

The Essence of Crosscultural Security Education

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This article presents the main factors that affect the preservation of peace and security among human beings. It treats these categories as the most important goal of the education of modern man, as the basis of its performance in the world today. The core values that most significantly affect human existence are structured around three basic concepts: security, peace, and education.

Peace is a value based on a range of other values associated with each other. It is based on certain laws and rules, including international rules. According to the negative definition, peace is simply the absence of war, a lack of organized violence between states, and a lack of military resources. It can also refer to the system that interrupts the state of war between states, or a process that sets out the conditions for ending the war. The positive definition of peace is a type of harmony in international relations, a positive relationship between countries. It is not a static concept—even when a lack of war prevails, actions that support peace are still required. Peace is a state of agreement between states and peoples, not simply a lack of war.

War, on the other hand, can be defined as a structured way of using violence to resolve a dispute, the use of military means of killing as a way to achieve certain goals. War can be understood as a collision of entities, a highly organized struggle among social groups. War is a kind of armed conflict, but not all armed conflict is war.

War (according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) is a form of major armed conflict in which troops that are subordinates of two or more governments and at least one military organization are engaged for a long period of time. War is said to exist when at least 1000 people are killed in a conflict in a twelve-month period, and when it is being formally waged in accordance with international law. During times of war, international agreements may be broken and diplomatic relations may be severed. Most of the conflicts that qualify as war according to these criteria nevertheless take place without an official declaration of war.

In the common understanding, war is the opposite of peace. Peace is the normal state of relations between states, while war is its unnatural counter, a state that fundamentally changes the relationship between the countries involved. Reflections on the history, essence, and nature of war, as well as speculation on the best ways to

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achieve and preserve peace, have appeared in human thought since antiquity. Within the broad discipline of international relations, the problem of war and peace, along with a wide range of security issues, occupies a prominent place.

In the field of international relations the concept of “armed conflict” is broader than the concept of war. Conflict refers to all forms of armed struggle whose participants are not subjects of international law. Armed conflict is preceded by antagonism between the parties, increasing conflicts of interest, various forms of verbal conflict (protest, opposition, threat) and confrontational action (e.g., severing of diplomatic relations, demonstrations of force).

In today’s world it is difficult to feel completely safe. Terrorism, natural disasters, environmental degradation constitute a great threat to contemporary populations, as do good that have been created to ostensibly advance civilization. Humans themselves have created things that do not allow them to live safely. Raising public awareness about the dangers of this world, through proper upbringing and education, can help us avoid large disasters, and thus increase the feeling of security. In addition to educating our children about the dangers posed by the world, however, we must also continuously speak about peace. We must educate the world to love peace if it is to be cultivated and defended.

Security as the primary value of human existence is one of the primary subjects of discussion within both academic disciplines and the broader society. It is the object of the concerns, aspirations, and desires of people around the world. In this environment, it is important to promote actions that preserve peace. These operations are conditioned by the characteristics of human nature, and, on the other hand, by axiology, or the study of values. Human nature is analyzed by both philosophy (anthropological philosophy) and psychology (which examines in detail man’s personality, disposition, development, and opportunity). Systems of values, on the other hand, are the area of study of axiology, a basic component of philosophy. Ethics, above all, sets cardinal values that are appropriate to the adult human personality. Such a personality is attributed to man, as an entity essentially free to realize its dignity, because he is concerned with great matters. Since ancient times such a philosophical man is in every aspect a model in ethics, and has served as an important ideal in a responsible and fair education.¹

Security is the fundamental and necessary condition of healthy and well-understood human development, as well as of full self-realization in a social community. We assume that the state we define as social security is achieved when the following conditions are met:

¹ J. Świniarski, “Przywódtwo jako osnowa edukacji dla bezpieczeństwa,” *Zeszyty Naukowe AON* 1 (2001): 134.

- There is a state of harmony between stability and instability in matters of life importance
- There is a favorable ratio of predictable to unpredictable events
- There are no unfavorable changes in an individual's achieved career standing and stability regarding vital factors and plans (both long- and short-term)
- There is no external control or interference in individuals' values and private actions.²

However, one can not talk about issues of security or war while excluding an education for peace. Therefore, if we want to lead a discourse about an effective education for security, we can formulate several basic questions. Attempting to answer these questions sets the course for our thinking here. The key questions for this issue are:

1. What is the essence of education for security, and how it may affect the maintenance of peace?
2. What values determine human security?

