The Ukrainian Ideal of Education in the Works of Mykola Shlemkevych (1894–1966)

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The article highlights the views of Mykola Shlemkevych – a Ukrainian scholar, educator, philosopher and public figure - on the ideal, purpose and content of the education of Ukrainian youth. The main concepts of the ideal of education are revealed: value orientations (God, nation, family, social environment, language, culture, history, tradition); moral (love, faith, kindness, truth, beauty) and national values (the Ukrainian idea, national unity, national consciousness, patriotism, national interests). Attention is focused on the spiritual origins of the Ukrainian people, encompassing the principles of nationalism and humanism; on patriotism; on achieving personal freedom; advocacy of democratic ideas.

Keywords: Mykola Shlemkevych; ideal of education; the moral values; worldview of Ukrainian youth; national values; Ukrainian person

The ideal of education as the purpose of education is the main problem of pedagogy, the answer of which depends on the solution of a number of issues like the content of education and upbringing of the younger generation. The ideal of education of each nation is formed depending on the social system, religion, culture, the formation of national psychology, worldview, morality, etc. It is manifested in the language of the people, their traditions, songs, literature, works of scholars, etc. In different historical periods, the society puts

forward educational goals and tasks, the implementation of which involves the search for values by children and youth.

The national ideal of education, which corresponds to the inherent characteristics of Ukrainians, has been created for centuries and, according to tradition, was passed down from generation to generation, being supplemented and improved. The main model in the education of young people is the ideas developed over the ages about the educational goal, guidelines for the life of Ukrainians, about what the educational ideal should be. The teacher's proper understanding of the purpose of education contributes to the formation of personality, the search and use of appropriate forms and methods of educational activities. The key to the recovery of the Ukrainian nation and the spiritual revival of the society is a return to their traditions, origins, and the faith of the ancestors. After all, each nation takes care of spiritual spiritual development. Determination of and national guidelines for the development of the Ukrainian society, methodological approaches to the theory of education requires a deep analysis of the historical and pedagogical experience of education of the Ukrainian people.

In this context, valuable is the legacy of Mykola Shlemkevych (January 27, 1894, Pylyava village, Ternopil Oblast – February 14, 1966, Passaic, USA), a Ukrainian scholar, educator, philosopher and public figure, whose life and educational activities took place against the background of social and political life of Galicia and the Ukrainian Diaspora. His contribution to the history of pedagogy, to the development of the theory and practice of education, the philosophy of education, to the process of national revival, preservation and development of the ethno-cultural identity of Ukrainians is significant. The study of the source base shows the interest of scholars in the works of M. Shlemkevych. In particular, N. Burachok¹ and S. Ramazanov² examine his scientific and public political activity, S. Hrabovskyi³ and M. Hrynenko⁴ study his philosophy and its significance for the formation of the worldview of Ukrainians and Ukrainian mentality; M. Czepil and O. Karpenko⁵ scrutinize the anthropological foundations of human

¹ Burachok, N. (2012). Osoblyvosti formuvannya i stanovlennya svitohlyadnykh pozytsiy Mykoly Shlemkevycha. *Bulletin of the Precarpathian University. History*, 22, pp. 162–166; Burachok, N. (2013). Natsionalni ideyi u hromadsko-politychniy ta naukoviy diyalnosti M. Shlemkevycha. *Halychyna: All-Ukrainian Scientific and Cultural-Educational Journal of Local Lore*, 24, pp. 211–215.

² Ramazanov, Sh. (1996). *Shlemkevych Mykola Ivanovych*. In Yu. Rymarenko (Ed.), *Mala entsyklopediya etnoderzhavoznavstva*. Kyiv: Dovira; Geneza.

³ Hrabovskyi, S. (1998). Doslidnyk ukrayinskoyi dushi. *Historical Calendar*, *1*, pp. 42–43; Hrabovskyi, S. (2000). *XX st. ta ukrayinska lyudyna: vyklyky i vidpovidi*. Kyiv: Stylos.

⁴ Hrynenko, M. (2016). Filosofska systema Mykoly Shlemkevycha i yiyi aktualnist dlya formuvannya svitohlyadu ukrayintsiv. *Skhid*, *142* (2), pp. 71–73.

