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Mezinárodní časopis  
pro dějiny výchovy a vzdělání

International Review  
for History of Education

Národní pedagogické muzeum  
a knihovna J. A. Komenského

Technická univerzita  
v Liberci

Praha 2023

## **Historia scholastica**

Číslo 2, prosinec 2023, ročník 9

Number 2, December 2023, Volume 9

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Valdštejnská 20, 118 00 Praha 1, Česká republika, IČ 61387169, www.nmpk.cz

Technická univerzita v Liberci, Fakulta přírodovědně-humanitní a pedagogická

Studentská 1402/2, 461 17 Liberec 1, Česká republika, IČ 46747885, www.tul.cz

### **Obálka a grafická úprava *Cover and Graphic Design***

Pavel Průša

### **Sazba *Type Setting***

Mgr. Lucie Murár

### **Tisk *Printed by***

Tiskárna PROTISK, s. r. o., Rudolfovská 617, 370 01 České Budějovice, Česká republika

Časopis *Historia scholastica* vychází 2x ročně.

*Historia scholastica* is published twice a year.

### **Indexováno v *Indexed in***

SCOPUS, ERIH+, DOAJ, EBSCO, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory

ISSN 1804-4913 (print), ISSN 2336-680X (online)

Číslo registrace MK ČR E 22258

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# Pedagogical Discourse on the Reform of General Secondary Education in Soviet Ukraine through the Prism of Child Protection in the 1920s: the Struggle against Unification

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Received 27 March 2023

Accepted 17 June 2023

Available online 31 December 2023

DOI 10.15240/tul/006/2023-2-009

**Abstract** The article reveals the leading ideas of Ukrainian teachers and civil leaders (V. Arnautov, Ya. Chepiha, T. Harbuz, H. Ivanytsia, Ya. Riappo, M. Skrypnyk, O. Zalizhnyi, etc.) on reforming school education for the sake of development and protection of a child in the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (USSR) in the 1920s. It has been proven that after the defeat of the Ukrainian Revolution (1917–1921) and the capture of the territory of Ukraine by the Bolsheviks, the pedagogical discourse focused on the idea of creating a new labour school. It should be based on the following principles: labour, active, social

education to protect the child, communist, the principle of Ukrainization and at the same time the imposition of Russification, etc. Ukrainian educators, looking for active methods of teaching children in a labour school, turned mainly to European and world pedagogical science (A. Binet, J. Dewey, F. Freeman, G. Kerschensteiner, E. Meumann, P. Natorp, F. Seidel, Ch. Spearman, W. Stern, L. Terman, E. Thorndike etc.). Pedagogical discourse was aimed at opposing the unification of school education according to the Russian model. The policy of Ukrainization was effective, so the all-Union authorities intensified ideological pressure, seeking to curtail this process. The struggle for the Ukrainian school ended tragically for Ukrainian teachers. This eloquently testifies to how the Soviet ideology during the reform used the ideas of social protection of the child, Ukrainization of the educational process to establish its own ideological and socio-political goals of the totalitarian society.

**Keywords** Ukraine, pedagogical discourse, reforming general secondary education, the principle of social upbringing of a child, Soviet ideology, foreign pedagogical thought, Ukrainization, Russification, unification

## Introduction

During the heroic struggle of the Ukrainian people against the Russian occupiers for the democratic values and independence of Ukraine, the appeal to the history of education, the reinterpretation of events and facts is relevant. The history of the education of Ukraine knows several reforms that have radically changed the school system and, accordingly, affected the education and upbringing of the child. Inter alia, this is the reform of the 20s of the 20th century, the causes, achievements and miscalculations of which were presented in the Soviet historiography in the right perspective of the ruling Communist Party. And most importantly, because the Bolshevik forces took over Ukraine, which gained independence during the Ukrainian revolution of 1917–1921. State-building aspirations, pedagogical discourse, achievements of school reform regarding the development of the national education system were nullified. Nevertheless, democratic achievements laid the foundations for the Ukrainization of education in the 20s of the 20th century. The Peoples Commissariat of Education of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (hereinafter referred to as the Narcomos of the UkSSR, abbreviation for Ukrainian Narodnyi Comisariat Osvity) implemented its own model of school education. However, socio-political (the only centralized union power, legislation, ideology within the USSR) and socio-economic (unified economic policy, national economy development plan) realities of the USSR, despite the Ukrainian leadership's desire to preserve its own model of school education, led to its gradual unification in the all-Soviet one, which took place under increased pressure from the Narcomos of the RSFSR (the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic). In these difficult conditions, the pedagogical discourse on the reform of school education unfolded. In what directions should school education in Ukraine be reformed? What principles should form the basis of school education for the protection and development of the child under the new Soviet reality? What foreign experience can be used to reform education?

