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**HUMANISTIC IDEAS OF THE PEDAGOGUE FRANTIŠEK  
BAKULE**

Liubov A. Volodina (a)\*  
\*Corresponding author

(a) Senior specialist of the 2nd category, the Parliament library, department of maintaining databases and state bibliography on official documents, Malomoskovskaya st, 2/2 building, flat 127, 129164, Moscow, Russian Federation, volodinalyubov@bk.ru

*Abstract*

The humanization of the educational space of a modern digital school is the main message of this article. The authors fear that as a result of global digitization of education, there will be a loss of the humanitarian component in the process of education and upbringing of the younger generation. In the hope of finding effective and efficient bases for personal growth of students, their individual development, preserving their traditional for any civilized society humanitarian knowledge and values, the authors turn to the historical pedagogical heritage in the context of the role and influence of the teacher's personality on the student's personality development. The focus of the study is an outstanding Czech teacher - an innovator, a unique character in the field of education and parenting, the pioneer of the new European pedagogy of the twentieth century F. Bakule. The technology developed by him based on child labor education, the use of art as a basis for overcoming students' physical and sincere diseases, unique inclusive school practice, teaching methods of reading, writing and counting, like many other things, are still recognized as unsurpassed achievements in the field of education and training children. Therefore, the article, along with the presentation of facts from the life, practical and research activities of Bakule, which are directly related to the promotion of humanistic ideas, presents original research material collected from authentic sources, which will help researchers and practitioners to replenish their pedagogical background.

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## **1. Introduction**

The modern information society with its global values and culture has transformed the educational landscape of our school. Today's ideologists of the development of education state the beginning of its digital overlap. It is predicted that by 2030 the existing learning models will cease to exist, and global changes will come in 5-7 years. They are associated with artificial intelligence, which will finally replace the paper textbook, online courses that will replace the teacher in the class, simulators that can create the right environment around the student. But behind the informatization and blurring of clear boundaries, openness and transparency of education, it is inevitably followed by its commercialization, the arrival of new participants - providers, consultants, coaches, obviously interested in the commercial efficiency of their work.

## **2. Problem Statement**

We are convinced that the personality of the teacher plays a fundamental role in the development of the entire pedagogical system of the world. The study of great personalities - representatives of historical generations, who determine cultural, spiritual quest, political predilections and pedagogical guidelines of society for many centuries to come, is the clearest methodological guideline in the study. Their authority allows avoiding unambiguity in the assessments and conclusions of the phenomena and processes under consideration. The past is present in the current constantly through the abandoned scientific, cultural, everyday heritage; it exists objectively and is opposed to fiction and substitution.

## **3. Research Questions**

However, as for all this, it is important not to lose the main thing - the student's personality, the child's personality, and with it not to lose confidence and not to lose communication between all the participants in the education and upbringing process (children, parents, teachers, etc.), in other words, how in modern realities not to lose the humanitarian component of the learning process. An important help in solving this problem turned out to be for us two research directions, which the presented work follows. The first vector is historical and pedagogical. The second vector is personal.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

In this context, the object of our consideration is an undeservedly forgotten person in the history of pedagogy - František Bakule. The great Czech pedagogue-humanist, an innovator who was called modern Pestalozzi, who managed in the most difficult historical period of Czech pedagogical reformism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. achieved the highest educational results by applying the original methods to achieve them. Unfortunately, humanistic pedagogical ideas and methods, which are still considered innovative, sometimes are not associated with their creator and ideological father. Therefore, the goal of our research is to lift the veil over the undeservedly forgotten in the homeland, unknown to the Russian scientific community and pedagogues - practitioners, but extremely popular outside of the Czech Republic and Russia, the humanistic heritage of F. Bakule.

## 5. Research Methods

In modern psychological and pedagogical science, the question of the influence of the personality of a teacher both on the process of forming a child's personality and on the development of pedagogical science, the cultural and educational environment as a whole, and the humanization of education is traditionally regarded as key and decisive. Many theoretical and pilot researches of Russian scientists are devoted to this problem. The development of classical ideas of humane pedagogy, "spiritual humanism" (Amonashvili, 2017) is considered, and the fragments of social reality reflected in the texts relating to the pedagogical concepts of individual teachers (Mudrik, 2019) are reflected.