Any reflection on peace and the values that determine its conditions requires the determination of how are they understood, especially since in every unique instance it is conditioned by one's axiological position. Let us say briefly that we recognize a value as something that is particularly valuable. Determining the value of peace lies in estimating those relations. The value may be the aim (in which case it will have a higher value) or it may be a means to an achieve aim (in which case it will have a lower value). Some values are absolute, while others are relative. The evaluation process is an essential element of human life, a key dimension of its security.

The Nature and Determinants of Education for Security

Education as the great hope of the present is itself at risk, as it is subject to many contradictions, tensions, and failures. Today, we observe the lowering of the prestige of many of the humanistic, social, and cultural disciplines as a result of views based in mechanical or psychological reductionism. Education in humanistic disciplines should assist in preparing citizens to perform their most suitable social and professional roles, in which a person finds him/herself in harmony with oneself and others.

² M. Rybakowski, "Kultura bezpieczeństwa na tle stanu bezpieczeństwa dzieci i młodzieży w ruchu drogowym," in *Edukacyjne zagrożenia początku XXI wieku*, ed. K. Pająk & A. Zduniak (Warszawa-Poznań: Wyd. Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, 2003), 100.

Modern society is described in terms of a “risk society,”³ in which a range of phenomena—illness, unemployment, armed conflicts, security risks—serve as sources of fear and anxiety that unsettle both individual and social senses of well-being. Piotr Sztompka indicates that modern culture possesses features that are difficult for the individual to accept and overcome. These characteristics can be described as falling into three sub-categories: cynicism (distrust), manipulation (misuse of trust), and indifference (selfishness). While living in a society we cannot with certainty feel safe, but at the same time human beings must possess qualities that somehow help them deal with it this inherent lack of security.⁴

Zbigniew Kwiecieński states that in the modern world we have reevaluated and changed the nature of work. His thesis on socialization shift holds that we have shifted our sources of education from family upbringing and school to mass media, peers, or “bad heroes.”⁵ A characteristic quality of the cultural development of many countries is the distance between the generations (generation gap), which is the consequence of the fact that young people are focused on change, the search for new patterns of behavior that are relevant to their changing reality, while the older generations are seen as living in the past and dedicated to preserving the status quo.

It its broadest possible terms, as a practice education refers to the notion of upbringing, especially intellectual upbringing; considered as a noun rather than a verb, it can be taken to refer to a level of knowledge, particularly in science.⁶ When understood as a way of learning to be human, however, our view of education should focus on humanistic education, and thus be oriented towards the values of humanity. Education is a social process, organized in order to induce changes in humans. Its primary focus is thus the relationship between human beings.

Education, on one hand, must prepare people to use the achievements of civilization, and on the other hand lead them to creative participation in furthering civilization. It is particularly important in the pursuit of scientific truth, and in shaping pro-social and pro-peace attitudes. It has influence on human autonomy, on building the right to choose. The educational process transmits patterns of behavior, beliefs, and traditions, and therefore it is of fundamental importance for the cohesion of society. Education shapes the personality of the social unit, and thus plays a tremendous

³ Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Sage, 1992); Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994); Ulrich Beck, *Spółeczeństwo ryzyka: w drodze do innej nowoczesności* (Warsaw: Wyd. Scholar, 2004).

⁴ P. Sztompka, ed., *Imponderabilia wielkiej zmiany: mentalność, wartości i więzi społeczne czasów transformacji* (Warszawa-Kraków: Wyd. Naukowe PWN, 1999), 265–82.

⁵ Z. Kwiecieński, “Edukacja wobec nadziei i zagrożeń współczesności,” in *Humanistyka przełomu wieków*, ed. J. Koziński (Warsaw: Wyd. Akademickie “Żak”, 1999), 56–57.

