

# PEDAGOGY

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## HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM: CHINESE AND RUSSIAN EXPERIENCES

*Alexey V. Lubkov*

*Moscow Pedagogical State University, Moscow, Russian Federation,  
av.lubkov@mpgu.su, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1395-4239>*

**Abstract.** This study investigates the historical and cultural roots of educational reform through a comparative analysis of China and Russia. Both nations face challenges from the rapidly evolving post-industrial era and advances in artificial intelligence. Their distinct historical and cultural backgrounds have led to different responses to these challenges, shaped by how each civilization perceives the continuity and breaks in its past and future development. To explore this, the study examines the unique philosophical perspectives of both countries, focusing on their worldviews related to sociocultural issues. Amid increasing mechanization, schematization, and formalization of human activities since the 20th century, the author emphasizes the importance of the hermeneutic approach and interpretive methods in education. This approach clarifies the processes of self-regulation and highlights the importance of understanding personal identity and one's role in the world. The study concludes that the combined experiences of these two distinct civilizations and their educational systems provide valuable resources for addressing current challenges and managing risks in the digital age. A key principle emerges: the need to balance tradition with innovation.

**Keywords:** *pedagogical education, information society, Chinese modernization, Confucian heritage, Russian civilization, Russian culture, spiritual traditions, nation, values, sociocultural context*

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Research in comparative education is vital for analyzing both the positive and negative aspects of educational modernization, which often relies too much on abstract global trends and disconnects from local contexts. Contributing to this discussion [1, p. 48], the article examines the experiences of China and Russia. It explores how these countries address not only educational challenges but also deeper issues related to shaping national identity, self-perception, and the development of

cultural and civic identity on the global stage. Hermeneutics plays an essential role here, underscoring interpretation as a methodological tool in the humanities.

Hermeneutical methods reveal meanings, values, and motivations inherent in the social world and its actors. They serve as the foundation for interpreting the values and meanings of human existence, which define the uniqueness of different cultures and eras. Therefore, hermeneutical methods can be applied to study sociocultural phenomena, including education. As a result, this research uses hermeneutic and axiological approaches to understand the deep internal processes within a given civilization. Contemporary scholars have conducted similar comparative studies. Recent research identifies a commonality between Russian and Chinese philosophy, especially between Slavophilism and Confucianism [2]. Both value systems are anthropocentric, emphasizing the cultivation of social virtues as a prerequisite for societal stability. They focus on the human being and developing social qualities as conditions for social stability. Knowledge is viewed not as individual possession but as shared within a community united by purpose, interest, and the recognition that love is the foundation of social relations. Inner freedom is seen as opposition to external necessity. The development of the state is considered subordinate to the moral improvement of the people, which depends on the moral cultivation of each individual. This framework provides a solid basis for further comparative analysis and a deeper exploration of the problem outlined in this study.

Russia and China are more than just territories marked by the borders of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. They represent civilizations with histories and cultures spanning centuries and rooted in traditional values. The question of what constitutes the core of a civilizational state remains open to debate. Nonetheless, culture and history play a decisive role in shaping a nation's archetype, with their persistent traits expressed through character, values, and behavioral patterns. People of Western civilization differ fundamentally from those of Eastern civilization, as their distinct value systems and views of human purpose shape their identities. In the West, there is an emphasis on rights and freedoms, giving rise to individualism, rationalism, pragmatism, and utilitarianism. In the East, the view of humans as the center of the universe manifests differently, prioritizing harmony with the surrounding world, spiritual elevation, and moral principles [3, pp. 270–271]. Within this context, the value and meaning dimensions of

Chinese and Russian civilizations reveal unique features that merit attention, given the challenges and risks faced by digital society.

China's spiritual tradition is deeply rooted in practices of insight and interpretation, most clearly reflected in its written culture. A distinctive feature of Chinese writing is its symbolism and the multiple layers of meaning it offers. Ink painting and calligraphy remain popular activities, incorporated into both schools and daily life, carrying strong symbolic significance. Techniques used in traditional Chinese painting create subtle gradations and allusions, enriched by multiple layers of symbolic meaning.