⁵ Czepil, M., & Karpenko, O. (2021). Mykola Shlemkevych (1894–1966): anthropological principles of human research. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, DOI: 10.1080/00131857.2021.1933944

research. The systematization of M. Shlemkevych's pedagogical ideas allows researchers to focus their attention on ideas about a person as a subject of education, on landmarks in the formation of the worldview of young people, on ethno-pedagogical and ethno-psychological foundations of character education of a Ukrainian child.⁶

Active participation in public life (he was a member of the political organization "Front of National Unity", the editor of "Peremoha" (Victory) magazine, member of the editorial board of "Ukrainski Visty" (Ukrainian News), etc.) for the sake of nation building and national revival finally shaped the life orientations and worldview positions of M. Shlemkevych, which enabled to theoretically substantiate the essence of the Ukrainian educational ideal. In accordance with the goal of education, which focuses on Ukrainians' concern for morality, patriotism, taking into account the experience of organizing the life in a community and family, M. Shlemkevych's ideal of a perfect person grew and became established on the national traditions and culture.

M. Shlemkevych interprets a person in two aspects – a human as a spiritual being and a person as a social being. M. Shlemkevych highlighted the spiritual manifestations of a person by characterizing the human ability to think about life (logos), readiness to order it (ethos), as well as the ability to distinguish between the beautiful and the ugly in life (eros). The model of a person will help ensure the choice of value orientations, strategic vectors in education, organize cooperation with other people, communication with God, realize the importance of knowing and perceiving a person as a unique spiritual-physical and sociomental phenomenon. The interpretation of the phenomenon of man as a social being finds a place in the "old time gentry", "Gogol person", "Skovoroda person", "Shevchenko person", a "strong" and a "new" person. The world-view manifestation of the soul was shown by the scholar through the model of a Ukrainian⁷. This is an "old time gentry", whose main concern was to eat well; a "Gogol" person who, despite all his love and attachment to Ukraine, became involved in the life of the Russian Empire; a "Skovoroda" person, a type of person who did not accept the Russian reality, but also did not become the old time gentry. Such person seeks a better world in his soul, in self-improvement; a "Shevchenko" person whose worldview is focused on science; a "strong" man, presented in three guises: a man of the peasant class, a proletarian class, and a man of irrational will.

⁶ Karpenko, O., & Yatsiv, O. (2019). Pedahohichni ideyi Mykoly Shlemkevycha (1894–1966). Drohobych: Posvit; Yatsiv O., & Karpenko O. (2019). Ethnopedagogical and ethnopsychological frameworks for shaping the character in a Ukrainian child in the heritage of Mykola Shlemkevych. *Analles UMCS. Sectio J – Pedagogia i Psychologia*, 32(1), pp. 171–182.

⁷ Czepil, M., & Karpenko, O. (2021). Mykola Shlemkevych (1894–1966): anthropological principles of human research. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. DOI: 10.1080/00131857.2021.1933944

According to M. Shlemkevych, logos (worldview) or ethos (way of life) are only surfaces under which life "boils". If we descend into their depths, we will see the beginning of beauty and ugliness, good and evil, nobility and simplicity, a kingdom illuminated not by clear thinking, but by religious guesses and form-creating artistic endeavours. At the same time, M. Shlemkevych emphasized: "In arts, the deep, the unused, the repressed is released in a clearly designed image". The researcher believed that the artist's experiences reflected in a work of art are a sign of its truthfulness (the immediacy and proximity of art encourages experience, not observation or perception with the mind).

Analyzing the peculiarities of the Ukrainian life, Shlemkevych equated human culture to the culture of a field, forest, or garden, when an agronomist, forester, or gardener tries to bring harmony to wildlife, to order the seething of nature. Areas of spiritual culture do the same with the free steppe of the soul. Arts, and especially literature, help a person to feel the world, to perceive it more deeply and directly. These two forces – ideology and arts – are linked by cooperation, but appear separately, each of them crystallizes clearly, like a ray of sunlight from mist; and they cannot lose their main features, because that would be a turn to mental chaos, and this is a renunciation of culture and thus a return to primitive wildlife. At the same time, Shlemkevych identified the main features of cultural areas. The worldview involves the tendency of clarity of concepts; it leads to scientific clarity and certainty. Since art strives for immediacy and closeness to life, it must be experienced, not observed, and accepted with the mind and imagination.¹⁰