In the process of historiographic search, we found out that Ukrainian researchers (O. Sukhomlynska, S. Filonenko, 1996) raised the problems of education development in the USSR in 1920–1933 in their works

(Sukhomlynska & Filonenko, 1996). T. Yanchenko revealed the peculiarities of the development of pedology in Ukraine in the 1920s and early 1930s (Yanchenko, 2016). The formation and development of the new educational system in the USSR in the 1920s was revealed by the historian V. Lypynskyi (2001), and the historian V. Borysov (2003) of the general education school in 1920–1933 (Lypynskyi, 2001; Borysov, 2003). Certain aspects of the influence of foreign reform pedagogy on the development of domestic pedagogical thought in the 1920s were characterized by N. Osmuk (2011), S. Polishchuk (2013), (Osmuk, 2011; Polishchuk, 2013). In particular, in our publications we highlighted the organizational and pedagogical principles of reforming school education within defined territorial and chronological boundaries, introduced unknown and little-known sources into domestic and foreign scientific circulation (Berezivska, 2011, 2016, 2019).

At the same time, the ideas of well-known Ukrainian educators and public leaders, whose names were removed from the pedagogical discourse during the Soviet era, regarding the reform of school education in Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s, are not systematically presented. Although their life and educational activity became the subject of research by modern Ukrainian scientists (L. Berezivska, N. Dichuk, O. Mikhno, O. Sukhomlynska, etc.), and therefore came back from oblivion to the pages of the new Ukrainian history of education (Berezivska, 2016; Sukhomlynska, Berezivska & Dichuk et al., 2005). The electronic resource “Outstanding Teachers of Ukraine and the World” of the V. Sukhomlynskyi State Scientific and Educational Library of Ukraine presents the lifeline and creative achievements of Ukrainian teachers and reflects the degree of their research in the educational and scientific space<sup>1</sup> (Berezivska, Pinchuk, Hopta, Demyda & Sereda, 2022). Nowadays, in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the question of decolonization of Ukrainian humanitarianism, in particular, a new reading of pedagogical portraits, has been legitimately brought up to date.

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1 See: <https://cutt.ly/g3nSvpJ>.



The considerations of the Danish researcher Maria Mälksoo regarding the return of the world to the “Ukrainian question”, the emergence of interest in the history of Ukraine during the Russian-Ukrainian war became interesting for our studies. She proves:

“Ukraine is also among the most flagrantly neglected cases of Soviet colonialism due to the allegedly insufficient applicability of the label ‘postcolonial’ to the former Soviet/Russian imperial space.” (Mälksoo, 2022, p. 4).

In general, according to her mind, in science, the issue of post-coloniality of former subjects of the Russian Empire, including post-communist subjects in the former Soviet republics and on the outer outskirts of the Soviet Empire, remains complex and controversial. And it is actually so.

Worthy of attention are the works of the American scholar Matthew D. Pauly, who tried to analyze the education reform in Soviet Ukraine through the prism of the idea of local history in the 1920s. He shows the role of the People’s Commissariat of Education of the Ukrainian SSR in this and rightly notes that, “Throughout the 1920s, the Ukrainian Commissariat of Education maintained a separate, distinct educational system from Russia” (Pauly, 2010, p. 4). He mentions some of the Ukrainian educators (V. Durdukivskyi, H. Hrynko, O. Muzychenko, Ya. Riappo) and tries to show in his writings the peculiarities of the development of the process of Ukrainization in Soviet Ukraine during the studied period (Pauly, 2009). However, in order to understand the changes in the educational space in the USSR in the 1920s, it is worth analyzing the pedagogical discourse on reforming school education in Soviet realities, in which Ukrainian educators hardened by the previous years of struggle for the Ukrainian school took part, especially during the days of the Ukrainian Revolution, proclaimed Ukrainian People’s Republic. This historical period was removed from the Soviet narrative, as we wrote about in our publications (Berezivska, 2022). And in fact, it was at that time that the Ukrainian school, the language, which became the basis of the Ukrainization of education in the 1920s,

was revived. Ukrainian educators actively studied the ideas of foreign reform pedagogy.

To understand the origins of the influence of the ideas of famous American and European scientists on pedology, pedagogical psychology, and experimental pedagogy on the development of education in various European countries, it is advisable to refer to the work of the Belgian scientist Mark Depaepe (Depaepe, 1993). However, Ukrainian education in the 1920s is not mentioned in that work.

So, the historiographic study of the selected problem made it possible to establish its scientific novelty: pedagogical discourse on the reform of general secondary education in Soviet Ukraine in the 20s of the 20th century was not investigated through the prism of child protection and development. Only with the declaration of independence of Ukraine, historians were able to study this historical segment objectively and comprehensively. In the process of source research, the works of Ukrainian teachers and public leaders of the researched period published on the pages of periodicals were selected and systematized.