Interest in symbolism in China stems from its rich philosophical heritage, with major traditions like Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism eventually blending into a cohesive whole. Confucianism, an ethical and philosophical system linked to Confucius (552/551–479 B.C.E.) and further developed by his followers, became the official state ideology during the Han dynasty. Its values and norms gained widespread acceptance, creating a stable foundation for social and political relations. Today, Confucianism is viewed as a worldview, a socioethical code of conduct, and a way of life.

A teacher holds a central place in this worldview – generations of Chinese have praised Confucius as the most outstanding teacher and mentor. The archetype of the teacher is mainly defined by deep spiritual and moral authority. Confucius serves as a model of spiritual leadership whose teachings laid the groundwork for modern state development grounded in ethical principles. This doctrine remains relevant today and is continually adapted to meet contemporary challenges. Its core can be seen in texts by Confucius' followers, such as the *Analects*, as well as in later cultural representations, such as literature and film. For example, Hu Mei's *Confucius* (2010) provides a cinematic portrayal of the philosopher's life and time.

Confucianism comprises a set of core categories that organize society from the highest to the lowest levels and across all social classes. One important concept is *xiao*, or filial piety, which also defines the teacher – student relationship. Teachers were regarded similarly to elders in the family, reflecting a key aspect of traditional Chinese culture. As a Chinese proverb states, “One who has been your teacher even for a single day becomes like a father for life.” Social order was founded on three main relationships: ruler to citizens, father to son, and husband to wife.

The ethics of interpersonal relationships in Confucianism, like in Buddhism, are critical: they are meant to be guided by sincere care rather than just formal duty. As a result, the family plays a central role in Chinese society, both historically and today, having a strong influence on individuals. For example, in education, teachers encourage respect for ancestors and family duties, while families strengthen that respect for the teacher. Educational programs include ethical and moral principles that support the harmonious growth of the individual. These reflect a moral behavior model based on a sense of social responsibility, including love, respect, trust, and care for others, especially elders. Therefore, Confucian ideas are actively woven into the educational process.

The subordination of younger individuals to elders extends beyond the family to broader social environments. The Confucian idea of filial respect mandated this hierarchy. For example, the emperor was seen as both a teacher and a father figure. The teacher's role has remained important throughout Chinese history. During the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, the cult of the teacher was embodied by Mao Zedong. Young Maoists, motivated by nation-building ideals, represented the Confucian concept of *zhong* (loyalty), blending allegiance to the Chinese Communist Party with patriotism. In contrast, the Confucian idea of *shan* (benevolence) implied a capacity for self-sacrifice [4, p. 45]. The need for a leader as a role model still exists today, clearly reflected in modern Chinese media under the theme "Learn from...".

The Russian tradition differs considerably from the Chinese model of teacher-mentor relationships, although instances of mentorship appear in Russian history. Over the centuries, Russian saints served as spiritual guides for people from all social backgrounds – from princes and boyars to commoners – providing confession, blessings, counsel, and comfort. Social service traditions were developed by Russian monks and exemplified an ideal way of life for all Orthodox followers. The dedication and moral authority of these spiritual elders cultivated the core of the Russian worldview, life ambitions, and values. Their mentorship, personal ascetic practices, and pastoral work formed a key source of moral influence on society [5].

The merging of secular and religious authority, inherited from Byzantium and strongly reflected in the politics of the princes of the Grand Principality of Moscow, became a core part of the Russian social structure. It contributed significantly to the resilience of the state and society, fostering discipline, organization, and self-sacrifice in the

defense of national interests. Protecting the homeland was seen mainly as defending the Orthodox faith, rather than just the state [5, p. 273]. By the 16th century, the title of the Moscow tsar, along with terms like “noble,” “all-powerful,” and “God-chosen ruler,” also included ideas such as “true mentor of the Christian faith” and “Christ-loving” [6, pp. 110–122].

The secularization of consciousness, which began in the 18th century and accelerated over the following centuries, led not only to the loss of the spiritual essence of state institutions but also to the secularization of everyday values in Russian life. By the late 20th century, teachers’ status had diminished significantly. Educators no longer held a leading role in shaping the younger generation, and the moral aspect of education faded as the system evolved, becoming disconnected from its formative purpose and opposed to the Soviet legacy. However, as early as 1826, A. Pushkin told Emperor Nicholas I in his note *On Public Education* that “the absence of parenthood is the root of all evil” [7, p. 356]. In recent years, there has been a move away from viewing education as just a service within the market economy. The government has increased funding and investment and undergone significant structural changes in the system. The goal has been to create a sovereign Russian educational system, thus reviving its native traditions – a mission highlighted by K. Ushinsky, a Russian teacher and writer recognized for establishing scientific pedagogy nearly 150 years ago.