⁶ *Słownik języka polskiego* (Warsaw: Wyd. Naukowe PWN, 1994), 515.

role in shaping the functioning of democracy and civil society. In addition, it helps drive increases in the productivity of human capital, which directly affects economic growth. Better education leads to an increase in the qualifications of the workforce, so it is an important instrument in fighting unemployment.

While education is a good, threats or insecurity are valued negatively, and seen as things to avoid and combat. The lack of security or the diminishment of a sense of security are treated as threats, phenomena that are dangerous both to the current existence of life and its future prospects. A threat is—for some—a subjective emotional state, associated with an inability to realize their needs, desires, and goals. It is the lack of feeling good (security). For others, a threat is an objective state connected to instability, to changes in the status quo. In the objective case, instability and change are threats that one will have to deal with. It is unambiguous, neither good nor bad. The threat may be constructive or deconstructive for security; it may contribute to safety or weaken it.⁷

Due to these different understandings of security (subjective or objective), much has been written about it, because it is a multivalent term and because there is in fact currently no area of activity, either intangible or material, where security does not play an important role.⁸ It represents an area of interest in disciplines as diverse as philosophy, military science, political science, psychology and pedagogy, sociology, cybernetics and systems theory, and many other disciplines and sub-disciplines of modern science. Moving into the area of educational science, security has supplanted education in the areas of defense, military and military preparation. The result is that, since the early 1990s, “education for security,” has been increasingly gaining recognition.⁹

Security education is sometimes defined narrowly and instrumentally as the entire education process that is designed to shape the values, dissemination of knowledge, and procurement of skills that are important for ensuring national sovereignty (national security). From the perspective of the philosophy of education, security identified with preparing people to fight (war) and to work (peace) to improve or stabilize their lives.¹⁰

⁷ J. Świniarski, op. cit., p. 134.

⁸ J. Kaczmarek, *Bezpieczeństwo*, Myśl Wojskowa 1998, nr 6, p. 5.

⁹ R. Stępień, “Załamania i odnowa edukacji obronnej - sens nowych perspektyw myślenia,” in *Edukacja obronna w systemie bezpieczeństwa Polski*, eds. Edward Jezierski & Walerian Magoń (Bydgoszcz: Arcanus, 1997), 123–26; T. Jemioło & R. Stępień, eds, *Dylematy wychowania wojskowego* (Warsaw, 1997); and R. Stępień, ed., *Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa*, Materiały z konferencji naukowej, 23-24 May 1994 (Warsaw 1994).

¹⁰ J. Świniarski, *Filozoficzne podstawy edukacji dla bezpieczeństwa* (Warsaw: Egros, 1999), 125.

Undoubtedly, the purpose of that education is above all to prepare people to live with a sense of assurance, stability, and development (and it is obvious that the conditions that are conducive to this are national sovereignty and national security). This education also helps people to achieve as objective states forms of existence, values, and actions, and to create stability and increase opportunities for development and improvement. This kind of condition does not require national sovereignty, but rather subjective and personal sovereignty, respect for human dignity and freedom, for individual rights and welfare.

Of course, the state's claims to sovereignty and national security are not in conflict with the personal-subjective sovereignty of its citizens. However, in the state does come into conflict with individuals' security when it deprives citizens of liberty, fails to obey the law, and does not provide the conditions for economic prosperity. Security cannot be exchanged for such personal values as freedom, respect for the law, welfare, and responsibility. It is true that exchanges of this kind falsely suggest totalitarian regimes such as North Korea, Cuba, but since (at least) the Spartan regime and the experiment inspired by Plato in Syracuse, citizens deprived of their personal values and individualism have lost the possibility to develop and fulfill their highest potential. It is no surprise that, sooner or later, regimes of this kind were neglected and eventually fell.¹¹

Education for security—in an intentional sense, that aims to effect change at the level of culture—should underscore the overriding importance of a concern for the preservation and improvement of life as its primary goal. Safety is perhaps the most important value of human nature, and is taking an increasingly prominent role as a social value as well.