The reader is represented by outstanding Russian teachers from Ancient Russia to modern Russia (Khutorskoy, 2019). It comes to the professional and anthropological ideal of a teacher - as a schoolmaster in the space of culture and in time of history (Slobodchikov, 2017). The issue is covered in the context of the formation of the educational space in the postmodern era (Ivanova & Elkina, 2017). The ways of humanization of pedagogical education in the modern socio-cultural context are substantiated (Shaydenko, 2014; Orekhova, Danilova, & Shadenko, 2018). We were unable to find any studies on F. Bakule in the Russian scientific and pedagogical reserve. However, the scientific search for foreign researchers (R. Vanova, V. Prishgoda, B. Titsl, P. and F. Faucher, and others) allowed us to use authentic material and present our author's vision of the problem of the pedagogical heritage of F. Bakule's humanistic ideas.

## 6. Findings

Let us turn to the information in the Heidelberg Volkszeitung of March 3, 1925. There is a reference to the choral concert given at Carnegie Hall in New York on April 1, 1923. This concert, in the unanimous opinion of critics, turned out to be one of the best of the season. The style of the singers was so perfect that it was an example for the outstanding choirs of that time in absolute purity of intonation, accuracy of rhythm, exemplary articulation. These praises were addressed to the Czech choir consisting of street children from the outskirts of Prague, children with disabilities and developmental characteristics, led by their teacher František Bakule. Born in 1877 in the Czech Republic in the family of wealthy peasants, F. Bakule very early, at the age of 14, decides to become an elementary school teacher. And this is in spite of the categorical protest of the parents who pushed him to the priesthood. He received his first appointment as early as 1897. Recalling his studies at the Institute for the Preparation of Primary School Teachers in Prchimbram (Czech Republic), he critically speaks about the methods and content of the pedagogical education existing at that time. We find these comments in Bakule's letter to O. Dekroli.

*I was just a product of a pedagogical factory, which was officially called the Institute for the Training of Teachers. What I received there as a training, what was the norm for most teachers, has always become an example for me, what cannot be done, what should be avoided in pedagogical activity. But precisely because of this negative experience, I became a propagandist of a new upbringing ... A child is not a boot that needs to be stretched along the leg or customized to fit one uniform form. Stretch. Yes, they could only stretch ... They did not even try to awaken or*

*develop in me the slightest sign of personality. The hired souls of my teachers did not want to take care of the soul of the child ... (Faucher, 1999, p.56)*

From the very first steps in pedagogy, Bakule appears as an innovator. In those schools in the country in which he managed to work (in Vrapitsa, in Druzhki, in Kladno, in the Mala Scala), he refuses to corporal punishment, replacing them with self-discipline; he prefers education of feelings and creates his first choir; together with the children, he organizes workshops, school trips, in which the parents participate (the whole village watches the passage of Halley's comet with him). At school, he creates a self-government system with general presidential elections, organizes debates with children on public life issues, and runs a school newspaper, which is soon banned by the school administration as subversive. Step by step, Bakule (1921) realizes his pedagogical project, the purpose of which he reveals as follows:

*I have a mission to give education to six-year-old citizens of the world. Now they have no meaning, but only instincts. Simple words on them practically do not act. So, my work should be aimed at placing my learners in a situation that will enrich their life experience, which will later become their life support. I want to equip children with abilities that one day would help them fight for a better social and economic life. (p.11)*

He could have become one of those practitioners, passionate activists of the new education, which flourished throughout Europe in the first half of the 20th century, if not for the ostracism of the school administration. It was this that forced Bakule to defend and develop new educational territories. In 1913 he accepted the invitation of the orthopaedic surgeon Rudolf Jedlichka and headed the "Institute for the treatment and education of infirm children" in Prague.