For M. Shlemkevych, the truth was always a priority in life. He considered the struggle for the Ukrainian truth one of the main tasks of émigrés. In the early 1960s, he participated in the founding of the Ukrainian Journalistic and Scientific Institute, as its important task was to refute distorted data about Ukraine on a scientific basis. He wrote: "The Ukrainian ambition and the Ukrainian ideal must be: in the current struggle between good and evil, to be the first partisan of truth and freedom based on it! Whoever wants to win the war must defeat the fifth column of the enemy in his own society – we must kill lies in our relations with each other, in our lives, and we must kill them in our relations with the world. We must rebuild the trust of Ukrainians in Ukrainians, and the trust of the world in our words, undermined by the lies that have become the political wisdom of individual people and groups". In order to search for the truth and "defence of convictions", he proposed the rule: "those engaged in debate should hold their own convictions".

⁸ Shlemkevych, M. (1992b). Zahublena ukrayinska liudyna. Kyiv: Feniks, p. 111.

⁹ Ibidem, p.74.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p.111.

¹¹ Lysty do Pryyateliv (1956). New York; Toronto: Klyuchi. Issue 11 (45). Year IV. November, p. 1.

¹² Shlemkevych, M. (1961). Dyskusiya i pro dyskusiyu. *Letters to Friends*. New York; Toronto: Klyuchi. Issues 3–4 (9–98). Year IX. March – April, p. 56.

M. Shlemkevych paid special attention to the role of the family in the formation of personality. Children need to be instilled with high moral qualities from an early age through love for their mother, family, native home, native region where the child was born and grows up, as well as use Ukrainian folk tales, legends on heroic themes, folk traditions, customs and rituals that contribute to making life more meaningful. The family for M. Shlemkevych, as well as for B. Tsymbalisty, is the main institution of upbringing, in which a person's character and disposition are formed from early childhood. The family followed the wills of ancestors; traditions, in particular, the educational tradition developed in the family itself. Early childhood experiences are usually forgotten, but their traces operate subconsciously and guide the behaviour of an adult. 13 In addition, each nation has its own character, which at different times was explained by the influence of nature, planets, climate, and social conditions of life. There is a national psyche that needs self-knowledge. It would be difficult to "explain the unique nature of the culture of this people, their literature, language, folklore, architecture. This does not exclude changes in character, but there is another way of thinking, feeling, behaving, which distinguishes members of one society from members of another". 14 In the family environment, the child learns moral values, forms national consciousness, social affinity. Analyzing the role of the family in raising a child, the researcher summarized: the measure of all values is the ideal Ukrainian system and the family as its basis. Everything that contributes to the happiness and health of the family is good, it is God given. Conversely, everything that weakens and destroys the family is evil, it is from the devil. And here are the deepest sources of Shevchenko's hatred of serfdom and conscription, because both undermined and destroyed the family.¹⁵

Popular ideas about the purpose of life, about what the representatives of the people should be, and therefore the guidelines for the moral development of a person, are important in education. Deep awareness of the essence of the categories of good and evil helps to understand the essence of every person's life, including spiritual life. If the good reflects the progressive actions of a person and proves their closeness to God, then it is manifested in the characteristics of moral attitudes, values, actions, and relationships. In this sense, the good is the moral motive of life, the ideal of upbringing, the goal of life. In the popular imagination, the good is selfless (the evil leads to decline, because it promises a person bodily pleasures and material benefits). Certainly, spiritual enrichment involves getting closer to the ideal, deep penetration into the essence of moral values. "It is necessary to penetrate into the soul of the people, with its summits and depressions, the good and evil, sincerity

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Shlemkevych, M. (1961). Natsionalnyi kharakter (Dumky iz pryvodu dumok d-ra B. Tsymbalistoho). *Letters to Friends*. New York; Toronto: Kliuchi. Part 3–4 (97–98). Ch. IX, p. 42.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 41.

