

# EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN REPUBLIC SAKHA (YAKUTIA) DURING THE PAST FIFTY YEARS: UNDERLYING CONCEPTIONS AND OUTCOMES

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**Abstract:** As it is well known, serious problems - such as violence, dogmatism, discrimination, poverty, social injustice - have deteriorated education at all levels and in all countries of the world. We can face these problems in education and propose possible solutions for different regions of the world. It is evident that these problems constitute violations of human rights, which cannot be overcome, unless we foster in the minds dispositions inciting their respect. We want to explain and evaluate the gravity and the dimensions of these problems which concern the different aspects Republic Sakha (Yakutia). Many of these problems is implementing already. Republic Sakha (Yakutia) is one of the least populated regions of Russian Federation, known for frigid, sharp-continental climate. It is situated on the north-east of Asia (Siberia): area of 3083523 km<sup>2</sup>, 2500 km from north to south, 2000 km from west to east, including three time zones. The population is 955580 people, 64.94% of urban population. 53.7% of people are native population - Yakuts, Evens, Evenks, 49.9% Yakuts alone. Other people are Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars, and lots of other nations.

**Keywords:** education, Republic Sakha (Yakutia), Russian Federation, educational policy, (the) Concept of National School

## THERE ARE NO FACTORS THAT CAUSED THE INCREASE IN RACISM AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION IN OUR REGION DURING THE PAST HUNDRED YEARS

In present time several tens of thousands of migrants from former USSR republics are living here. They actively work in the area construction trade (providing the republic with fruits) and in other areas (transport, building trades). In our republic there are no signs of conflicts between nations, racism or discrimination. There are several orthodox churches, a mosque, a catholic and a protestant church in

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Yakutsk. There is a Muslim and a Jewish graveyard, tens of active national communities. Lots of Russian and Yakut journals are published. Citizens of former soviet republics are willing to work in Yakutia. Conflicts between members of nations living here for centuries or tens of years are definitely absent.

Unfortunately in other regions of Russia there are signs of conflicts between nations. The main reasons of it are a very big fluent of migration in Russia and absence of transparent in migratory politics in the some regions of our country.

#### THE MAIN FACTOR THAT CAUSED THE INCREASE OF DOGMATISM IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS IN OUR REGION DURING THE PAST HUNDRED YEARS

There is some dogmatism in social and cultural life of the republic, which is not an inheritance of USSR's institutes. Soviet Union was using a strict ideology, forming culture and education by many parameters. Lots of such barriers were destroyed by globalization processes in post-communist period, but some were tenacious enough to become elements of culture codes, saved till the modern time.

#### THERE IS NO POVERTY IN OUR REGION DURING THE PAST HUNDRED YEARS

Growth of poverty and social injustice is present in the republic of Sakha (Yakutia) as much as in whole modern Russia. Distinction into the poor and the rich is very noticeable thanks to articles from newspapers and Internet, behavior of some persons, difference in salaries, etc. It influences development of culture and education. Countryside citizens must make large sacrifices to provide their children with high education.

#### THERE ARE NO VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM IN OUR REGION DURING THE PAST FIFTY YEARS

There are virtually no factors than can lead to growth of terrorism and violence in Republic Sakha (Yakutia). All levels of education play a large role in resisting these factors. Education was always an important life priority in the North-East of Asia for Sakha (Yakut) people, who were living in the Northern areas of the world. A school for "teaching grammar Slavic-Russian" and a parish school were already open by a monastery in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in Yakutsk, populated only by several thousand people, a clerical school (transformed to a secondary school and a clerical seminary), an

eparchial female school, a district school, a male classical pre-gymnasium (transformed to a real school), a Kazak school, a female gymnasium and a teacher seminary were founded. The female gymnasium had an excellent reputation, teaching girls from different East-Siberian towns. Libraries, book shops were working in the town. In the 1934 a Pedagogical Institute was founded in Yakutsk, and later on its basis (the) Yakut State University in the 1956. In 2010 the University was transformed into the North-Eastern Federal University.

#### THE ROLE OF EDUCATION (PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION) FOR THE PREVENTIVE MEASURES OF THE PHENOMENA MENTIONED ABOVE

More than fifty years ago citizens from countryside of Yakutia sent their children to learn to Yakutsk. For that, children needed to pass huge distances, because area of this land exceeds 3 millions of square kilometers. They needed often to sell everything they possess (houses, cattle) just to let their children get high education.

A task to remove illiteracy was set in the republic after 1920, same as in whole Soviet Union. Illiteracy of population was removed before 1973; the republic provided secondary education for everyone and moved to leading positions in number of specialists with high and professional education. Great attention was given to the development of secondary school, from soviet period to modern time. A teacher's role has great educational, social and cultural importance, especially in village schools. Teachers, head teachers, directors had large authority in population, as members of intelligentsia. Teachers' family dynasties are well known in Yakutia, people from several generations working in the area of education. Lots of people's teachers brought fame to their schools.