The importance of education for security has increased with the development of Western civilization, as it has moved into eras characterized by industrialization and urbanization. This shift was brought about by a necessary adjustment in prevailing modes of thought about man's vocation, scope of action, technological progress, and the sustainability of the growth of human communities. The importance of education increases with the broadening understanding of freedom and human dignity, respect for the rule of law (particularly the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights), the provision of universal prosperity, and the increasing global social tilt toward individualism.¹²

Connected to the issue of education for peace is the relationship between education for security and continuing education. The starting point is to solve a dilemma: whether to educate for war, and for behavior (and life) during times of military action or, on the contrary, to educate for peace, including behavior and life during times of

¹¹ J. Świniarski, *Przywództwo jako ośnowa*, 135.

¹² *Ibid.*, 135.

no military activity. Extreme examples of these views are often treated as mutually contradictory, as leading toward militarism or pacifism. The specific emphases of these two approaches are, respectively, on educating people to exert command and apply constraint, and on collaboration and leadership. But between these two there can be a middle ground. This area holds a solution that leads to the concept of education for security. The implementation of this solution poses many difficulties, both theoretical and practical, which in turn requires a critical reevaluation of tradition and the theory of education.

The Values that Determine Human Security

Usually the term “value” is considered a basic category of axiology (the philosophical study of value). Systems and hierarchies of values define every culture. They depend on history, national traditions that are legacies of past generations, socio-economic conditions, relations among people and property, and the form of government.

We live in a world of different values. Human life consists of being confronted with endless choices. Nowadays we pay a great deal of attention to “axiological education”--that is, education that leads to conscious choices regarding values, as well as using a hierarchy of values as a basis used for forming one’s own philosophy, career goals, and lifestyle choices.

Axiological concepts influence educational goals for three reasons:

- Axiology provides a general perspective on the world of values
- Axiology helps determine educational goals in both large and small social groups
- Increasing attention is being given to individual hierarchies and value systems.

The fundamental value in modern axiology is the human being: his/her life, mental and physical development, self-realization, freedom, identity, and independence.¹³

A person’s hierarchy of values is one of the basic conditions that affects human behavior. Values direct attitudes, motives, behaviors, and lifestyle. They affect one’s evaluation of other people and events and determine one’s attitudes towards different objects. Values trigger motivations and shape human actions, but they are also the subjects of desires; they are the factor that regulate proceedings and give life more meaning. Every ideal or educational model has to be based on the understanding of the axiological specifics of human nature. Knowledge of education therefore has to be based on both knowledge of values and knowledge of human nature.

¹³ T. Lewowicki, *Przemiany oświaty. Szkice o ideach i praktyce edukacyjnej* (Rzeszów: Wyd. Foto “Art.,” 1994), 19.

Every human must make tough choices every day. Having knowledge about the nature of values and their meaning at home, at work, and in life is very helpful in navigating these choices. Values are an object of interest of the humanistic and social sciences. They help determine the mode of human existence, how people perceive their life and its quality, their interpersonal relations, their attitudes towards self, others, and the rest of the world. The question of values is the question of what we do, what we want, how we proceed, and how should we proceed. It is therefore the question what compass would provide us with the best guidance when we look to chart our own path in life.¹⁴

Education for peace-shaping values should lead gradually—by creating conditions for the experience of a stable system of values—to an understanding that stability is both possible and necessary, leading one to examine that the meaning of stability for oneself in one's own life. A man devoid of values does not progress past the stage of hedonistic and conformist standards. He evaluates options and makes decisions only on the basis of pleasure and benefit. Not only he is unable to make his own choices; he also does not realize that he has the power to make such choices, and that he is personally responsible for them.

Education for values is not precisely defined in the literature. Different authors emphasize in their interpretations a more instrumental or formation-oriented dimension of teaching.¹⁵ For the purposes of this article, I have relied primarily on an approach oriented toward axiological education.¹⁶ Axiological education consists of axiological training and education for values.

The purpose of this field of education is to prepare people for autonomous operation in the world of values. This concept allows us to distinguish between education for values and axiological education, which is the transfer of knowledge about values, including skills in evaluating hierarchies of values as well as oneself (including the clarification of values, as well as education in comparing and analyzing values due to different criteria). The axiological foundations for education are provided mainly by the humanistic social sciences. They allow us to comprehend the various psychological and social mechanisms of the assimila-

¹⁴ W. Heisenberg, *Część i całość* (Warsaw: Wyd. Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1987).