There he will meet Vojta, a crippled boy, without a right hand, who will become a wonderful lithographer due to his meeting with Bakule. There he will bring up Yarushek, who is unable to fully move, who will master artistic skill in such a way that he will become famous and create under the pseudonym Sarkan. It was at the Institute of Bakule's namesake, little František, an armless boy who lived by begging and amazed passers-by with the dexterity of the legs that he used as hands when he came to the attention of Bakule, led the school workshop, designed his own car, which he masterfully controlled his legs while driving through the streets of Prague. Finally, Yanda, a child with severe paraplegia and mental retardation, thanks to Bakule's educational method, organized and led a scout squad of ten such teenagers (as cited in Prihoda, 1927). Bakule is convinced that for such children it is necessary to create conditions for them to gain complete independence afterwards. They need to educate "for life through life, for work - work." Instead of scornful sympathy, there is a firm will leading to the restoration of their dignity.

*What do these children need? To understand, to feel that they, the destitute, too, can live without heartache, freeing themselves from a humiliating sense of poverty. They are not worthy of tolerance, not pity, but equality, as active citizens who can independently get what they need for a full life. (Bakule, 1921, p.17)*

Bakule turns the school into a workshop, transforming the desks into workbenches. Without changing his conviction that the pedagogue should constantly learn and improve, he learns crafts: carpentry, bookbinding, and others.

The workshops develop and become a real wooden toy factory, which will ensure financial independence for this community. For almost more than a year, this particular “school of life” did not even speak about reading, writing, or counting. However, Bakule was sure that the hour would certainly come, and it will come. “On the last Sunday of July 1914, little Jaruš, tired of the games, got bored. Veit, a boy of sixteen, takes up pencil and paper. What do you want to do, Veit? I will write home, father and mother. Jaruš thought, and then hesitatingly says: "Mr. Director, I would like to write to my mother ...". (Bakule, 1918) The holiday of reading and writing captures all these little illiterate people who in less than three weeks learned to read and write. For Bakule, there is nothing surprising. Manual labor requires observation, reflection, concentration, accuracy of gestures. When the need for reading arises, visual and manual motor skills are ready for complex exercises. The result was so quick, because for every child the use of a hammer, jointer, and chisel required, given certain physical or mental deficiency, specific mental activity (reflection). It was necessary to search, tinker, invent, find for everyone the necessary devices for work, thus, the educational manual labor was personalized. What, according to Bakule, does a child acquire in this activity? He becomes more independent, and the teacher? The teacher acquires the highest freedom in the implementation of their ideas for each student separately. He discovers and accompanies the process of knowledge of each student, which, in turn, in its uniqueness realizes it. The teacher does not teach, he awakens and awakens himself. He teaches to learn and stimulates the process of knowledge. And this, according to Bakule, is nothing but responsiveness (empathy) - to notice, guess, organize and reproduce. In 1919, Bakule, after disagreements with the administration, which advised him to find a school more suitable for his activities, left the institute. He was followed by 12 children. So the time has come for the birth of a new school of Bakule, which will later become the Bakule’s Institute.

We had to endure hardships - the lack of food, lack of housing, which are aggravated against the background of social and political instability in the young Czechoslovak Republic. No funds available. Bakule and "his children" will be saved only because of their talents. Bakule gives paid lectures, and children make crafts for sale. The greatest income will bring the presentation of the puppet theater. The unique experience of this children's republic causes a public outcry. The American Red Cross will make a “\$25,000 donation to Europe’s most remarkable socio-cultural organization.” Bakule buys a villa in Prague Heights and sets off on a new educational adventure (as cited in Prihoda, 1927). “Little Bakules” arouse curiosity among street children roaming the outskirts of Prague. The innovative experience of joint education of children without features and children with disabilities begins. In the new institute,

*every child knows that he is part of everything that has only one goal for which he strains all his strength, and this goal is to create in the name of an institution where as many children as possible will be able to get acquainted with the joys work and spend your leisure time in noble entertainment. (Titzl, 1998, p.444).*