¹⁵ Shlemkevych, M. (1958). Verkhy zhyttya i tvorchosti. New York; Toronto: Kliuchi, p. 47.

and treachery... An appropriate objective socio-psychological analysis should tame the forces of evil, chain them in the heavy chains of the in-depth "ego", opening the soul to the sky and the sun in a burning rush to cultural and civilizational transformation".¹⁶

The moral ideal of a person is also connected with the idea of freedom and democracy. It should be noted that in the early 20th century, democratic ideas of the formation of the worldview of young people were developed in Ukraine, in the works of Ukrainian educators (Yu. Dzerovych, T. Lubenets, O. Muzychenko, I. Ohiyenko, S. Rusova, S. Siropolko, Ya. Chepiha), in the mainstream of reformist pedagogy, focused on free education, preparing children for practical life, fostering the feelings of independence, self-activity, initiative, and creativity.

Moral values, desire for beauty, devotion to one's kind, homeland, native land are embodied in the Ukrainian ideal of education. The return to the spiritual roots of the people on the basis of humanism puts the "decent person" with their moral virtues and the laws of honour, kindness, and mercy in the centre of attention. "A decent person", according to M. Shlemkevych, is the basic moral requirement, the moral ideal that forms the basis of the moral values pyramid. ¹⁷ It is the way of life of the "decent person", their moral values that restrain the people of the elitist type in their desire to go beyond the idea of social duty or duty to the laws of family life. Having a body and a soul, a person cares about material things – food, housing, worries about the children, parents, their health, beauty, convenience, comfort. However, the Christian worldview obliges a person to make a choice in favour of the good and to give priority to spiritual values, which means readiness if necessary to give up the material values for the sake of the spiritual ones. A good person brings joy to others, they are capable of mercy and compassion, ready to empathize, forgive, be patient and tactful, embody goodness in behaviour and everyday life, and they come to the aid of others. The Ukrainian tradition is characterized by humanistic ideals, an emphasis on spiritual principles, the interaction of moral and national values, it displays a noticeable attention to the national in the life of a person, their character, ethnic roots, way of thinking, etc., and the preservation of this originality is facilitated by the religion and faith in the ideals of good.

Feeling confused, according to M. Shlemkevych, does not allow building a life strategy for the future; at the great crossroads there are no new ideas, no words of God.¹⁸ In our opinion, under such conditions, the balance in the hierarchy of social values is disturbed. Even when he interpreted the confusion of the Ukrainian people as a tragedy, at the same time he asked: "Perhaps the modern disorientation of the worldview and the order of life is only

¹⁶ Shlemkevych, M. (1992b). Zahublena ..., op.cit., p. XII.

¹⁷ Shlemkevych, M. (1992a). Dusha i pisnya. Ukrayinska dusha. Kyiv: Feniks.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 37.

a temporary disorder of the soul, a disorder of its inexhaustible richness?"¹⁹ We believe that M. Shlemkevych found an optimistic way out of this situation. He explained: we got into that society, and we have to join its pace so that we do not get crushed, we got into that society, but we also have our Ukrainian world and our Ukrainian society.²⁰ The changes in the social consciousness, emergence of features of a "new" person (patriotism, fortitude, responsibility, business acumen, etc.) give hope for overcoming negatives and negativism.

M. Shlemkevych highly valued the importance of the formation of a worldview for young people and the development of the spiritual sphere; he noted that Ukrainians have never been indifferent to issues of spirituality: "The matters of the spirit, development thereof and the culture are a matter of life and death of the Ukrainian nation".²¹ In interaction and cooperation with the people, in the process of humanizing their consciousness based on self-study and understanding of their activities, there is an opportunity to build their own life.

Shlemkevych's life outlook was determined by faith: the faith in the final victory of the Ukrainian liberation idea. Shlemkevych "translated" the commandments of God "love God above all things, and your neighbour as yourself"22 into the language of philosophy and came to a conclusion that "a person must, first of all and above all, love the metaphysical in themselves, their metaphysical principles – love the things, which go beyond and above purely human nature. And a person must love in their neighbour a similar being, which on a metaphysical basis grows above the individual, purely human level". 23 Such categories of morality as love, goodness, happiness, truth, compassion, altruism, reason are important. The human soul has both the good and the evil, truth and lies, sincerity and treachery; there is a righteous man and a thief.²⁴ According to Shlemkevych, civilization moderates negative traits, but at the same time, it reduces the desire for novelty and creativity, because there is only one type of person in society. The tamed forces of the soul live deep inside. They are liberated in dreams, in ailments, which are the struggle of our civilized "ego" with our deep "something".