The purpose of the article is to reveal the main ideas of Ukrainian educators and public leaders about reforming school education in Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s through the prism of child protection and development. At the same time, we should note that since education was reformed at different stages of historical development in the conditions of the disunity of Ukrainian lands, within the states to which this or that part of Ukraine belonged, there were significant differences in education systems and, accordingly, in their restructuring. Therefore, we analyze the pedagogical discourse regarding the change of the school education system in the 1920s only in Central, Southern, and Eastern Ukraine, i.e., in Dnieper Ukraine, which was first part of the Russian Empire, and later – the Ukrainian People's Republic, and then incorporated in the status of the Ukrainian SSR into the USSR. We do not consider the pedagogical discourse on the territory of Western Ukrainian lands, which until 1917 belonged to Austria-Hungary, and in the 1920s – to Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. This can be the subject of a separate study.

### **Participants of Pedagogical Discourse or Touches to Biographical Portraits of Ukrainian Teachers**

After the defeat of the Ukrainian revolution, Ukrainian educators split into two cohorts. Some were forced to emigrate due to persecution and rejection of Soviet ideology (S. Rusova, P. Kholodnyi, etc.). Others, having believed in the Soviet authorities, in particular in the intentions to develop Ukrainian education based on domestic and foreign experience, continued scientific, public, teaching work in Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s and early 1930s.

Vasyl Arnautov (1881–1938) was a historian, teacher, supporter of Ukrainization. Terentii Harbuz (1891–1939) was a pedagogue, professor, teacher, author of textbooks and manuals for studying the Ukrainian language. Hryhorii Hrynko (1890–1938) was a teacher, social and educational activist, People's Commissar of Education of the UkSSR (1920–1922). Oleksandr Zaluzhnyi (1886–1938) – pedologist, teacher, psychologist, reflexologist. Hryhorii Ivanytsia (1892–1938) was a teacher, the author of textbooks on the Ukrainian language and reading books for labour schools, schools for adults, manuals on the methodology of teaching the Ukrainian language and translation studies. Vasyl Pomahaiba (1892–1972) was a teacher, professor, researcher at the Ukrainian Research Institute of Pedagogy. Yan Riappo (1880–1958) was a teacher and educational activist, Deputy People's Commissar of Education of the UkSSR, creator of the Ukrainian Soviet education system. Mykola Skrypnyk (1872–1932) – political, social and educational leader, People's Commissar of Education of the UkSSR (1927–1937). Ivan Sokolianskyi (1889–1960) was a pedologist and teacher-speech pathologist, Head of the Scientific and Methodological Committee of Social Education Management of the People's Commissariat of the Ukrainian SSR, Ukrainian Research Institute of Pedagogy. Yakiv Chepiha (Zelenkevych) (1875–1938) was a teacher, psychologist, public person, methodologist, theoretician and practitioner of primary education, author of textbooks.

These educators suffered a difficult fate: most were convicted, arrested until execution or exile, shot or had their lives shortened, some were posthumously rehabilitated in 1956–1957. What united them in this era? The desire, as before, to build a Ukrainian school, albeit in

Soviet realities, but on the basis of Western European and American pedagogy. First of all, they fought for the right of the Ukrainian child to study in native language, to study the history, geography, and literature of Ukraine, which helped shape the national outlook. These educators set the tone and directions of the Ukrainian discussion about education, to a certain extent they adapted to political changes, to the rule of the Russian Bolsheviks. Undoubtedly, ordinary teachers, who even in this early Soviet period could express their opinions as practicing educators, took part in the debate on reforming education.

### **The problem of Training and Implementation of School Reform**

Ukrainian educators and public persons were aware of the irreversibility of the Soviet educational reform, therefore *the problems of its training and implementation* were actively discussed. Yakiv Chepiha characterized school reform as fundamental and radical, therefore it cannot be implemented in one year (Chepiha, 1922, p. 224). To his mind, the development of a new labour school will gradually acquire new forms, principles and methods, and will be filled with new content. The teacher highlighted negative trends: the lack of trained teachers, appropriate conditions for new education. He believed that the teacher should develop the individual abilities of the child and hoped for the preservation of the democratic principle in education:

“A teacher in a labour school can be considered as a ferment that supports the fire of spiritual life in a child’s soul, the desire to act, search, work, create and regulates the discovery of his abilities, appetite, and desires” (Chepiha, 1922, p. 215).