In Soviet time, especially in towns, the teaching language was Russian. In the 90s there was started a search for national restoration of people living in Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). Educational reforms were needed. The Concept of National School was created by the way of different area specialists' collective work. It counted aboriginal nations' aspiration to develop and conserve native language, to study sources and tendencies of national culture. The Concept of National School set priority for national-regional component in education. An international conference about national schools' problems was held in Yakutsk in the March of 1993, by initiative of UNESCO and Russian

Federation's Ministry of Education. Specialists from many countries of Europe, America and Asia participated.

Government of the republic takes measures to develop education: gives funds to create international cooperation and to buy modern study equipment, computers; many measures are taken to increase education system workers' salary greatly. As a result of the concept, young people started to join nation's culture and traditions. At the same time, a process of interaction between other nations and cultures was going. Connected to the task of effectively studying foreign languages, Sakha-Belgian, Sakha-Turkish, Sakha-Korean schools were open in the 90s.

In the republic there is a network of musical schools, a High School of Music is created. It has study buildings and a boarding building for living of students. An ensemble "Virtuosos of Yakutia" was created on the basis of the school, well-known for its performances not only in the cities of Russia, but in many other countries. Talented youth can also acquire education at the Art School, from which many well-known artists had graduated, recognized on Russian and international levels. In January 2000, the Arctic State Institute of Arts and Culture was created, preparing specialists for all the Eastern Siberia. Here are studying people from Republic of Altai, Khakassia, Tuva, Evenkian and Taimyrian municipalities of Kamchatka and Krasnoyarsk regions.

#### IDEAS UNDERLYING THIS KIND OF EDUCATION

Starting from the 90s, some schools were open in the republic, teaching by author's programs, based on existing standards of education. They use original, effective methods of education, for example schools of ecological specialization. Students actively participate in varied Olympiads and conferences.

As far as the republic gives much attention to the development of primary and secondary education, graduates of secondary schools become competitive for entering prestigious universities of Russian Federation. Often they try to enter high educational institutions of Moscow, Petersburg and other cities with well-known universities. Many also acquire education abroad. For example, recently some students acquire education in China. Secondary education in the republic makes accent at the same time on educational and educative components. Youth is not much aggressive, but tolerant to other cultures, nations, at the whole population of the republic.

The first president of Republic Sakha (Yakutia) M. E. Nikolayev was engaged in the problem of perfecting education, on the level of state policy. Because of that, the whole system of education was rebuilt, considering new possibilities, demands of time, development perspectives. In 1992 the Department of Prediction, Preparing and Placing of Personnel was created. Thanks to that, lots of able, talented youth went to study to central universities of the country.

#### THE PLACE OF THE HUMANITIES, OF PHILOSOPHY, ETHICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF OUR REGION

The educational policy now is built into the three main directions: renewing and developing national school, reorganizing secondary and high education, preparing scientists and specialists in the areas of innovation and new technology. Several social problems were solved after that: the stipendiary was increased, added extra grants for elder students and excellent pupils started a republican salary system for scientists and high education workers. Some premiums were added for scientific degrees, candidate or doctor of science. There are state grants for young scientists and doctorates. 100 postgraduates were especially prepared to strengthen potential of pedagogical science. Some capable, able for scientific work, teachers from remote places were chosen and sent by the state to postgraduate study in central universities of the country. By majority, they are already graduated, doing scientific and educational work in the system of secondary and high education.

One of the innovative ideas is to creating a network of 36 president's schools, basis for realization of new pedagogical ideas, technologies and educational systems. Graduates from these schools (80-100%) enter universities from our country and abroad. They are winners of contests and Olympiads of regional, Russian and international levels.

The territory of our republic is a part of megaprojects such as the oil pipeline "East Siberia - Pacific Ocean", building a railroad to Yakutsk. By that reason, nearly 200 of young people were set to study engineering to the Tomsk Polytechnic College and other universities. Connected to the realization of megaprojects, a lack of professional working hands was discovered. That's why close to 20 new technical specialties had been opened in professional secondary institutions since 2007-2008. Parents' thinking stereotype to give their children just any high education needed to be broken.

## ANY POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT MAKING OUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

These positive tendencies of development are connected with the State University in Yakutsk. Effectively working since 1956, now it has the status of a federal university. Starting by April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010, the federal state autonomic institution of high professional education “North-Eastern Federal University” (NEFU) became a diversified university, teaching approximately 20.000 students.

The North-Eastern Federal University is one of 9 federal universities across the Russia, oriented to solving geopolitical problems and satisfying personnel needs of large interregional investment projects. North-Eastern Federal University educates high-qualified staff, open to independent creative and practical activity, able to generate knowledge and to implement world-level innovative technologies.

