Self" stands out from our spiritual space, striving for definiteness, stands out as facing the definite, stands out and forms as ready to plunge into a certain definite and hold it in its movements.

The "Self" clearly shows the definiteness of spirituality, the essence that we interpret as its image. The "Self" lives by the definiteness of its spirituality (the definiteness of what makes up its universal psychic basis).

The difference between the "Self" and spirituality manifests itself in the field of applied activity. Spirituality, which incorporates "Self", is above any purpose. It belongs to *itself*. It is the universe in its definiteness. She marches in time and space and *serves to nothing and nobody*. The "Self", besides the fact that it, together with spirituality, is not conditioned by any pragmatism, is called to reveal to the universal its own self. The "Self" is active, active within the framework of person's spirituality.

The “Self” is especially active (it seems that spirituality is formed not only under the influence of “Self”; talking about other structures of revealing spirituality is too problematic).

### *Human spirituality and personality*

What is the relation between the categories of personality and spirituality? The answer to this question lies in philosophical and pedagogical field.

A personality in the context of the provisions of the psychology of the 20th century is what primarily reveals social behavior in a person, that is, the behavior that unfolds in the continuum of contemporary social space. Most modern concepts of personality are based on such a reality as its (personality’s) *direction*. The direction of the personality is described as its appeal to itself and to the external. The content of this reality (direction) in these concepts is determined by the social (Druzhinin 1999, 456–464).

Using the category of personality in pedagogy makes it possible to keep the potential strategies for social development and behavior. What are the social aspirations of a person? What is the nature of the person’s relationship with other people? What social role can and is the person going to play?.. In these and similar questions, the personality unfolds in a person.

The language of dialogue with a person is the language of the most measurable and consistently represented in various definitions, characteristics, etc.

Modern pedagogy is immersed in the reality of the personal in man. It does not see anything else (not personal) in him and does not want to see it. For it, a person is a kind of *social* certainty, and nothing more.

The spirituality and its image (its definiteness) is a universal-social reality. Spirituality as a specific phenomenon belongs to *itself* and is first of all seeking *itself* in this or that social manifestation. The continuum of spirituality is the whole universe in its potential and infinity. The continuum of spirituality is the universal in the social and beyond.

The social for the spiritual is one of the forms of its manifestation and unfolding in reality (other forms are still *tabula rasa* for science).

The language of dialogue with the spiritual in a person is the language of the intuitive retention of what is happening in the latter, the language of understanding interaction (unfolding not on a rationally explanatory, but on an intuitively complimentary basis).

Modern pedagogy does not see the spiritual in a person. Under the spiritual, pedagogy, at best, sees the social-altruistic movements of a person’s personality, which in no way contradict the specific parameters of a person as a planetary form of life.

### *Metaphysics of education (pedagogy of non-interference)*



Education is the *support* of the emergence of a person's image in spiritual being. The *emergence* of an image (the emergence of the metaphysical) is what can be used as a *guide*, as a *methodology* in pedagogical action.

Everything in the pedagogical environment of a person should contribute to the manifestation (discovery) of the image of human spirituality. The influence of the teacher on the student in this context is called pedagogy of *non-interference* (the term and concept date back to the heritage of L.N. Tolstoy [1948]; see our interpretation of the concept in [Gagaev A.A. andGagaev P.A. 2014, 41-174]).

The effectiveness of the influence is associated with its formal absence. The spirituality unfolds by itself and as belonging to itself. The efforts to unfold it, if required, shall be, first of all, as midwives, as those that support, and no more, the discovery of the image of human spirituality.

The midwifery actions (non-interference actions) shall include, first of all, the creation of a special semantic environment. The special feature of this environment is its semantic content (cultural questions), which form the basis of the possible movements and intentions of human spirituality and its "Self". If the environment is filled with these movements and intentions, it acquires the status of a certain *subjective* principle that appeals to the spirituality of the student, to his "Self" (the ability to become a substance takes on a deeper meaning; more about this in [Gagaev A.A. andGagaev P.A. 2010, 21-22]).

The indicated environmental realities can be embodied in the classical scientific, artistic, philosophical, historical, etc. text (as a subject of human comprehension), the worlds of science (not standardized reductions of scientific knowledge), the spirituality of the teacher as an infinitely deep reality, spirituality of the student (as potentially containing the movements of the entire universe).

The pedagogy of non-interference does not accept the goal in education, the goal in its relation to the spirituality of the student (the idea again goes back to the legacy of L.N. Tolstoy [Tolstoy 1948, 71]). The image of human spirituality is above any socially determined goal (a kind of reduction of a socio-anthropological nature). The image is what can be and is the result of the joint spiritual and pedagogical life of a teacher and student. If acceptable, the goal in education shall be an operational and didactic reality in comprehending one or another spiritual experience.

The teacher-student interaction strategy should be specially mentioned in the context of non-interference pedagogy.

The image of human spirituality, which is a methodological guide in education, is not open to *everyone* (every adult). It belongs to itself and its demiurge and, as a treasure, will be guarded from the subjects of interaction, fearing a careless touch from the outside. An image as a treasure, as manifesting itself in its innermost "Self," according to S. L. Frank [1990], is revealed only to its peer. The teacher can and must, if he/she wants to support the *emergence* of the image of human spirituality, *universally* and personally address the student's spirituality, his "Self", open *his innermost* to him and by this create the prerequisite for communication. It should be noted that the *universal*-personal approach to someone is available only to few teachers. Reflecting on the relationship between

the teacher and the student, V.V. Rozanov noticed that in order to turn to the student's face (his universal "Self"), the teacher himself must be that *face* (Rozanov 1990, 14).

So, the presence of the teacher's *face* and his *universal* and personal appeal to the student contributes to the discovery of the student's spirituality.

## Discussion and conclusion

Let us summarize the above. Basic in pedagogy are the categories of human spirituality and its image.

The person's spirituality is understood as a universal psychic reality possessing the ability to retain itself (the ability to reflect) and in this to create new worlds for the universe (both mental and material).

The image of spirituality is the unfolding of the definiteness of human spirituality, that definiteness which is given to a person initially by birth and which infinitely expands throughout his life.

The image of human spirituality is reflected by the person himself, by his "Self", is reflected and supported by his actions (unfolds and becomes fixed).

The image of human spirituality is not formed, but opens (unfolds). It opens with non-interference influence from the outside. It is opened by means of a universal-personal appeal to the student from the external environment as a kind of subjective education and teacher as an infinitely deep universal spirituality.

What will change in pedagogy if the theorist and educational practices think in the above categories?

We believe that we can talk about the release of the individual from social and cultural activities not typical for him/her (which is characteristic of education in a mass school). A person who keeps oneself in reflection will be able to determine the truly organic value-epistemological context for development and, as a result of this, the true guideline of establishment in modern society. The teacher will no longer have the obligation to determine the future of students (at least at the level of school opportunities) and become what the teacher should be, the one who reveals the true in students.

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