It was Yan Riappo who most fully characterized the course, organizational and content foundations, and prospects of school reform in the 1920s. To his point of view, it was necessary to change and rebuild the organizational forms of education and training, to fill them with new content, vigorously rejecting capitalist elements and developing socialist elements (Riappo, 1927, p. 30). He identified the factors that influenced the need to build a Soviet Ukrainian education system

fundamentally different from the Russian one: Ukraine began its Soviet construction later than the RSFSR (Soviet power was established there in 1917 after the October Revolution), so it already had relevant experience; the polarity of views regarding the vectors of the development of Ukrainian education among teachers and heads of education; crop failure, famine; thousands of homeless children; there was a great need for qualified workers. The basis of the education system was the “Scheme of Education of the Ukrainian SSR” by H. Hrynko, aimed at the development of professional education, which was needed by the economy of Ukraine, such as: large-scale industry (coal, ore and metal industry), mechanization of agriculture (Riappo, 1927, p. 34). By the way, the creation of H. Hrynko’s educational concept, which he presented in Ukrainian, Russian, and German, was influenced by the reform events taking place in Western Europe and directly by the ideas of the German teacher G. Kerschensteiner (Vaskovych, 1996, pp. 147–162, 153).

Ya. Riappo argued:

“a million-strong army of homeless children mutilated in the civil war stood in front of the Narcomos of the UkSSR; he naturally became a supporter of social education of children. [...] The main task in Ukraine at that time was not education, but nutrition and upbringing, organization of that child. An orphanage was declared the organizational form of social upbringing, and the children’s communist movement became the foundation of social education” (Riappo, 1927, p. 34).

The pedagogue explained the essence of the Soviet educational reform as the “reconstruction of the old heritage”, proposed to eliminate grammar schools and universities “as the central fortress of feudalism”. Instead, a single system of social education for children aged 4–15 years was introduced – a kindergarten, an orphanage, a single labour monotekhnical 7-year labour school.

Summarizing the development of school education in Ukraine, Ya. Riappo outlined the following achievements: the introduction of

Ukrainization and the transfer of all institutions and schools to the Ukrainian language of instruction; provision of educational needs of national minorities; activation of teachers and emergence of new teaching methods; repurposing a general education school into a vocational school; the introduction of general compulsory education for children aged 8–12 and the prospect of introducing a general seven-year school. The following problems stood in the way of the reform: overworked teacher; low financial support, insufficient professional level; crisis in the construction of new schools, etc. In general, Ya. Riappo characterized the school reform as a “revolutionary assault”, “a colossal destruction”, “the construction of colossal structures” (Riappo, 1927, pp. 121–125).

Pedagogical discourse broke out between Ukrainian educators – supporters of the principle of professionalism – and Russian – supporters of polytechnicism. The difference in opinion was that, according to Ukrainians, secondary school has to be built not on the basis of general education, but on the basis of vocational school (Riappo, 1927, pp. 37–38).

We present the ideas of ordinary teachers regarding the unification of the Ukrainian and Russian education systems, expressed in the pages of the magazine *Shliakh osvity* [Path of Education]. For example, M. Kravchenko approved the following discussion, “[...] for the first time we are faced with the fact of a broad discussion of the education system of the Soviet republics. Until now, issues of the education system as a whole have never been discussed by the general public”. Further, evaluating the positive and negative sides of both systems, he noted that after making certain corrections to the Ukrainian education system, it “has all the data to transform it from the system of a certain Republic to the system of the entire Soviet Union” (Kravchenko, 1928, p. 54). A. Kostiuchenko expressed the following opinion, “[...] corrections are needed in the education system of the UkSSR. Only the pedagogical vertical requires a radical break. In general, the educational system of the UkSSR should remain in the same state as it was. Practice has shown its viability” (Kostiuchenko, 1928, p. 57).

We present several opinions of educators who took part in the discussion on the pages of the weekly supplement *Vyrobnycha dumka* [Productive Opinion] of the newspaper *Narodnyy uchytel'* [People's Teacher]. "[...] the Ukrainian educational system approached the matter much more correctly, more truthfully defined the ways to solve the problem of public education. Acquiring certain labour qualifications is what should be the main focus of educational work" (Zelenskyi, 1928, p. 3). "The construction of the education system according to the scheme of the RSFSR and the BSSR cannot withstand criticism: firstly, the 9-year school of the RSFSR is the same grammar school of the old days, then students enter the university being completely unfamiliar with production and practice... According to our system of general education, a seven-year school or an equal to given amount of knowledge one will provide cultural training for personnel performing simple operations, then polytechnic schools that will be polytechnicized will provide training for highly qualified workers, [...] higher technical schools will provide training for functional engineers in a narrow field of management, and institutes – to engineers and production organizers" (Pysarenko, 1928, pp. 5–6). "The unification of the system should give an advantage in this direction to our education system in Ukraine [...], it is necessary to leave the Ukrainian system stable as a whole: 4 years of the 1st concentr and 3 years of the 2nd concentr" (Skurativskyi, 1928, p. 7). Summarizing the discussion, the editors of the newspaper *Narodnyy uchytel'* [People's Teacher] noted that the majority of educators recognized the Ukrainian education system as correct and in line with the main political and economic tasks of Soviet construction (Systemu osvity, 1928, pp. 10–11).