According to M. Shlemkevych, special tension in a person is formed by integrations and separations, which influence the space of values, goals and the meaning of a person's life, which, in turn, are the main reference points for the person's self-determination and self-knowledge. This tension takes shape, matures and is formed between categories: hedonism – altruism, love – power, creation – self-deification (these extremes define the space of goals and the meaning of life of the people of a specific culture). Invoking

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 97.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 141–142.

²¹ Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, f. 406, op. 1, spr. 245, p. 15.

²² Shlemkevych, M. (1992b). Zahublena ..., op.cit., p. 51.

²³ Ibidem, p. 52.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 74.

the usual analogies and visualizations, he noted: "The nation will be divided into individual human units, and they say: in reality there are individual Johns, Steves, Pauls, Marys, etc. The nation is just a bundle of them and nothing more".²⁵

M. Shlemkevych, describing historical events and their connection with moral and social life, cites various situations from the life of individual regions of Ukraine. There is a difference between Western and Eastern ideas about the life of Ukrainians. There are wild forces in the East, and calmer, rational ones in the West.²⁶ In Western Ukraine, there were attempts to build a new state in November 1918, which arose on the ruins of the empire.²⁷ These considerations were continued, because, on the one hand, we see irrational motives, and on the other, the steadfast and realistic struggle of King Daniel, who does not cease trying to free himself.²⁸ M. Shlemkevych assured that in the East there were opportunities for some social promotion, while in Galicia there was a situation where a Greek Catholic priest of that time "did not really rise above the general level".²⁹ Therefore, a generalization was made that 1917 and the early 1918 opened the door, but everything fundamentally changed after November 1. "We came out of our narrowness and limitations into the wide Ukrainian world. We breathed the air of the distant expanses of the Ukrainian steppe and Ukrainian history, ... we contacted Eastern Ukraine, its body and spirit of a powerful people".30

The scholar devoted many works to the coverage of information about events in the life of Ukrainians, which were aimed at promoting the activation of the national struggle. Sometimes these articles were published under the pseudonym M. Ivaneyko, they were about Ukrainian-Polish relations, difficult situations of social life in Poland ("God's peace and the FNE"³¹, "In the age of national ideas", ³² "Let the living think of the living"³³, "The order of our life"³⁴, "Our circumstances"³⁵, "Healing from the spirit"³⁶, "Under the highest care of the nation"³⁷). The researcher emphasized that it is not worth listening to "hatred preachers" and drink water "from impure springs", it should be remembered that in the ruins of "our spirit and our history", amid the desert, "simple, sincere souls" are looking for "support in brighter days of the past". He

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²⁵ Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, f. 406, op. 1, spr. 245, p. 47.

²⁶ Shlemkevych, M. (1956). *Halychanstvo*. New York; Toronto: Kliuchi, p. 15.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 10.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 16.

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 24-25.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 64.

³¹ Ivaneyko M. (1963). Bozhyy myr i F.N.E. *Peremoha: ideologichnyy zhurnal*. Part II.

³² Ivaneyko M. (1938e). V dobi natsionalnykh idey. *Ukrayinski Visty*. Lviv. Issue 122.

³³ Ivaneyko M. (1939b). Zhyvi zhyve dumaymo. *Ukrayinski Visty*. Lviv. Issue 64.

³⁴ Ivaneyko M. (1938b). Nakaz nashoho zhyttya. *Ukrayinski Visty*. Lviv. Issue 173.

³⁵ Ivaneyko M. (1939a). Nashi obstavyny. *Ukrayinski Visty*. Lviv. Issue 172.

³⁶ Ivaneyko M. (1938c). Ozdorovlnennya vid dukha. *Ukrayinski Visty*. Lviv. Issue 99.

