

## Spiritual aspects in a Modern Legal Higher Education



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**Abstract.** *This article is an attempt to highlight and to elaborate the power of spiritual education in universities in general, and in legal higher schools in particular at the present stage of the educational process.*

**Key words:** *legal education, spirituality in education, spiritual education.*

### Problem statement

The aim of real education should be self-realization, realization of the spiritual values of the soul [1]. Spiritual and emotional values constitute a key element in development of student's skills and regulation of their activities [2]. Nowadays modern education expands its borders nationally, territorially, globally. Universities are opening their doors for the young people from all over the world despite of national, cultural and religious qualifications. Therefore, the aim of this article is dedicated to determine the importance of spiritual aspects in higher education, especially of higher legal education.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Spirituality was highlighted in scientific research of philosophers, psychologists, pedagogues L. Sokhan, L. Oleksyuk, V. Sugatovsky, I. Bech, O. Kirichuk, G. Kostiuk, M. Sukhomlynsky, M. Makarenko, Byers, Flake, Nash, Kessler, Shteiner etc. The aim of this article is to identify spiritual aspects during the educational process of students for legal professions taking into consideration of modern conditions of legal education.

**Setting goals and objectives.** The relevance of this current research is determined by social requirements to modern legal education, which is the source of highly educated leaders with deep spiritual and moral values. Spirituality has to become a strong basis of a modern society, which requires leaders with deep spiritual beliefs without limitation by religious frames. Students of legal faculties are future leaders of our society: lawyers, advocates, prosecutors, judges, politicians, managers, etc., and they need to have not only professional skills, but also high

level of spiritual qualities and beliefs no matter what religious belief they have.

**Presenting the main material.** Education is the basis of the intellectual, spiritual, physical and cultural development of the personality, his successful socialization, economic prosperity, a guarantee of the development of society, united by common values and culture, and the state [12]. Education to be complete must have five principal aspects corresponding to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education follow chronologically the growth of the individual; this, however, does not mean that one of them should replace another. But that all must continue, completing one another until the end of his life.

The spirituality is commonly interpreted as a life guided by high moral standards, as an aspiration towards ideals, as high feelings, thoughts and actions. In the sociology the spirituality is considered to be a consolidating basis of the society represented in the moral

values and traditions. They are concentrated in the religious doctrines and practices, as well as in the art.

However, the concept of "spirituality" has no clear and precise definition. Moreover, some modern philosophers think that in spite of frequent use of this term, its content remains debatable. According to Y. Abramov and E. Kornev this term is "not operational" [13]. Spirituality can be studied as transcendence, connection, wholeness, compassion [9].

Because the phrase "spiritual education" does not yet have a normal or established use, all the philosopher can offer by way of conceptual clarification is a logical taxonomy of possible senses of the phrase. Decisions have yet to be made about what should be counted as instances of spiritual education. And this does call into question the value, indeed the very possibility, of subjecting the phrase to logical geographical analysis [8].

Spiritual development is the development of the non-material aspects of life, focusing on personal insight, values, meanings and purpose. Students should develop a zest for life and the courage and ability to persevere, overcoming any inner resistance and vacillation when approaching obstacles. They must develop the desire to use and extend what they learn in high school. According to the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Approval of the Concept of the State Target Social Program "Youth of Ukraine" for 2016-2020 dated September 30, 2015, No. 1018-p one of the priority for development of youth is called "Culture and spirituality", whose purpose is to support young people's initiatives, create conditions for their creative and spiritual development, intellectual self-improvement [11].

Spirituality gives an opportunity for person to rise above the biological and social limitations of his human being. At this level, the will to life is transformed into a will to power, but first of all - to power over oneself. Overcoming oneself, a person becomes a person. He "raises the bar" for his "I" and realizes his potential [14]. Morality and as spirituality, rather than "being abstract "traits", are qualities that potentially attach to any and every experience of growing persons in their interaction with their natural, social, cosmic world, and are to be experiences through discovery and through functional use of living" [4].

Steven Glazer, past educator, administrator, and cofounder of the Naropa

Institute, referred to the transcendent aspects of spirituality in his down-to-earth, practical definition of spirituality as it relates to teaching (1999). Calling it sacredness, Glazer wrote: So, then, what is sacredness? Sacredness is the practice of wholeness and awareness. It is approaching, greeting, and meeting the world with basic respect. What is sacredness as the ground of learning? It is rooting education in the practices of openness, attentiveness to experience, and sensitivity to the world. Spirituality in education begins with questions: What is my experience? What is my effect? What are the interrelationships between myself and others? Are these being attended to? [6].