V. Pomahaiba used the concept of "improvement" or "changes" in the Soviet education system. To his mind, it is expedient to carry out reforms based on the experience of the West and America (Pomahaiba, 1928). Compulsory education of children should start from the age of 7. The educational process was to be based on the principles of conformity to nature, monism. Pomahaiba, like Ya. Riappo, argued the differences between the contemporary Ukrainian and Russian education systems. Ukrainian educators tried to defend a special system of

Ukrainian education different from the Russian one under the pressure of unification (Pomahaiba, 1928).

It should be noted that the pedagogical discourse of the studied period differed from the discussions of previous years primarily by the introduction of Soviet rhetoric: “proletarian dictatorship”, “worker-peasant power”, “bourgeois”, “bourgeois countries”, “bourgeois pedagogical thought”, “bourgeois school”, etc. Ukrainian educators could not avoid these definitions, which were completely uncharacteristic of their work before 1920.

### **Principles, Content, Methods, Structure of the Soviet School**

We should point out that the reform of the Soviet school began after the defeat of the Ukrainian Revolution and the capture of Ukraine by the Bolsheviks in 1921. And in Russia – after the October Revolution of 1917. However, we will not see in the pedagogical discourse even a mention of the Ukrainian Revolution (1917–1921), the development of Ukrainian statehood, the creation of a Ukrainian school. For example, Ya. Riappo avoids considerations about this period and its significance for Ukraine. At the same time, he leans towards Soviet rhetoric and portrays the October Revolution as the liberator of numerous nationalities enslaved under the tsars, including the Ukrainian nationality (Riappo, 1927, p. 103). This testifies to the fact that the Soviet government, from its first days, falsified the history of Ukraine, leveled the national consciousness of the Ukrainian child, and shaped the worldview of the Soviet man.

Pedagogical discourse unfolded on the issue of the *state educational policy* of Soviet Ukraine. To the point of view of Yakiv Chepiha, it should be based on the following provisions, “1) to preserve the spiritual wealth of the people and provide ample opportunities for revealing their creativity in the field of cultural development; 2) take care of increasing the economic well-being of the people; 3) to satisfy the various interests of the numerous inhabitants of the state in their national, political and legal demands and 4) to carry out the general tasks of the state in full agreement with universal human aspirations. These four provisions are the basis of the healthy life of the state organism”



(Chepiha, 1922, p. 210). And precisely such social foundations at that time were extremely important for the Ukrainian people, but did not correspond to the all-Union postulates of assimilation and unification.

During the Ukrainian Revolution, the Ukrainian governments introduced *universal compulsory primary education* (1919), but this achievement of the Ukrainian governments was ignored by the Bolshevik authorities. However, this issue required further practical solutions, that's why it became a component of the pedagogical discourse in Soviet times. V. Arnautov believed that the state had the appropriate resources for the introduction of universal mandatory free four-year education. At the same time, he noted that paid education did not correspond to the nature of worker-peasant power (Arnautov, 1928, p. 21). M. Skrypnyk wrote about the importance of eliminating illiteracy, building new schools, and training teachers (Skrypnyk, 1927).

During this difficult time of Soviet power, Ukrainian educators continued to actively discuss the theme of the *development of the Ukrainian school, the Ukrainization of the educational process*. The term "new Ukrainian school", which was widely used by Ukrainian educators before the establishment of Soviet power, disappeared from the pedagogical discourse. However, the concepts of "new school" and "new labour school" appeared. In this context, the preservation of *the native language and Ukrainian studies subjects* remained an important issue. And this issue was covered by periodicals during at least the first 10 years of the Soviet era. Educators noted the great achievements of the Ukrainization process. The Ukrainian language and literature were included in the curricula of all types of schools, these subjects became the object of careful methodical study, corresponding retraining of the intelligence in Ukraine (Ivanytsia, 1927).

Marking the achievements of the Ukrainization of education at the early stage, A. Prykhodko drew attention to the negative trend, "[...] by implementing the national policy in Ukraine and reviving Ukrainian culture, the party turns it into a weapon, which is used to forge the ideology of communism" (Prykhodko, 1927, p. 15). At the same time, the creation of textbooks in the Ukrainian language, a huge academic dictionary of the living language and 34 terminological dictionaries,

which were supposed to lay the foundations of the modern Ukrainian language, were positive. The Ukrainian Academy of Sciences (founded on June 21, 1921, now the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine – L.B.) played a major role in this process (Prykhodko, 1927).

In the context of defending the interests of the Ukrainian people, fighting against their assimilation, M. Skrypnyk rightfully argued that Russians are a national minority in Ukraine. He was the inspirer of Ukrainization, education in native language. At the same time, he was concerned about the importance of studying the Ukrainian language in schools of national minorities (Skrypnyk, 1931, p. 25). Ya. Chepiha opposed the Russification of national minorities, “In our country, the Russification of the children of this national minority is often held in the schools of national minorities” (Skrypnyk, 1931, p. 26).