Today, the Russian educational system is reviving traditions of Russian and Soviet schools, which prioritized personality development and the spiritual aspects of character – thoughts, actions, habits, and inclinations. Leading cultural figures stress that moral growth is impossible without understanding the past and being rooted in native traditions, as every individual is connected to an artistic and historical context shaped by centuries of collective effort. National culture provides the foundation for building character [8] and developing civic identity, enabling active participation in the nation’s future, according to I. Ilyin, national belonging is reflected in how a person believes, prays, sings, reads poetry, chooses leaders and heroes, and shows kindness, honor, or duty. From this perspective, education is “the awakening of subconscious receptivity to national spiritual experience” [9]. Children need to absorb values through their native language, reading, singing, prayer, folklore, and images of cultural and historical figures. This process also involves engaging with the nation’s history, its struggles and achievements, and respecting its heroes and traditions. Through this,

education fosters curiosity, moral awareness, and responsibility, while helping students understand that the national territory is a shared heritage shaped by the labor and sacrifice of past generations.

The Soviet experience significantly influenced the development of mentorship. Starting in the 1920s and 1940s, the practice of patronage emerged, followed by the formal institution of mentorship in the 1950s and 1960s. Since then, mentorship has been systematized as a social phenomenon and placed under legislative regulation. During the 1970s through the 1990s, it became an essential part of state policy, gained theoretical support within professional pedagogy, and developed methods and technologies for mentoring practice. In 2023, the President of Russia declared the Year of the Teacher and Mentor, highlighting the role of mentorship in strengthening social unity, bridging the generational gap, and supporting the nation's development in line with traditional values. Mentorship is seen as a practice rooted in solidarity, mutual support, and the transmission of cultural and moral values. Families are increasingly involved in the educational process [10, pp. 53–58, 111–113, 121–122].

The next important aspect relates to the content of education and the use of technology. China exemplifies a civilization that, during the 20th century, quickly transformed into a modern, highly technological society. From a country suffering from widespread poverty and hunger, it has become a leading global power and economic force. Drawing on the experience of the Soviet republic, China charted its own course, combining traditional cultural values with the aims of socialist modernization. A key factor in this development was not only technological progress but also collectivist values rooted in conventional morality, which influenced social behavior patterns.

Confucianism highlighted collective values as the foundation for shaping the ideal individual. Its core principle, acting in accordance with objective requirements, required subordinating personal interests to those of the community, thus ensuring harmony between humanity and nature. This naturalistic worldview, combined with an anthropocentric perspective, placed social order as dependent on the individual's internal state and actions.

In Confucian thought, the individual and the cosmos are seen as fundamentally connected. Human actions are believed to resonate throughout the universe, giving special importance to the concept of *dé* as a link between the transcendent and social order [11–17]. Moral qualities are considered to come from Heaven through the Dao, and

mastering them is viewed as the ultimate goal of self-improvement. Core ideas of Confucian education – loyalty (*zhong*), filial piety (*xiao*), benevolence (*ren*), and righteousness (*yi*) – define the purpose of human conduct and shape the ideal of the *junzi* (noble person). Following moral norms and the ethical–philosophical code in traditional China serves a dual purpose. On the one hand, it promotes harmony among individuals, society, and the natural world, maintaining the integrity of existence.

Conversely, it provided the *junzi* (noble person) with a path for personal advancement within the social hierarchy. Chinese society is highly hierarchical, with subordination directed toward the ultimate standard – Heaven. As a result, there is a special reverence for knowledge and education as the primary means of understanding the truth.

This feature is characteristic of the traditional Chinese cultural system. In the Confucian model of statehood, knowledge and learning were regarded as a material force. Knowledge was understood primarily as a body of philosophical and cultural principles, ethical guidelines, and values rooted in ancestral reverence and moral self-cultivation, transmitted from generation to generation as the sacred virtue of *de*. Scholars note that the system of codified rituals functioned as a foundational element of the Chinese worldview. Since the Zhou dynasty, these rituals have been shaped by what has been described as “ethically determined *rationalism* and desacralized *ritual*” [18, p. 296, emphasis in the original – N. Rakitjansky]. Rationalism in this context is understood as a means of preventing the uncontrolled expansion of thought into the realm of mysticism [19]. The “desacralization” of ritual refers to its strictly worldly dimension, since “the Chinese cosmos is neither spiritual nor material – it is *energetic*, and differs from the European universe in the same way that an *organism* differs from a *mechanism*” [18, p. 302, emphasis in the original – N. Rakitjansky].

