CHINA'S EDUCATIONAL AIM AND THEORY

by ZOU GUANG-WEI

Abstract — The aim and theory of Chinese socialist education is to provide scientific and technological knowledge so as to develop the productive forces and to meet the demands of the socialist cause. Since education is the main vehicle towards modernizing science and technology, any investment in education is viewed as being productive as it feeds directly into economics. Faced with the demands of industrial and agricultural production, training a technical as well as a labour force becomes crucial. This is made possible by the provision of two labour systems for workers both from rural as well as urban areas and by two kinds of educational systems for both urban and rural students. Chinese educational theory is seen as a fusion of principles from its own educational legacy with those of Marxist-Leninist principles.


Résumé — L'objectif et la théorie de l'éducation socialiste chinoise est d'apporter une instruction technologique et scientifique afin de développer les forces productives et de servir la cause socialiste. Puisque l'éducation est le principe véhicule conduisant à la modernisation de la science et de la technologie, tout investissement en matière d'éducation est considéré comme productif puisqu'il nourrit directement l'économie. Confrontée aux demandes de la production agricole et industrielle, la formation d'une force technique et de travail devient cruciale. Ceci est possible grâce aux deux systèmes de travail proposés aux ouvriers des zones rurales et urbaines et aux deux types de systèmes éducatifs pour les étudiants des villes et des campagnes. La théorie éducative chinoise est vue en tant que fusion des principes de son propre héritage éducatif et des principes marxistes-léninistes.
The People's Republic of China is a developing socialist country. China's education is a socialist education led by the proletariat. Socialist education, which is the most progressive form of education in human history, serves the interests of the broad masses.

The basic functions of education are, firstly, to pass on knowledge of nature and skills of production, ensure the reproduction of the labour force, and develop science and technology; it is a means of promoting the development of social productive forces, and is therefore itself productive. Secondly, to impart a code of conduct and social ideology, train people to have a definite viewpoint and moral character; it is a means of preserving a definite relationship of production, political system, and moral customs. The distinguishing feature of education is to train people. The basic functions of education should be brought to full play mainly through educating and training the younger generation. It constitutes one of the basic and indispensable conditions for the existence and development of human society.

After the establishment of the socialist system in China, the principal internal contradiction was the one between the need of the state and people for a rapid economic and cultural development on the one hand, and the failure to meet this need on the other; in other words, it was the contradiction between the people's growing material and cultural need and the backward means of production. The People's Republic of China has set for itself the objective of solving this principal contradiction, thereby gradually turning China into a powerful, modern socialist state with a highly developed democracy and civilization. This is the focus of the country's work. China's education should centre its efforts on training personnel for the realization of socialist modernization. It is necessary to educate a large number of scientists, technicians, and administrators in different social sectors and to quickly provide a huge reserve labour force with the necessary knowledge of modern science, culture, and technology to take a direct part in production.

The objective of socialist education is determined by the socialist political and economic system and by the need to modernize production. The aim of China's socialist education is to 'enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually, and physically and to become a worker with both a socialist consciousness and culture'.

Socialist education must meet the needs of socialist revolution and construction. Therefore, those people thus trained must have a socialist consciousness, support the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, love the socialist motherland, keep to the socialist road, cherish lofty ideals and communist morality, work hard for the socialist cause, and serve the people. At the same time, if we want to liberate the productive forces and achieve a high labour productivity in a socialist society, we must widely use modern