#### *The Labour Principle as the Basis of the New School*

One of the most discussed principles of that time is the *labour* one. It was supposed to become thorough in the educational process of the *labour school*. Only when the work is interesting, the child receives joy from it and satisfaction with the achieved results (Chepiha, 1922, p. 212). Chepiha defined forms of work for students to acquire knowledge: field, kitchen-garden, garden, school workshop, plant, factory, etc. Knowledge of academic subjects is acquired during active and creative learning, observing the life of plants and animals, thanks to excursions to the field, forest, lake, river, social centers, museums, etc. It is important to combine sculpting and drawing with such subjects as the native language, arithmetic, natural science, geography, history, etc. Clubs, recitation, dramatization, school theater, singing, music, sports are effective for creative learning. Activity is closely related to the labour principle. The school should not break the child’s nature (Chepiha, 1922).

The labour school was considered as a school of the future, based on the ideas of the American teacher and psychologist J. Dewey (1859–1952), the German teacher G. Kerschensteiner (Arnautov, 1927). To implement labour and active principles, educators turned to experimental pedagogy, which was to be based on the results of studying

the child using scientific methods of questionnaires, observation, and testing.

### *Pedology and Active Learning Methods*

*Pedology as the basis of reforming school education* has become a popular issue in pedagogical discourse. It arose within the framework of experimental pedagogy as a special science about children and as a synthesis of psychological, anatomical-physiological, biological, sociological knowledge about child development. At that time, the Narcomos of the UkSSR, looking for ways to solve pressing problems, turned to the ideas of Western Europe, the United States, and the republics of the USSR. Experience was actively exchanged. Thus, in 1922, People's Commissar of Education H. Hrynko visited several Western European countries (Austria, Germany, France, Czechoslovakia), where he got acquainted with the activities of many educational institutions and with "authoritative representatives of various pedagogical currents" (*Narodnyi komisariat*, 1924, p. 37–38). Foreign experience in the field of pedology was highlighted in Ukrainian periodicals, translations of works on pedagogy and psychology were published. In 1925–1926, famous pedologists O. Zaluzhnyi, I. Sokolianskyi, V. Protopopov, and Ya. Chepiha paid working visits to Germany, the USA, and the RSFSR (Yanchenko, 2016, p. 241).

They tried to find and implement active learning methods (test method, Dalton plan, etc.). It is about the views of American psychologists and educators: Edward Lee Thorndike (1874–1949), Frank Freeman (1880–1961), Lewis Terman (1877–1956); French positivist-psychologist Alfred Binet (1857–1911); German psychologists and educators: Ernst Meumann (1863–1915), William Stern (1871–1938), the English psychologist Charles Edward Spearman (1863–1945), and others.

According to O. Zaluzhnyi, "the task of the test methodology is to determine whether a child or an adult has this general ability and the ability to study or for one or another profession and to measure this ability" (Zaluzhnyi, 1926). He defined the types of tests: Intelligence Tests, Standardized Scholastic Tests, Vocational, Physical Tests for measuring physical ability, Tests for Determining character, etc. The

most developed, as the teacher reported, were Giftedness Tests and School Tests.

Reflecting on the concept of “giftedness”, he appealed to the ideas of foreign scientists (Binet, Freeman, Meumann, Stern, Thorndike, etc.). In particular, he gave the interpretation of the concept of “giftedness” authored by A. Binet, “as a healthy understanding of facts and phenomena, as initiative, as the ability to adapt to the environment”. The most complete description of giftedness, according to Zaluzhnyi, was made by F. Freeman: “Giftedness can be considered as the ability to successfully adapt with the help of those traits that we usually call intellectual” (Zaluzhnyi, 1926, p. 65). According to Stern, “giftedness is the general ability of an individual to adapt his thinking to new needs. This is the ability or flair of the organism to successfully (adequately) adapt to new circumstances”. According to Terman, giftedness is something other than the ability to think abstractly.

In the columns of periodicals, educators (Arnautov, Harbuz, Zaluzhnyi, Chepiha) discussed *the complex system of education* (structure, programs, methods), which caused a decrease in formal knowledge, and the subject system of education. T. Harbuz considered the complex system as an organization of the pedagogical process, which will cause in the students of the labour school the necessary reactions, reflexes, norms of behavior and orient the school towards the children’s communist movement. As he argued, the basis of complex programs, “[...] is the principle of regional studies in the understanding of regional studies as the economy of the local region, and not as elements of only the historical-ethnographic natural sciences of the local region; in the same way, complex programs give the labour school a truly industrial bias, since production, and with it all socio-political and household forms of life connected with production, are taken as the basis of the pedagogical process, as the basis of complex programs” (Harbuz, 1925, p. 76). Among the industrial complexes, along with the topic of health care, political complexes are proposed (the October Revolution, the death of Lenin, May Day, etc.), which indicates the politicization of the child’s consciousness. According to Ya. Chepiha, it is necessary to reduce the number of complexes in order to increase formal knowledge

(Harbuz, 1925, p. 78). I. Sokolianskyi considered complexes a means of acquiring knowledge (Sokolianskyi, 1926, p. 14).