China had no churches, clerical hierarchy, or concepts of heaven and hell, although sages, ancestral spirits, and Heaven were considered sacred within the Confucian tradition. As a result, the Chinese value system does not view the surrounding world as transcendent, nor does it include the idea of a single personal God-Creator. This is a fundamental difference from the Russian mentality, which has its roots in Slavic paganism and the Orthodox Christian tradition that followed.

In Chinese tradition, the world unfolds from an internal center and is independent of any divine force. This perspective shapes the practical application of Confucian ethics and guides behavior across social and

intercultural contexts, emphasizing rationality and expediency. Scholars have described Confucius, who viewed knowledge as the result of education, as a great rationalizer [20, p. 307]. Pragmatism remains a defining feature of traditional Chinese culture, influencing patterns of personal, social, and national life. Observers note that in contemporary China, this pragmatism is reflected in daily life and public affairs, marked by efficiency, perseverance, and a systematic pursuit of goals, including modern reforms [21, pp. 55–56].

The Russian tradition holds that humans were created in the image and likeness of God. Moral development is viewed not mainly through social roles or public morality, but in relation to a person's destiny in the Kingdom of God. It is seen as a struggle for the soul between Christ and Lucifer, heaven and hell. Russian social and religious thought, therefore, concentrates on the inner essence of the individual – the imperfect, “small” human being with all the flaws and weaknesses of human nature, yet called to rise above vice and undergo moral renewal.

The religious aspect of Russian thought often centered on questions about the meaning of life, overcoming evil and suffering, and seeking truth. This gave philosophical reflection a historical and metaphysical depth, unlike the more subjective and sentimental approaches usually seen in the West [22, p. 165]. The result of this spiritual struggle was viewed as crucial for humanity's destiny, determining whether the world order would be created or destroyed. In this framework, the human being was seen as a microcosm and the reference point for all existence. Such an attitude toward the individual was unknown to the ancient world. Christianity was responsible for shifting the entire worldview toward the human being, making the person the focal point of existence [23, p. 151]. These are fundamentally different motives and goals from those that support the idea of a “consumer society”.

Faith in Christ was seen as a source of freedom, making a person truly an individual capable of resisting sin and overcoming risks and threats that otherwise would reduce human existence to a state of enslavement and depersonalization [24, pp. 17–18]. Human responsibility, based on free will and choice, thus involved responding to God's call and recognizing the necessity of Christ. In this sense, “learning from Christ” can be understood as a way of moral self-perfection in Russian thought. A key element of the Orthodox understanding of Christ is the doctrine of the Trinity, which has shaped the core values of Russian civilization and has been interpreted over centuries. Just as God is one in three distinct hypostases, the Russian

cultural model emphasizes the principle of unity, in which the individual is spiritually free, unique, yet connected by shared values. Within this framework, the social and state aspects of life were viewed as parts of a single whole. This unity, achieved through harmony among its elements, ensured the continuity of generations and the preservation of historical memory.

The concept of unity was embraced by Rus' within the Eastern Christian tradition and, on Russian land, gained a unique interpretation and form of existence. The theological and philosophical aspect of "unity in diversity" was elaborated in the works of A. Khomyakov [25] and L. Karsavin [26], and further examined by many other figures in Russian religious and philosophical thought. Their conclusions highlighted unity as a fundamental principle of harmony. The "visible church," understood as the unity of many individual expressions [26, pp. 540–541], manifested itself in Russia's historical life. Consequently, society was seen as a living organism rather than a mechanical state system. Unlike systems based solely on subordination and strict adherence to moral and ethical codes, the Russian cultural model was characterized by "unity in diversity," in which spiritual freedom and individuality were regarded as core values. This trait defined the authenticity of the Russian social and cultural order.