"Waldorf Education" or, alternately, "Anthroposophic Education" is one of the successful example of implementation of holistic education, which includes spiritual aspects. During its more than 90-year history, Waldorf education has developed into one of the most successful forms of progressive education. Established by Rudolf Steiner the system is based on an anthroposophical view and understanding of the human being, that is, as a being of body, soul and spirit [7]. Anthroposophy is a human oriented spiritual philosophy that reflects and speaks to the basic deep spiritual questions of humanity, to our basic artistic needs, to the need to relate to the world out of a scientific attitude of mind, and to the need to develop a relation to the world in complete freedom and based on completely individual judgments and decisions.

The success anthroposophy has had in many areas of modern life seems to have gone hand in hand with a sell-out of its own basic principles.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that anthroposophy, in spite of the public recognition of anthroposophical initiatives, still has scarcely any standing in universities and academic life generally. It is considered unscientific, and is thus paid no heed in those faculties where it might be of relevance (medicine, agriculture, education). At the door of science anthroposophy has hitherto knocked in vain. This is all the more serious, in that the scientific mentality is the one that sets the tone of our time. The universities, its representatives, are the institutions that determine the values and goals of modern society.

In the last few years, however, this relationship between anthroposophy and science has begun to change. There are certain indicators of this change that are currently

making the scientific status of anthroposophy such an urgent question. They are as follows:

– Developments in the field of higher education: in the individual fields of medicine, agriculture, education and even eurhythmy anthroposophically oriented professorships have been established in recent years. In keeping with the terms of the Bologna process, Waldorf teacher training is beginning to take its rightful academic place. The most eminent scientific body in Germany, the Science Council (“Wissenschaftsrat”), has in recent years been concerned with questions of approval for anthroposophically oriented universities. In the case of the Alanus University at Alfter, near Bonn, the Council granted accreditation at the highest level it had approved in ten years, and recommended in addition that the Educational Science Department be given the right to grant doctorates. This recommendation has since been duly carried out, initially limited to five years’ duration. In connection with the mission statement of the Alanus University, The Science Council’s official assessment comments as follows: A focal point of research which gives the institution its particular identity is the ongoing, discursive concern with the thinking and works of Rudolf Steiner in relation to art and science. In the case of the Mannheim Academy accreditation was refused. Even though anthroposophy was not the main reason for this, the assessment nevertheless alluded to the fact that a possible danger lies “in basing the work of a university-level institution on an extra-scientific theory of education involving methodology influenced by a particular worldview” [3]. With this statement it is made abundantly clear that for the highest body in Germany concerned with such matters the scientific credibility of anthroposophy is a major question. This must be understood, primarily, as an opportunity to address the question. It must be done, however, not in the usual manner of putting forward a vigorous apology for anthroposophy as science, but rather by means of an open discussion, that would at least begin the job of giving anthroposophy its place in the scientific landscape.

– Scientific publications: In recent years a growing number of contemporary academics have published extensive criticism on anthroposophy, written from the perspective of “established” science and based upon profound knowledge of Rudolf Steiner’s works. Helmut Zander has produced a comprehensive, two-volume analysis of Anthroposophy in Germany. For decades now, Heiner Ullrich, as an education theorist, has been carrying on a critical discussion of Waldorf education and its anthroposophical underpinnings. In autumn of this year (2011) appeared Hartmut Traub’s thousand-page treatise on the basic philosophical writings of Rudolf Steiner. – What is important here is that a serious dialogue with anthroposophy has been opened up by representatives of modern academia. So far such a discussion has only been pursued on a small scale by representatives of anthroposophy [12].

For many centuries it had been considered that education and knowledge in general and universities in particular were responsible for the moral and social development of students and for bringing together diverse groups for the common good with the strong spiritual basement, which is a guarantee of peaceful existence and comprehensive development of society and certain person.

To keep up this high requirement modern education and particular legal high school needs to work upon following vectors:

1) Contents of spiritual and emotional educational should be included in training programs for faculty members of universities.

2) The instruction of spiritual values that contribute to development of student’s emotions in order to develop their self-behaviour should be included in courses and activities provided to students.

3) Teaching methods in universities should be developed in a manner that agrees with the value and moral curve that supports student’s self-discipline skills and activates them to work, achievement, respect for others and combating contemporary challenges like violence, determinism and dark thoughts.

## Conclusion

Modern society is facing the problem, which can be called “spiritual hunger”, and education has to tackle it to create stable and strong basement for personal and social growing and development. Unfortunately, majority of modern education processes is still based on a machine-age model of separate subject areas, which encourages a fragmented view of learning. With the concentration of a unifying spiritual perspective, which is based on understanding of unifying of God’s order, high legal

schools should understand that, in days of spiritual hunger, education needs to do more than grope in the dark, it needs to point students to the light of the world.

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