¹⁵ *Edukacja aksjologiczna*, red. K. Olbrycht; T.1. *Wymiary - kierunki - uwarunkowania*, Katowice 1994; T.2. *Odpowiedzialność pedagoga*, Katowice 1995; T.3. *O tolerancji*, Katowice 1995; T.4. *Wybrane problemy przekazu wartości*, Katowice 1999; K. Ostrowska, *W poszukiwaniu wartości*, Gdańsk 1994; T. Kukołowicz, M. Nowak (red.), *Pedagogika ogólna. Problemy aksjologiczne*, Lublin 1997; K. Denek, U. Morszczyńska, W. Morszczyński, S.Cz. Michałowski, *Dziecko w świecie wartości*, Kraków 2003; A. Szerląg (red.), *Edukacja ku wartościom*, Kraków 2004. [Author: please clarify these citations, and format them thus: Author, *Title* (Place of Publication: Publisher, Date of publication).]

¹⁶ Katarzyna Olbrycht, *Prawda, dobro i piękno w wychowaniu człowieka jako osoby* (Katowice: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2000).

tion of values, different ways of understanding values, and finally, the different types of values and ways of organizing them.

The best axiological education is no substitute for an education in values, however. As the student develops intellectually, it becomes an increasingly important factor in determining the effects of education. Education for values is essentially a mode of shaping an axiological orientation, which directed at more than merely providing a competence. It is a function of axiological maturity, one that expresses itself as a willingness to consciously and responsibly choose a value, respond to it, and embrace ability to choose. The result of an axiological education—axiological competence—is axiologically neutral. One can possess knowledge and ability while failing to orient their lives consciously toward a specific value. Orientation implies a general direction resulting from the choice of fundamental, basic abilities to organize specific values due to a chosen direction of life in accordance with decisions one has made.

Education for values is intended to prepare and encourage students to discover, live, organize, realize, and create values that result from the adoption of a specific philosophy of existence and exploration of the world. Any education, if it is not to be mere manipulation, must be essentially an education for values. These values are first inculcated in children with the help of adults, and then, as students grow older are more independently discovered and voluntarily chosen, as recognized in the sense of duties arising from a free choice.

The subject area of education for values is essentially the entire educational environment (understood broadly), which in varying degrees declares preferred axiological orientations, and rewards or forces certain choices. Education is heavily conditioned by the values that are recognized and implemented in a particular culture and society. Its effectiveness, however, depends primarily on the authority of educators. Education for values must therefore be considered as imparting the skills to identify a desirable and acceptable set of values and determine their priority. They must result from a particular vision of humankind and the world that provides arguments in favor of their adoption, and at the same time allows for a fair discussion of consequences. The educators who are to carry out this vision must accept it fully, and the fact of its adoption as the basis of education in educational institutions should be accepted by the relevant social actors.

A key consideration in this regard is an awareness of the hierarchy of values, a clear indication of which values are most important. This must also involve teaching the process of learning which specific values are subordinate to the primary values and require implementation, because if they are not fulfilled they will delay the achievement of those values that are most important for a given orientation. This awareness allows educators to treat students' decisions reflexively and evaluate them every day, because of the clearly defined hierarchy of values. One should not enforce

excessively formal, rigid value systems, but should correct students as they grow in line with the fundamental direction and purpose.

Another important element of such an education is shaping sensitivity to values, which is here understood as the ability to perceive the world and respond adequately to its actions. Simulations are therefore needed that may sharpen the desired values, associate them with a particular experience (e.g. willingness to conduct peace talks, negotiations, etc.).

One irreplaceable experience in this area is the opportunity to develop one's own specific action for a given value. The most important action is the one that requires effort, time, and work—an action that, by rejecting pleasure or conformism leads gradually to independence in formulating judgments and decision making. Well-formed character is the condition to conduct effective actions for recognized values. A secure character allows one to stand firmly by the values one has identified, even when confronted with challenges, vacillating motivation, and peer pressure.