In Ancient Rus', national self-awareness was shaped "in the image and likeness of God" and was based on principles of religious tolerance, justice, solidarity, and brotherhood. Nothing was seen as existing outside the whole. The concept of the world among the Slavs implied spiritual and Christian equality, unity, and harmony, where the individual "I" was inseparable from the collective "we," and the latter served as the foundation for the former. This understanding of communal identity was articulated and promoted by the intellectual elite of that time. Historically, each region of Ancient Rus' was formed as a union of communities, a "greater world" made up of "smaller worlds." Over the centuries, this structure maintained the image of a shared Russian world. Instead of competition and individualism, which later became defining features of Western civilization, communal solidarity and collective unity prevailed, eventually shaping the Russian spiritual tradition as the principle of unity.

In times of hardship or collective celebration, the communal aspect of the Slavic character became especially evident [27]. Russian literary critic V. Belinsky argued that the "spirit of the people" was strong and resilient, viewing the national character as the country's natural state,

rooted in its patriarchal traditions and way of life. Despite his critique of Russian society before Peter the Great, Belinsky acknowledged that upheavals and historical hardships only revealed the lasting strength of the Russian people [28]. This character was reflected in folk poetry, the epic tradition of Russian folk heroes [29], legends [30], choral songs [31], spiritual verses, and hagiographies and apocryphal writings [32], all of which articulated a moral code. Such cultural expressions conveyed the uniqueness of the Russian-Slavic people— their habits, values, and worldview – what could be called the “birthmarks” of national identity, or the Russian style. Rituals and customs reinforced continuity across generations, maintaining a shared cultural memory.

Icon painting also shaped the development of cultural identity. The profound and straightforward iconographic styles expressed the spiritual strength of ascetics. In contrast, the repetitive themes of iconographic subjects and prayers resonated with the tough, unadorned life of rural communities, leaving little room for pleasure or distraction [33]. For Russians, the sense of sin and conscience – awareness of inner faults—came before formal punishment by the law [34]. Material desires were modest, focused solely on fulfilling basic needs [35]. This outlook influenced how people viewed others: those who fell into weakness were met not with judgment but with compassion, since everyone was seen as a sinner. According to F. Dostoevsky, this kind of self-reflection—“self-criticism”—was uniquely Russian and absent from European traditions [24, p. 19]. From this, Dostoevsky believed, the Russian potential to create a universal community based on compassion and care for others emerged.

Unity, understood as the empirical reality of the Russian world with its communal spirit, excluded the emergence of secular and nihilistic thought, against which the main efforts of public intellectuals in the nineteenth century were directed. Questions of worldview became central in the confrontation between different strands of Russian social thought. Beginning in 1863, one of the most widely read Russian journals, “*Russkii vestnik*,” launched a series of publications that literary criticism later classified as “anti-nihilistic novels.” In the March issue of that year, readers encountered the first part of A. Pisemsky’s novel “*Troubled Sea*.” [36]. This marked the start of a polemical campaign highlighting the clash between traditional values and new radical tendencies. In 1864, V. Klyushnikov’s novel “*Marevo*” [37] was published. The following years saw the appearance of V. Krestovsky’s

dilogy “Bloody poof,” [38] featuring the first volume, “The Flock of Panurge,” in 1869, and the second, “Two Forces,” in 1874 [39].

The protagonists of these works were nihilists who, in both literature and life, promoted the rejection of the “old ways” with an intensity and fervor previously unseen in Russian society. Such figures appear, for example, in the First Part. Turgenev’s “Fathers and Sons” (1862); in N. Leskov’s novels “Nowhere” (1864), “Neglected People” (1865), “At Daggers Drawn” (1870–1871), and “The Cathedral Folk” (1866–1872); in I. Goncharov’s “The Precipice” (1869); in V. Avenarius’s diology “Wandering Forces” with its novellas “The Modern Idyll” (1865) and “The Passing Craze” (1867); as well as in F. Dostoevsky’s “Demons” (1871–1872), “The Idiot” (1868), “The Brothers Karamazov” (1879–1880), and other works.

Nihilism developed into a social and moral issue that not only challenged established worldviews but also threatened the integrity of the individual. In pursuit of abstract ideals such as “humanity,” “good,” and “justice,” boundaries of acceptability were often crossed, eroding the sacred nature of these values and pushing individuals toward amorality and even criminal acts. Radicalism, driven by dreams of a fair society, swept away everything carefully built over centuries and passed down through generations. It is therefore no surprise that V. Rozanov recommended including N. Leskov’s “At Daggers Drawn” in the reading list for young people, calling it an excellent “inoculation against nihilism” [40, p. 139].