Pedagogical principles and innovations of Bakule are gaining new momentum. Principles? The Institute is organized according to the principle of self-government: “officials” are elected for three months; each has the ability to perform various administrative functions. Earnings that students receive from their work are divided according to their abilities, knowledge and diligence. Individualization and differentiation of education is carried out on the basis of a number of seminars on the study of various types of crafts. From joinery to mechanics, from livestock to gardening, from binding to printing, from graphic art to photography. Learning is based on the principle of cooperation, which lies at the core of the organization of everyday life, when healthy children and students with disabilities share all rights and responsibilities. The older ones teach the younger ones, realizing the idea of Pestalozzi that knowledge becomes true only after its transmission. Successes in learning come when the student feels the need for it. This is preceded by motor games and a variety of manual labor, so that when the desire to learn appears, the whole body is accustomed and prepared for concentration. The teaching itself was inextricably linked with research activities, aided by the extensive library and language laboratory (even Esperanto was studied) of the Institute, research trips and trips. Constructed ships and cars!

And yet the most distinctive aspect of the pedagogy of Bakule is his appeal to the power of art. At the same time, he acts as a fierce opponent of the division of art into children and so on.

*I do not allow special art for children, I make art, beauty, accessible to them, regardless of whether they were intended for children or not. Teacher, educator, pedagogue - conductor, mediator, accompanying his learners to the heights of beauty, literature, painting, music ...*  
(Bakule, 1921, p.18)

The result of this work was the choir and literary exercises of Bakule’s learners who were so not childishly deep and shrill that they accused him of charlatanry, thinking that these were his own compositions!

The greatest act of Bakule, where his pedagogical genius manifests itself to the greatest extent, thanks to which he receives worldwide fame and recognition, this is certainly a choir. We started this article with him. It is the choir of Bakule that will perform throughout Europe, giving, for example, more than 200 concerts in France. In Lyon, when the children bowed, the mayor of the city E. Herriot, all in tears, enthusiastically greeted them. The choir invited to the USA will give 150 concerts.

For the development of hearing in children, Bakule uses all available means: he suggests improvising musical pieces on cups and plates, guessing and reproducing the steps of a neighboring horse, distinguishing each chicken's clucking, finding out who enters a room in the manner of slamming the door. All this for Bakule is a passage of musical interpretation. He is convinced that in the musical play every soloist must know all the other parts, therefore the musical plays are memorized entirely by heart. The work of the artist on Bakule starts only after the labor of the craftsman. It is this kind of work that allows the child to give his own presentation of the author's work, which is expressed by musical notes and musical sounds (Váňová, 2000).

For Bakule, “music education” is nothing more than the shortest way to arouse interest, develop feelings, encourage and accompany personal development, independent work, and joint activities. Despite

the fact that Bakule works with children experiencing the most serious difficulties in learning and development, both physical and mental, and sincere, he is tuned to the highest results, the most ambitious collective and personal achievements. Thus he was able to understand the complex dialectic of possibilities and limits.

Unfortunately, the Bakule's Institute will not withstand the economic crisis that hit the entire Western world in the 1930s. Bakule is forced to sell land and building. He delves into the description of his pedagogical experience. The occupation of Czechoslovakia during the Second World War destroyed any hope for the publication of his research. The post-war rise in the country turns out to be short-lived, and the "Prague events" are the cause of the next concealment of F. Bakule's pedagogical achievements. His articles are subject to strict censorship, are removed from public libraries. The main reason is free-thinking, a call for inner freedom, truth, self-knowledge, self-realization and everything that contradicted the emerging ideology of the second half of the 20th century in the country. This is what Vaslav Scendur writes to Faucher (1999): "Bakule died in oblivion. During the cremation, there were only a few true friends. The organ was playing, but the organist was fake all the time ... None of the officials came to say goodbye ..." (p. 103).

## 7. Conclusion

František Bakule, a Czech pedagogue - an innovator, in our opinion, was one of the most creative and original pedagogues of the twentieth century. Convinced of the educational possibilities of labor and artistic practical training, he left behind a unique legacy. Political and economic realities of the time, ideological storms led to the neglect of the personality and creativity of Bakule. We believe that the time has come to rediscover it for scientists and practitioners, whom we awe and do, collecting research material bit by bit.

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