

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION THROUGHOUT HISTORY

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## **Introduction**

A few years ago during an honorary visit to our country, the eminent ophthalmologist Dr. Louis E. Chaparro Mena, a radical of El Salvador residing in San Francisco, gave me a manila folder tightly shut, containing clips of academic articles highlighting actions of its time.

“I put in your hands these articles – me dijo - : first, to conserve them, and, secondly because you sir, are living in our country, and without a doubt will encourage the eventual publication of these articles. It is a series of articles written by my father and published in the *Diario Latino*, up to the year 1951”.

Thanks to the confidence in Doctor Chaparro Mena, that though out time, I have held great admiration profound affection his father, the illustrious Professor Louis G. Chaparro; and, after we said goodbye to each other, I waited patiently to unfold these brilliant essays, and for the past years, nearly half a century I have taken care of these manuscripts because the paper is hard and if bent, would break.

At the beginning of organizing these old manuscripts and at the sight of them, I realized before my eyes lies a true intellectual treasure. Gentle and deliberate is the literary style, the depth of thought is conferred within the first lines of the historical journey from Plato to Will Durant, and so is every entry under the title *The Philosophy of Education Throughout History*.

I noticed, however, that the manuscript was incomplete because it lacked a few very important dates, and there is nothing regarding the pre-Socratic philosophy and nothing of Socrates, the fundamental figure of occidental thought; but nothing could have been done to complete it and, in any case, the gaps are limited amongst the wealth of its content. In effect, the work that the reader holds in hand is of the highest hierarchy, of the utmost importance and of elevated worth for someone who desires to know or refresh their knowledge about the development of philosophical thought and education, and about the historical contributions of the analyzed thinkers. Time passed. The national environment was rarefying each day; the social wave was becoming more furious to a point where the complex and contrary political positions in dispute reached, finally, the climax of the civil war, which had been furiously prolonged for twelve years, time during in which, for one reason or the other, there was no given time to edit and publish this work.

At the signing for peace, June, 16<sup>th</sup> 1992, a new scene opened for El Salvador. A scene in whose multiple surfaces, in spite of postwar problems, was opening passageway for a distinct cultural environment, favorable for the infusion of multiple ideas, for the appearance of literary works, historical and scientific, an intellectual resurgence that, after much contention, permitted the exposure of feelings, ideas and reflections; which before, were largely retained.

It is in this period and in this new atmosphere that manifests the present publication under the sponsorship of the National Council of Culture and Art (CONCULTURA). Proof of gratefulness shows in the land of a developing nation, that which, after the rigorous procedure, it was realized the commendable quality of the present work, right to one of the most famous teachers El Salvador has encountered.

Sir Louis G. Chaparro was born in Valle Bravo, Mexico July 5, 1879 and passed away in San Salvador October 19, 1969. His life was a prolonged succession of didactic and educative success, and, above all, a constant dedication to the young people of various countries, especially Mexico, Guatemala and El Salvador, in which he directed numerous educational centers and cultural institutions. For the valuable services lent to our homeland, he was declared by the National Legislative Assembly, the Most Honorable Teacher of El Salvador July 30, 1953.

The years pass without remedy and the cloak of oblivion continues to cover everything. A few days ago I had the sad experience of verification, in moments that I pronounced the name Sir Louis with enthusiasm, affirmation and security, that my interlocutor did not know whom I was referring to. (!! ) It is incredible how the new generations know nothing about the important characters that have shaped national history.

This cannot be.

It cannot be, because the knowledge of history and its historical characters is vital for the good health of the citizens, for their equal development and for their dignity. Because, this knowledge creates the best spring for education and reinforces the base of our nationality. Because oblivion is deadly to the greatness that we all aspire.

In two ways the present publication will attempt to refresh our memory: for one part, to bring to date the image of the those great characters, like Professor Luis G. Chaparro, whom mean great importance to our system of education. And for the other part, making a brief journey, by the hand of an expert guide, by means of his scholarly word, elegant and calm, to the biggest figures that along centuries have built the base of panoramic modern education, in that which establishes the most fascinating adventure of universal thought.

With great reparation we rescued these lost papers, and we offer them to the new generations, especially the commanding sector, as the legacy of an illustrious teacher that beyond the barriers of time, has continued contributing to our country his valuable contribution.