Philosopher S. Frank viewed Russian nihilism as a fierce quest for the absolute ideal. However, this “absolute” turned out to be nothing, “equal to zero” [22]. According to the religious philosopher L. Karsavin, nihilism in Russia took particularly radical forms. In his view, this reflected a core trait of the Russian character – the drive for the absolute ideal and an inability to live without it [41, p. 540–541]. Ideas and ideals begin to form early through upbringing and education, later evolving into a cohesive worldview. At the same time, a young person’s views can change significantly, as many examples demonstrate. For instance, the publicist and social figure M. Katkov shifted from being a Westernizer to a statesman and supporter of imperial ideology.

In the field of education, the issue is especially complex because human nature is difficult to understand. An illustrative example is the life of Dmitrii Pereleshin, a notable figure of Narodnaya Volya and later a public representative. He was held in the Peter and Paul Fortress for two years during an investigation. At one point, he was visited by his

mentor, Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov, the founder of the Moscow Imperial Lyceum. In his memoirs, D. Pereleshin gives a detailed account of this meeting, which amazed him [42, pp. 115–120]. A long conversation took place between the mentor and his former student. Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov remembered his youth, when he was interested in ideas about defending individual rights and freedoms, as well as proposals to introduce an English-style constitution in Russia. He also reflected on how, in his later years, he changed these views and explained the reasons for this change. Katkov then asked how a Lyceum graduate could have taken such radical political positions. To this, he replied: “You yourself, Mikhail Nikiforovich, were my first teacher and propagandist” [42, p. 118].

The question arises: why was M. Katkov, a consistent supporter of personal development and education based on respect for national traditions and culture, as well as an active defender of Russian pedagogical interests, identified as the person who influenced the development of a radical worldview [43, p. 261]? According to Pereleshin, as early as third grade, he was reading “Moskovskie Vedomosti” and checking its quotations against those of “Golos” and “Poryadok”; by sixth grade, he had read the “Land and Liberty” proclamation, and his interest in “Moskovskie Vedomosti” only grew over time. He also mentioned his contact with left-wing students and pointed out shortcomings in the everyday life and practices of the Lyceum [42, p. 118].

Despite efforts by those who published Russian literary classics and engaged in public debates to influence public opinion, the response often defied expectations. This shows that the process of national self-understanding and self-awareness is an ongoing aspect of human development. Dostoevsky died, and one and a half months later, Emperor Alexander II of Russia was assassinated. Although these events may seem unrelated, within the context of Russian culture’s values and history, they were linked. After all, Dostoevsky’s protagonists predicted that when there is no God, everything is permitted. The tragedy of March 1, 1881, and the subsequent acts of political violence exemplify this point. Many significant historical events were foreshadowed and reflected in Russian classical literature. In a conversation with his student M. Katkov, Dostoevsky seemingly foresaw the potential consequences of the “Narodnaya Volya” movement’s aims for Russia. This shows that establishing value-based foundations within a

worldview remains a fundamental duty for teachers aiming to shape individuals' and future generations' perspectives.

Russian history presents both positive and negative examples of the intelligentsia's role. While often motivated by skepticism, pride, and a duty to improve the people's welfare, they sometimes became disconnected from reality, retreating into ideas, illusions, and social myths. In the twentieth century, this disconnection was apparent during the early Soviet era and later periods of cultural decline. Disrupting the continuity of centuries-old cultural traditions in public consciousness is key to understanding how society maintains and develops itself without significant upheavals. The intellectual and political elite play a crucial role in shaping the conditions for either preserving or destroying cultural traditions. Consequently, ideas about societal ideals and values remain essential.

Moral education involves shaping children's individual personalities and fostering their inner independence. According to prominent thinkers of the nineteenth century, modern individuals must put forth significantly more effort to uphold personal will than their ancestors did two and a half thousand years ago, as the rise of external cultural temptations has made true freedom more challenging to attain [44]. Indeed, the dynamics of modern society present both opportunities and new challenges that every civilization must confront. In particular, the moral structure of the "consumer society" heavily influences the values and thinking of the younger generation.