The basis of a complex approach to the organization and content of the educational process was pedology. The sociogenetic direction spread in Ukraine (in contrast to Russia, where the biogenetic approach prevailed) (Sukhomlynska at al., 1996, p. 136). From the mid-1920s, most scientists began to favor an environmental approach to the study of childhood. T. Pasika wrote, “Soviet pedology and pedagogy base their work on sociobiological aspects of determining child behavior and child development, which is fully justified by the materialistic science of the proletariat” (Pasika, 1928, p. 5). He believed that pedagogy should rely on pedology in order to educate the “new socialist man” (Pasika, 1928, p. 9).

As we can see, in the pedagogical discourse of the Soviet era, the national, labour and active pedagogical principles were filled with a different meaning through the prism of building a communist society. Due to the large number of street children who needed protection, a new principle – social upbringing – was actualized in the works of educators.

### *Social Upbringing is a New Principle of Soviet School Education*

The principle of social upbringing is closely related to the labour principle. As V. Arnautov noted, the term “social upbringing” is of Western European origin, based on the ideas of German educators P. Natorp (1854–1924) and F. L. Seidel (1821–1896). It is broader than the term “labour school” and includes measures of the state and proletarian society in the direction of proper upbringing of children, class consciousness (Arnautov, 1927, p. 20). Ya. Chepiha interpreted it as the motto of the new school. The idea of social upbringing is intertwined with the ideals of the community, accompanied by activity and self-activity. The teacher defined the forms of social upbringing: guarding and being on duty; decorating the school; school order and division of labour; self-help of students; correspondence; children’s magazine; games and toys; school holidays; farm; collective field, vegetable garden, garden; excursions; school museum; educational clubs; theater; self-management. Ya. Chepiha tried to specify his previous ideas of the pre-Soviet

era in accordance with the new structure of Soviet school education. He argued that the “child’s freedom” should be realized in a labour school. At the same time,

“holidays should be combined with important moments in the life of the school – not with religious holidays, as it was in the old school, but with holidays of public and political life” (Chepiha, 1922, p. 15).

Communist ideology leveled the nature of childhood, “[...] childhood came under the influence of a strong communist youth organization... The social upbringing of children became the upbringing of class consciousness, consciousness of the tasks of the proletariat” (Arnautov, 1927, p. 21). In Ukraine, no one doubted the orientation of the labour school to the children’s communist movement as a perfect form of social upbringing” (Harbuz, 1925, p. 80). It is obvious that under the slogan of protecting the child, the principle of social upbringing was imbued with communist propaganda.

The process of development of social pedagogy in the 1920s in Ukraine had its own characteristics, which were determined by the task of socialist construction. Soviet pedagogy, first of all, had to solve the issue of educating the young generation in the communist spirit, forming citizens of a new society. Thus, the idea of social pedagogy was transformed in the Soviet Union into a kind of theory of “social education” – “sotsvykh” (‘sotsial’ noho vykhovannya’), which, on the one hand, continued the traditions of domestic pedagogical science and absorbed the latest achievements of foreign pedagogy (methods of studying childhood problems, in particular, relations “the child – the team”), and, on the other hand, it had the character of ideological indoctrination (Osmuk, 2011).

### **Ideas of Foreign Reform Pedagogy in the Development of School Education in Ukraine**

As we can see, the pedagogical discourse regarding the educational reform in Ukraine in the 1920s was more focused on foreign experience

than on national traditions (Berezivska, 2011, p. 190). Among the reasons, it is worth identifying the efforts within the framework of the Sovietization of education to preserve the Ukrainian education system, different from the Russian one, based on the principles of European and American pedagogy. The pedagogical discourse was influenced by experimental pedagogy (A. Binet, W. Lay, E. Meumann, E. Thorndike, etc.), pragmatic pedagogy (J. Dewey), the concept of labour school (G. Kerschensteiner), social pedagogy (F. Seidel, P. Natorp and others).

