

MENDIVE

REVISTA DE EDUCACIÓN

Translated from the original in Spanish



José Caridad Cantón Navarro, paradigm of the teacher

José Caridad Cantón Navarro, paradigma de maestro

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José de la Caridad Cantón Navarro, better known as José Cantón Navarro (1925-2008) was born in the Saavedra farm, in the municipality of San Juan y Martínez, province of Pinar del

Río, on July 18 or 1925; son of José Cantón Reibravo and Bernarda Faenecía Navarro Duque.

Since a young age he understood the need to study and work for what he manages to share his obligations in both aspects. At school, he excels in studies and in unconditional support for his classmates. He recognized the work of teachers, which is evidenced in his poetry "To my teacher." At the same time he manages to perfectly master the cultural work of the fundamental cultivation of his father's farm: tobacco.

He enrolled in the Normal School of Pinar del Río in 1940, making one of his big dreams come true, being a teacher; He joined the revolutionary activity at this stage, despite his young age he is selected as a militant of the Communist Party of Cuba, from these classrooms with only 16 years, publishes two articles in the provincial newspaper El Heraldo Pinareño: "The German School of Youth" and "Why Hitler Hates Culture" fiery articles related to German fascism, in which he showed their potential for the development of a pedagogical thought, independence, emancipation, liberation of social justice and philosophical-humanistic.

The wide and rich scientific production of Cantón Navarro is linked to the elimination of all the barriers that prevent the multifaceted development of the members of society; with total faith in human improvement, for which he appreciated and defended that this is the basic objective of pedagogical thinking and action: to train new generations in the highest two ethical and political-revolutionary, patriotic and internationalist and solidarity principles, as well as to promote in society the scale of values in which Martian ethics and communist morals are combined. The thought and pedagogical action of Cantón is an expression of his struggle for human emancipation.

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In 1982, before a question about why he had studied teaching, he posed: "... by vocation, family tradition and economic need ..." (Canton 1982, p.2). Years later he says: "The teaching I have given, in all spheres, has always been based on the Martian vision. It is that first I was very impressed by the apostolate of the teacher and then his thought and that entity gave to the cause of the humble" (Canton 2001, p. 1). The vocation, its patriotism and its condition as Martian, are transcendental aspects within its pedagogical thought and action.

In his teaching poetry was, also, a teaching of great educational value from the first day he took a classroom. He used it as a valuable means to stimulate the skills, aesthetic sensibility, cognitive activity and values of his students. Together with the classic poems of José Martí for children and other revolutionary poets, he brings to the classroom numerous poems specially composed by him, corresponding to the age of the children, their interests and their corresponding school levels.

Some of his works contribute to consolidate in the Cuban pedagogues the responsibility with society, the country, the students and their families; the elevation of thought, the permanent care for example, modesty, simplicity, the spirit of sacrifice, the unwavering vocation for study and research, as part of their concern and contribution to the development of teaching.

The pedagogical thought of José Cantón Navarro is not consolidated in a single text; It is disseminated in books, essays, articles, compilations of documents and chronologies, brochures as author and co-author, compilations, prologues to books, periodicals, lectures, events, programs and others. In this, he manifests feelings full of happiness, love, respect and human solidarity, sense of patriotism, anti-imperialism, high creativity, love for work, socialist

optimism and projection towards human improvement, keys to an alienated republic as he aspired and raised on several occasions.

"But we have not only made our, in theory, the educational conceptions of the Apostle: we have also materialized them in our national teaching system. We practice integral education - physical and mental, material and moral; we are guided by the Martian principle of linking study with work. We have abolished scholasticism, and we take lay and scientific teaching, like sap in trees, from the roots to the top of our national education system. With Martí, we think that the new man must come out of direct and scientific education in the public school." (Canton, 2008, p.28.)

As a former of public awareness, contributes to ennoble the behavior of their pupils, justifying the need to build with the effort of all, a better country, a homeland free and full of justice. Recognizes the need for teacher preparation regarding the problems of Cuba, sees the need in two directions: to himself and their disclosure in relation to their students and people.

He makes a permanent call about the need for every teacher to be aware of the problems of his homeland. It can be seen that, like Martí, he is a defender of the necessary link between the teacher and the homeland, between the teacher and the society that is being built. Considers that the teacher has a great mission to transform their students with the aim of that they can transform their realities, providing solutions to major issues affecting their well - being, in

building a new society that will guarantee the vital needs of each human being.

In its program proposal, the intentionality that it puts in the preparation of teachers for their professional performance with adherence to the cultural and civic-patriotic traditions of the Cuban school, for a large, prosperous, happy, independent homeland, is evident. Sovereign and democratic: pride in the values that identify the Cuban, his vision as the protagonist of the independence of Cuba, the love of our glorious history and its founding fathers, respect for the independence and sovereignty of other peoples and solidarity with those who fight for their rights; the rejection of the imperial war and the love of peace, productive work, equality and respect among all, without racial or sex distinctions, the persistence of independence, the US government as a historical enemy of the independence of Cuba, are some of the aspects that, together with the scientific and secular preparation which is to educate children, are expressing their own Martian convictions and Marxist-Leninists, who go through programs for different grades and places available to teachers, so that the Cuban school serves the needs of the country.

According to him, the teacher is a facilitator of the training process, which allows students to learn, practice a respectful student-student, student-teacher, teacher-student. The educator must put himself in the place of the student, be sensitive about his perceptions and feelings; he must create an environment in the classroom that allows you to breathe confidence, tranquility, and security, not be authoritarian or self-centered. The student must be the one who consolidates his learning process, under the guidance of the teacher characterized by a high moral exemplarity.

"Essential task of education..., it must be the

formation of its citizens in the highest ethical-moral principles, which must govern from top to bottom, all republican life. It is not an abstract, ahistorical moral: it must start from man, be at the service of man, especially the humble, the oppressed and unjustly discriminated against. All efforts, the creative work of the Republic, must preserve national independence, and also guarantee freedom, justice, welfare, peace, happiness, and dignity for citizens and the nation." (Canton, 2016, p.59).

To Cantón there is nothing more important than the conception of an educational work that allows the integral development of the members of society because it considers that education will guarantee the stability of the nation and its vertiginous development. His thinking and pedagogical action, in all its integrity, embodies a humanistic cultural body, conceived to realize a prosperous republic of an ethical-moral nature.

"As a teacher he was an excellent educator not only because of his intelligence, because of his teaching vocation and his pedagogical preparation, but, above all, because he knew how, as José de la Luz y Caballero said, he was a living gospel." (Silva, 2019, p.6)

Even on his deathbed in 2008, he makes great contributions to Cuban education, reviewing Cuban History books and other articles. Men like him honor the pedagogical professional work.

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