In recent decades, China's policy of openness to the world has strengthened profit-driven values, shaping social behavior. Even children are encouraged to pursue competitive success, while youth and adults increasingly focus on material wealth. This pragmatism in human relations diminishes the balance once maintained among moral integrity, material well-being, and social status. In response, contemporary educational practices seek to reaffirm the importance of morality and the need for personal growth and renewal.

The efforts of the Chinese authorities focus on reaffirming the authority of Confucian principles while integrating figures from the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution into narratives of selfless devotion to the common good. They also promote altruistic behavior inspired by the national hero Lei Feng [4, p. 49]. A key feature of the Chinese educational system is its ability to reinterpret traditional values within a modern context, enabling concepts such as devotion to family, ritual, duty, filial piety, loyalty, and patriotism to coexist with advanced

technologies in the post-industrial era. The moral ideal of the modern individual is expressed at all levels of education and socialization— from elementary school textbooks to propaganda disseminated through mass media and in public spaces across Chinese villages and cities. This ideal is embodied in the traditional understanding of virtue, which is only possible when collective interests are prioritized over individual ones. The younger generation is guided to understand a simple but powerful truth: “The Celestial Empire does not belong to one person; it belongs to all” [4, p. 48]. Consequently, the modern Chinese individual is expected to embody a behavioral pattern influenced by symbols rooted in Confucian traditions.

In the twentieth century, China and Russia took different development paths, each heavily influenced by its respective spiritual tradition. Understanding these traditions is key to analyzing both the breaks and continuities in their historical journeys. During tough times— inevitable for every civilization—the core ideals of society face the ultimate challenge. In China, such values are deeply embedded in a rich philosophical tradition, especially Confucianism, which continues to shape mainland China’s culture and history and remains relevant today. Pagan and Orthodox traditions of Russia laid the cultural groundwork, reflecting the importance of community life, patriotism, and the organic unity of the people.

The primary concern right now is the dangers of the digital world and the Internet, especially the spread of multiple identities, which makes it harder to establish a civic identity. The biggest challenge in the digital economy is balancing tradition and innovation. As human activity becomes more mechanized and formalized – a trend noted by Russian thinkers [45] since the last century – we should focus on a humanistic and philosophical approach rather than another wave of technocracy. As Russian Imperial historian V. Kliuchevsky pointed out in the late nineteenth century, the question isn’t whether science is used to deny God, but whether it is used to create a better life than in the West – something that depends on the will and reason of Russian society [46].

Russia and China today maintain and adapt approaches rooted in Soviet pedagogy, updating them to meet modern challenges. The Soviet experience demonstrates that ignoring the formative aspect of education often led to the destruction of personality and the loss of historical memory. The main challenge is to address not only the rational side of the individual but the whole person. This requires drawing on the heritage of pre-revolutionary, Soviet, and modern Russian schools

within a sovereign educational system. Any modernization is effective only when it is based on core values and traditions, strengthening rather than weakening the sociocultural context. Such an approach protects the national sovereignty of both Russia and China. Pedagogical universities are vital in this process. Today, Moscow Pedagogical State University works with over 40 universities in China. Educational links between the two countries are well-established at all levels, from schools to joint university projects, within a broad context of long-term friendship and strategic partnership.

Axiological aspects of education have long been overlooked in Russia. Still, it is crucial to focus not only on technologies and methods but also on the process's ultimate goals. Digital technologies should support educational objectives that reflect the needs of both society and the state, serving primarily as tools for teaching, upbringing, and preparing the next generation of Russian educators. In the face of technological breakthroughs, it remains essential to prioritize the personalities of teachers and students. While technological innovation provides many opportunities, the spiritual dimension should stay a central focus, rooted in the civilizational traditions and historical heritage of both China and Russia.

Together with Chinese partners, Moscow Pedagogical State University (MPSU) is developing innovative teaching methods and supporting the growth of language, literature, culture, and national education systems. Pedagogical universities are building digital ecosystems based on meta-technologies that combine online and offline formats, integrating both technological and humanistic elements. Curricula designed for a pilot project by MPSU include modules on moral and civic development. The education program aims to develop professional skills in students who will become future teachers. When creating these parts of the educational process, it's essential not only to shape students' values and Russian civic identity but also to equip them, as future educators, with modern tools to promote moral values and teach history. In any subject, it's vital to highlight Russian scientific achievements, the history of Russian discoveries, and their influence on global science. It is also necessary to showcase Russian artists' contributions to worldwide cultural heritage. The biographies of notable Russian scientists, politicians, public figures, and cultural and artistic leaders should emphasize their civic and professional achievements, as well as their dedicated service to Russian society.