It was H. Hrynko as the head of education who contributed to the comprehensive study of foreign pedagogic ideas for the development of the Soviet school. In the rather controversial article “Our Way to the West” (1923), he wrote, “the historically achieved level of cultural development of Central European countries is immeasurably higher than the level at which we began our Soviet history and, in particular, the matter of education in the broadest sense of the word, pedagogical technique, their pedagogical culture and culture are immeasurably higher” (Hrynko, 1923, p. 15). Using Soviet rhetoric, he argued that “[...] Europe has rich scientific and pedagogical experience, which is determined by fruitful traditions of scientific developments in psychology, psychophysiology, psychotechnics” (Hrynko, 1923, p. 15). He proposed a program of measures to establish relations between the governing bodies of Soviet education and the best representatives and organizations of pedagogical thought in Western Europe: correspondence and personal communication, sending materials; establishment of connections between pedagogical journals, experimental institutions; foreign business trips, etc. (Hrynko, 1923, pp. 17–18).

The study and creative use of foreign experience by Ukrainian educators became a continuation of the traditions of the pedagogical discourse of the era of the Ukrainian Revolution (1917–1921). This contributed to the development in the Soviet pedagogical discourse of the ideas of the labour school (V. Arnautov, Ya. Chepiha, Ya. Riappo, etc.), pedology (Ya. Chepiha, I. Sokolianskyi, O. Zaluzhnyi, etc.), social pedagogy and education (H. Hrynko, Ya. Riappo, O. Zaluzhnyi, etc.) and the establishment of a purely Ukrainian reform direction – national education (Ya. Chepiha, H. Ivanytsia, etc.).



It is important that the educational policy of the USSR in the 1920s promoted the study of European and American pedagogical thought, hoping to build school education on democratic and humanistic values. The Foreign Editorial Commission, which worked in Germany (1921–1923) and Czechoslovakia (1924–1925) provided significant organizational and scientific and pedagogical support for Ukrainian educators (Osmuk, 2011, p. 15).

However, in the early 1930s, a series of party decrees unified Ukrainian education into a Soviet one based on the Russian model. Most of the ideas of foreign reformist pedagogy were removed from the pedagogical discourse or adapted to the Soviet needs of the closed communist space.

### **Conclusions**

Thus, after the defeat of the Ukrainian Revolution (1917–1921) and the capture of the territory of Ukraine by the Russian Bolsheviks, in the 1920s the pedagogical discourse concentrated on the idea of creating a new labour school. The result of the discussion in the media was the development of a completely new Soviet system of school education – social education, upbringing of children aged 4–15 years – kindergarten, orphanage, a unified labour monotekhnical 7-year labour school. School education should be based on the following principles: labour, active, social upbringing to protect the child, Communist, the principle of Ukrainization and at the same time the imposition of Russification, pedocentric for the formation of a “new person”, unified school; free and compulsory education. The attempt of Ukrainian educators to combine national and communist principles, as history shows, was a tragic mistake.

Ukrainian educators (V. Arnautov, Ya. Chepiha, T. Harbuz, H. Ivanytsia, Ya. Riappo, M. Skrypnyk, I. Sokolianskyi, O. Zaluzhnyi, etc.) proposed ways to solve the problems of school education: taking into account world and European experience, Ukrainization the educational process, meeting the educational needs of national minorities, meeting the needs of society and the child, training teachers for reforms, building new schools, introducing active methods and forms



of education, etc. They relied on their own work and practical experience. They appealed mainly to world pedagogical science (A. Binet, J. Dewey, F. Freeman, G. Kerschensteiner, E. Meumann, P. Natorp, F. Seidel, Ch. Spearman, W. Stern, L. Terman, E. Thorndike, etc.) Pedagogical discourse was aimed at opposing the unification of school education according to the Russian model. The process of Ukrainization was effective, therefore, seeking to curtail it, the All-Union authorities increased ideological pressure. This eloquently shows how the Soviet ideology of the 1920s during the reform used the ideas of social protection of the child, pedology, the Ukrainization of the educational process to establish its own ideological and socio-political goals of the totalitarian society, and how under the pretext of aid and humanization of education, child upbringing and education, educational activity were dehumanized. In the Soviet ideological landscape, the child was considered as a subject of politics. For Ukrainian educators, actually “barred” by Soviet ideologues, the struggle for the Ukrainian school finished tragically – repression, mutilated lives or even death, removal of their names and ideas from the scientific space. And the year of death of most of them (1937–1939) reminds us of this. The ideas of foreign reformist pedagogy about experimental pedagogy, pedology, and active learning methods, which became especially widespread in the educational theory and practice of Ukraine in the 1920s, were considered in the subsequent Soviet discourse as manifestations of bourgeois ideology. For 70 years, until the declaration of independence in 1991, the Soviet power dominated the territory of Ukraine, which with the aim of assimilating the Ukrainian nation into the mytho-Soviet people, continued a systematic Russification policy regarding all social components, primarily education, through the prism of communist propaganda as the basis of a totalitarian society. Currently, the ideas of Ukrainian teachers regarding the reform of school education in Soviet Ukraine of the 1920s, and foreign scientists who influenced the pedagogical discourse, were actualized during the development of the New Ukrainian School. A comparative analysis of these ideas may be the subject of a new scientific study.

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