By the condition of 1.10.12 the teaching staff consists of 1434 persons, including 139 doctors and 718 candidates of science. The University consists of 11 institutes, 8 faculties, 3 branches - the Polytechnic Institute in the city “Mirniy”, the Technical Institute in the city “Nerungry”, and the Chuckchee branch of North-Eastern Federal University, opened in 2010 in Anadyr. The University has developed infrastructure of scientific-educational complex; it possesses modern equipment to develop fundamental and applied studies. There are 6 research institutes within the University.

The material and technical base of NEFU includes 40 study and laboratory buildings, the “Nohtuja” polygon, the “Junost” stadium and athletic hall, the “Dolgun” pool, a skiing base, a food combine. In the campus there are modern, well equipped, comfortable student dorms, joint living area of 88.340 sq. meters. The “Smena” student dispensary provides resting and getting medical service for 100 students per month. The scientific library of NEFU keeps hold of more than 1.300.000 storage units. The culture centre of NEFU for 640 seats is the largest in the republic. The University has long and strong connections with lots of world’s leading educational institutes - exchange of teachers and trainees, joint conferences and symposiums. There is a part of new dorm, 162 places, especially for foreign students and teachers.

The development of NEFU is oriented to forming a complete innovative chain: “fundamental research - applied science works -

technological works - experiment production - serial production". Also an innovative belt of NEFU will be formed, by facilities which are commercializing the results of research. The "North-Eastern University Educational Region" Association includes 59 schools from the republic, Chuckchee autonomic district and Magadan region. The base of Association is the network of president schools - front-end educational collectives with innovative activity.

Thus, NEFU becomes a center of social-humanitarian, economical, historical researches, a polygon to develop and introduce new social-humanitarian practices, providing the preservation and development of the nation cultures from North-East of Russia and Circumpolar territories. It will become an integrating centre for education, science and industry, supporting growing economy of Far East with high-qualified specialists.

The Rector of NEFU, E. I. Mikhailova proposes five main directions to develop the University further: 1. Global competition for young and gifted students; 2. Introduction of new systems and methods to teach creative students; 3. Strengthen role of NEFU professor as a main factor forming federal university; 4. Increasing role of employees as creative structures for effective management; 5. Transforming the University into an intellectual centre, a "factory of thinking".

One more educational and scientific centre in the republic is the Yakut State Agricultural Academy (YSAA). It consists of 5 faculties (Veterinarian Medicine, Agro-technical, Engineering, Economic and Juridical) and 2 branches in the town "Olekminsk" and in the settlement "Oktemcy". The number of students is 5.909. There are 71% of agricultural professions, 22% - economic, 5% - humanitarian, 1.2% - recycling of forest recourses, 0.8% - nature improvement. There is an Institute of increasing qualification and retraining of personnel, teaching leaders of republican municipalities, specialist and workers of agricultural industry, teachers from agricultural schools. Practical lessons are realized on the basis of demonstration platforms for herd horse breeding, cattle breeding, deer breeding, crop and mechanization.

All the changes and plans, connected to a quality growth, usage of new technologies, widening and deepening of educational structures, allow us to hope for an effective development education in Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), to expect new achievements and positive changes in the future.

The development of humanity sciences in our republic gets high attention and big importance. Firstly, it is connected with the North-Eastern Federal University and its Institute of Foreign Philology and Regional Knowledge, the Institute of North-East Russian Federation Nations' Languages and Cultures, the Philological and Historical faculties, and the Department of Philosophy. They are tightly interacting with Pedagogical and Psychological institutes, with the scientific institutes of "Olonkho – Yakut National Epic", "A.E. Kulakovsky" (the first Yakut writer), with Perspective Technologies in Education, Increasing of Pedagogues' Qualification, with Arctic Innovative Centre, no less with museums of archeology, ethnography and history of high school.

At the time more than ten dissertation councils are functioning in NEFU, being in process of reorganizing. Public lectures receive lot of attention, read by the university's professors on the most actual humanitarian and social modern problems. A wide network of student scientific clubs and conferences, free to participate for anyone willing, helps humanitarian thought to infiltrate student environment.

Consequently, by ignoring some difficulties inherent to the development of Russia, the situation in Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) stays positive and keeps considerable potential for further development. It is also connected with deep traditions in the area of education in the republic.

The Northern regions are a very important part of our planet and the mankind's future is connected to the development of these regions. Many versions of the mankind's future may be investigated in Polar Regions of the Earth. It can be considered as polygons where many actual modern problems have the clearest scope, and where the simplest models of development can be tried out.

The investigations of such a major project are very important and we hope that it will be continued; because the education, the culture and social interactions are real priorities for us.