We need to explore new methodological approaches and develop technologies that emphasize human values. The principle of the individual serves as the foundation of movement, progress, and development; however, in its extreme forms, it can also lead to decline and destruction, thus weakening the social fabric [27]. Personality is inherently social and cannot exist without cultural and historical context. It must be shaped through historical memory, cultural heritage, and the ongoing reevaluation of its qualities [47]. Russian intellectuals warned that society and the state could face fragmentation if the spiritual foundations of social relations and governance are weakened [48]. In a multipolar world, it is essential to preserve and honor cultural and historical traditions. This approach helps young people understand the historical experiences of key national figures and the global scope of labor and struggle. Rooted in their national context, it fosters empathy and a sense of responsibility, reducing tendencies toward “nationalist self-assertion and excessive self-criticism” [9].

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***Information about the author:***

**Alexey V. Lubkov**, ScD in History, Professor, Academician of the Russian Academy of Education, Rector, Moscow Pedagogical State University (ul. Malaya Pirogovskaya, 1, stroyeniye 1, Moscow, Russian Federation, 119435).

E-mail: [av.lubkov@mpgu.su](mailto:av.lubkov@mpgu.su)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1395-4239>; SPIN-code: 1883-4065

# ПЕДАГОГИКА

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## ИСТОРИКО-КУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ОСНОВЫ РЕФОРМИРОВАНИЯ ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ: КИТАЙСКИЙ И РОССИЙСКИЙ ОПЫТ

*А.В. Лубков*

*Московский педагогический государственный университет,  
Москва, Россия,  
av.lubkov@mpgu.su, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1395-4239>*

**Аннотация.** Актуальность темы вызывает необходимость обращения автора к опыту сравнительной педагогики в изучении проблемы историко-культурных основ реформирования педагогического образования в условиях стремительного сегодня развития информационного общества. Две цивилизации: Китай и Россия, столкнувшись с вызовами постиндустриальной эпохи, которая стремительно движется в освоении передовых технологий, в том числе связанных с искусственным интеллектом, показали в исторических реалиях разные интерпретации ответов на эти проблемы. В немалой степени разница состоит в осмыслении дискретности и непрерывности развития своего прошлого и будущего. Исследование заданных вопросов обращает автора к изучению своеобразия опыта, представленного конфуцианством и отечественной мыслью, актуализировавшей мировоззренческую сторону социокультурных проблем. Например, в дискуссиях XIX в. вокруг нигилизма скрывается глубокий пласт мировоззренческих вопросов, осмысление которых подводит исследователя к пониманию, что такое ядро цивилизации, слагающее облик общего русского мира или китайского общества. В условиях механизации, схематизации, формализования человеческой деятельности – процессов, набирающих обороты еще с XX в., автор обращает внимание на значимость герменевтического подход и интерпретационного метода, позволяющих рассуждать о важности развития понимающего образования, которое открывает мир человеку, а человека миру. Герменевтически-ориентированный на тип образования подход открывает механизм саморегуляции, ставит вопрос о человеке, понимающем себя и свое место в мире. Автор делает выводы о том, что накопленный двумя разными цивилизациями и системами образования опыт позволяет решать современные задачи и отвечать на риски информационной эпохи, где должен быть реализован главный принцип о гармоничном сочетании традиций и новаций.

**Ключевые слова:** педагогическое образование, информационное общество, китайская модернизация, конфуцианское наследие, российская цивилизация, русская культура, духовные традиции, народ, ценности, социокультурный контекст

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***Информация об авторе:***

**Алексей Владимирович Лубков**, доктор исторических наук, профессор, академик Российской академии образования, ректор, Московский педагогический государственный университет (ул. Малая Пироговская, 1, ст. 1, Москва, Россия, 119435).

E-mail: [av.lubkov@mpgu.su](mailto:av.lubkov@mpgu.su)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1395-4239>; SPIN-код: 1883-4065

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