³⁷ Ivaneyko M. (1938d). Pid nayvyshchoyu opikoyu natsyi. *Ukrayinski Visty*. Lviv. Issue 184.

believed that "on that ruin a longing for the reconstruction of... an orderly state of our spirit awakens... This is where true nationalism comes from, the first strength of which is love for one's history and future, for one's spirit and its leading ideas". If the main task of the national state is to take care of the constant nurturing of the purely human in the nation, then the value of the state does not mean its external greatness and power, but what it aims at. The national feeling should be considered within the framework of morality, immorality should not govern the national beliefs. M. Shlemkevych revealed his own vision of the future of Ukrainians in a series of articles. First of all, it is about the fact that Ukrainians can only save themselves, they must set themselves a clear goal, form a pro-Ukrainian worldview.

Ukrainians are characterized by their innate devotion to democratic values. If in culture a person creates and manifests himself as a unique individuality, then his social development, the process of his socialization, inclusion in the universal human community, according to M. Shlemkevych, is ensured through his culture (the culture acts as a way of being a person, forming and manifesting his self-identity). Therefore, the search for harmony between "I" and "we", between an individual and the society necessarily takes place through culture. Therefore, M. Shlemkevych emphasized: "The true culture includes the values that have a universal character; it appeals to what is identical, most essential and most interesting in a person and in all the people; it crosses folklore, ethnographic and political boundaries; it unites, but does not divide..." The educator defended the idea of the Ukrainian unity.

The pedagogical ideas of Mykola Shlemkevych are an organic component of the history of Ukrainian education and pedagogy, the theory and philosophy of education. He gave priority to moral values, to the search for the meaning of life, thriving to high ideals, which in secular education mean moral and ethical concepts such as love, kindness, justice, beauty, etc.; awareness of moral values and lifestyle of a "decent person"; development of spiritual, moral and national relationships; the development of the desire for self-improvement and self-development, ideas about the role of a favourable social environment, national

³⁸ Lysty do Pryyateliv (1959). New York; Toronto: Klyuchi. Issue 4 (74). Year VII. April, p. 1. ³⁹ Ibidem, p. 15–16.

⁴⁰ Ivaneyko, M. (1936). Deus sive natio (Natsionalizm yak intuyitsiya buduchyny). *Peremoha: ideologichnyy zhurnal* F.N.E.; Ivaneyko, M. (1934b). Zhyttya y ideal. *Peremoha: suspilno-politychnyy dvotyzhnevyk*. Lviv. February 15; Ivaneyko, M. (1938a). Ideyne zaplidnennya. *Ukrayinski Visty*. Lviv. Issue 139; Ivaneyko, M. (1935). Ideolohichni pidstavy tvorchoho natsionalizmu (Referat vyholoshenyy na I. Krayeviy Konferentsiyi F.N.E. 23.03.1935). *Peremoha: misyachnyk hromadskoyi dumky*. 1 April; Ivaneyko, M. (1933). Metropolis of spirit and nationalism. *Peremoha: ideological magazine F.N.E*. Lviv, 1933. November 15; Ivaneyko, M. (1931). Nationalism (Fragment statti "Nedolya dukkha y natsionalism"). *Peremoha: suspilno-politycznyy dvotyzhnevyk*. 1933. November 1; Ivaneyko, M. (1934a). Nasha svoboda. *Peremoha: suspilno-politycznyy dvotyzhnevyk*. Lviv, 1934. January 15.

⁴¹ Shlemkevych, M. (1992a). *Dusha i pisnya. Ukrayinska dusha*. Kyiv: Feniks, pp. 97–112.

⁴² Shlemkevych, M. (1992b). Zahublena ... op.cit., p. 17.

cultural, educational and positive family environment in the formation of a person's outlook. The goal of education assumes the priority of the moral and orientation to national values. An important aspect of personality formation is patriotism, achievement of personal freedom, advocacy of democratic ideas.

These global ideas of Mykola Shlemkevych are relevant for the modern philosophy of education, and the theory and practice of education. The priority areas of their implementation in modern educational practice are the delineation of clear guidelines for the formation of the consciousness of young people regarding self-realization in life, the development and improvement of the scholar's views on a person as a subject of education, the search for ways of developing the spirituality of young people, the creation of a national cultural and educational environment, the components of which are language, national symbolism, mentality, literature, art, everyday life, etiquette, etc.

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