But the most important way of assimilating values is contact with people who represent and embody the values. The lives of real people who consistently strive to act in accordance with certain values provides legitimacy for those values. It is therefore necessary for the education for values to refer to figures of personal, real authority. They may be heroes from literature or film, but the most important role is played by real people, whether living or dead. The precondition is that teachers provide a true presentation of these people, without retouching, since students are always very sensitive to perceived falsity.

In the context of determining the value of human security, we speak mostly of the three triads of values that are intertwined throughout history into one, the axiological center of European identity. In ancient Greece they took the form of the highest values: truth, goodness, and beauty. In Christianity, they constitute the basic virtues: faith, hope, and love. On the banners of the French Revolution, they were rendered as liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Modern civilization often seems to plunge into the chaos and crisis of education. It calls into question its meaning, casts doubt on the likelihood of agreeing on objectives for education, and is uncomfortable in expressing a preference for certain values. The truth about man and his values is not the truth of man, his development and goals. It is rather a picture of being doomed to struggle for success, or at least survival, alone in a dangerous world. In such a setting, the intense experience of pleasure, which constantly requires the acquisition of new resources, is the only fulfillment.

The path of such a re-evaluation is set by the concept of education for security. It is a redefinition that covers the role of the teacher, of the expectations placed on the teacher and the rights granted to him. It also requires an internally coherent system of behavior that is necessary for effective management and teaching.

Given the issues outlined above, it is worthwhile to stress that the fundamental

concept of the system of education for security cannot be achieved merely by changing the structure of the existing system. The future of this system depends primarily on the content and values within a structure that will be developed and disseminated from scratch. The value system of national symbols, a common culture and habits also has a positive effect on the creation of national identity, which is an inherent factor in security education.

The process of education for peace and security is also significantly influenced by regional challenges. In Europe these challenges are mainly associated with the systemic changes in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe brought about by the disintegration of the communist system and the end of the Cold War, and the ongoing process of integration, which has had an impact on every area of society.

These challenges pose important tasks for both philosophy and science, including pedagogy and education for security. In education, one should promote the fact that cognition and addressing challenges is a condition for avoiding threats, or for viewing circumstances as opportunities rather than dangers. Education in general, and education for peace and security in particular, can serve to impart to students the proper knowledge and shape their skills, attitudes, and value systems in ways that are conducive to building and protecting a safe and peaceful world.

Education for peace and security that is commensurate to the challenges of the twenty-first century should consider:

- The prudent application of pedagogical achievements of different countries throughout the European Community
- How best to enable the reconciliation of national interests for the common good of Europe
- Ways to overcome stereotypes and prejudices against European integration, while also highlighting the benefits and difficulties associated with it
- The promotion of sustainable values of European culture, which are “points of support” for the process of building democracy in Europe and around the world
- How to defend and protect the human dignity and human rights, which are important components of peace and security.

Conclusion

Education for peace and security is an area of pedagogy that is constantly acquiring new dimensions, many of them related to the issue of multiculturalism. Social mobility, migration, and unprecedented development of all types of tourism have revealed the ineluctably multicultural face of the world, and has raised awareness among many people to issues of diversity. Dialogue between cultures is increasingly important in educational contexts, in both the global and local dimensions, but it needs to be put in practical, concrete terms, so that students’ experiences can be enriched through

learning about and experiencing human different. Through such experiences, the new problems of unity and diversity within the world suddenly take on new vividness. They are expressed primarily through a new understanding of culture. And this understanding of culture justifies the need to seek out the basic elements of universal ethics, based on the rights and responsibilities of human beings in their humanistic integrity, which in turn make it possible to identify values that must be common to all members of the new global community, including

- The rights and responsibilities of human beings
- The values of democracy and civil society
- The obligation to provide protection for minorities
- The importance of resolving conflicts peacefully and through negotiations
- The equality of the sexes.

Peace and security seem to be particularly timely subjects for education in this historical moment, and their implementation is urgent because of the situation in the contemporary world. Peace cannot be defined as the absence of war, but rather should imply that there is harmony in all areas of human life and conduct. All the arrangements adopted in the field of human rights are related to the recognition of peace as a basic condition of human existence. Education for peace must rely on the transmission of universal values and training in permanent attitudes, as well as on developing the skills to allow individuals to be active citizens in the modern world.