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## THE NOTION OF A CHILD AND CHILDHOOD IN THE UKRAINIAN EDUCATIONAL TRADITIONS

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Childhood is a very important period of human life that begins with the birth of a child. Each culture and nation in the world had different attitudes towards education and upbringing of a child. The notion of "child" in the Ukrainian culture appears at every element of the society's life. Therefore, the aim of the article is to analyze the peculiarities of the perception of the world of childhood through the prism of folk ideas and culture in Ukraine. The paper reveals the notion of a child and childhood and their place in Ukrainian folk, traditions and culture. It covers the periods from Kyiv Rus to modern times and considers all significant aspects of Ukrainian culture, i.e., paintings, sculpture, prose, traditions and customs, lifestyle, and beliefs. Furthermore, the article presents different examples of the presentation of the notion "child" in the spheres of the Ukrainian culture. It is proved that a child was a significant element in the social and cultural life of Ukrainians in different periods. Ukrainian educational tradition paid great attention to the excellent education of children. Thus, the article demonstrates the attitude towards children of different ages mentioned in works by various artists, painters, writers, and sculptors. It is essential to recognize that religion played a crucial role in children's education by the mid 21st century, which was presented in the culture. Furthermore, the paper present the attitude of the society towards children of different origin i.e. orphans, children with one parent, homeless children etc. Folk pedagogical views on the development and education of children are the material that points to the role assigned to children within the folk culture. Therefore, it is important to research the history and evolution of these views in order to implement the best examples into the educational process.

Keywords: childhood, child, education methods, customs and traditions, history of pedagogy.

**Introduction.** Children are the most important element in any society worldwide. Childhood is a stage of ontogenetic development of an individual, which begins with the birth of a child and ends with the introduction into adult

life (of course, in adolescence). In fact, as a socio-cultural phenomenon, childhood has a specific historical character and history of development. The primary social function of childhood, which is to prepare a person for independent adult work, determines age differentiation, duration, and originality of childhood. The nature and content of certain periods of childhood are also influenced by specific socio-economic and ethnocultural features of the society in which the child lives and the system of public education (Рапацевич, 2005, p. 121).

Numerous scholars have researched the issue of child education in the context of cultural environment, among them: M. Stelmakhovych, M. Yevtukh, Zh. Petrozhko, I. Shcherbak, M. Hanenko, D. Stepovyk and others. However, there is a lack of research concerning the history of child education in the Ukrainian culture.

**The study aims to** research the notion of child, childhood, and child education in the Ukrainian culture and educational traditions.

# Ethnopedagogical views on child development in the Ukrainian culture.

Folk pedagogy is a holistic pedagogical system with a clearly defined purpose of education and traditionally established means to achieve it. The content and methods of folk pedagogy are based on folk worldview and folk psychology, i.e., ethno pedagogy was created following the people's soul, mentality (Павлюк, 2006, p. 192). Pedagogical culture of different nations, their views on the education of the younger generation are mainly similar, have many standard features, although they have their differences.

The cordocentric nature of the Ukrainian character, dreaminess, gentleness, and lyricism determined the general humanistic style of Ukrainian Ethno pedagogy. This humanism is first of all manifested in a particular attitude to the child, his health, and well-being in the system of national values. In Ukrainian Ethno pedagogy, a child is a gift of God. It should be protected and cared for, and the abuse is forbidden (Павлюк, 2006, p. 192). The happiness of having children is mentioned in several folk proverbs and sayings: "Children are God's dew", "Little children are bright stars: they shine and rejoice in a night" (Павлюк, 2006, p. 215), "Children are the greatest joy in the world", "A house with children is a bazaar, and without children – wasteland" (Євтух, 2003, р. 143). While wishing someone prosperity, Ukrainians means the children: "Happy hour to you! To see the sun, the world, and the children in front of you". The same opinion can be observed in the Ethno pedagogy of other proverbs: "Without branches - not a tree, without children - not a family", "Childless as a hollow tree: no face, no firewood", "Where there are children, there is joy", "Children the basis of happiness", "There are many troubles with children, but without them the world is unpleasant", "Children decorate the house" (Стельмахович, 1991, p. 95).

There was a belief among the Ukrainians that every family should have children: "If no child grows up, it will be a difficult hour in old age". There has always been a favorable attitude to having many children in Ukraine: "One son is not a son, two sons are half a son, three sons are a son", "He has seven daughters, then happiness to all" (Павлюк, 2006, p. 215). Several Ukrainian folk proverbs and sayings: "I feed seven sons, I prepare happiness for all". Simultaneously, preference was given to the birth of boys, which is traditional for all Slavic peoples. For example, among the southern Slavs, a woman who gave birth exclusively to girls had no respect for her husband and was equated with infertile (Кузеля, 1906, p. 32).

The Ukrainian ethnocultural tradition provided clear age limits for youth to marry. Marriage was one of the critical social institutions associated with a particular system of ritual forms, motifs, and symbols. From the point of view of tradition, marriage and the birth of children were the obligatory stages of an individual's life cycle. There were many premarital, marital, postmarital customs and rituals, which aimed to ensure the fertility of the couple. Magical actions aimed at the birth of offspring (mostly male) were an integral part of the structure of the wedding ceremony (Щербак, 2004, p. 10–11).

The time of birth of the child was an important factor that determined its future. There are different folk "versions" – the idea of the emergence of fate in the Ukrainian tradition. According to some, fate is born with a child or endowed by angels or God; according to other beliefs, the fate or misfortune of the child is given by the mother.

In addition, in folk notions of a happy/unhappy fate, the day the child is born plays a significant role. The definition of such birthdays was mainly associated with the general idea of their division into male/female by grammatical gender and, accordingly, positive or negative semantics for a person of a specific sex, i.e., if a girl was born on a man's day (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday), it was considered an ominous sign (IIIepδακ, 2004).

Certain stages of physical development of a child in the first year of life, namely: the appearance of the first tooth, walk, movement of the child to the outside space, food restrictions, etc., were associated with specific ideas and magical actions (Щербак, 2004).

The significant indication is that in the past, the childhood period was shorter than it is now, and children were much more likely to become involved in adult life. A peasant, whose life was full of work, went through three stages of human life: childhood, when a person is unproductive and depends on the help and care of others; adulthood, which began from the moment when it could be involved in work, and old age, when there is no strength, and the person is unfit for work. In a

situation where every pair of hands was on the account, and on the other hand, everyone who could not work was a burden to the family, it is not surprising that childhood was as short as possible, and children worked at home, on the farm, in the field (Zoladz, 2006, p. 24–15).

Even though it was essential for every Ukrainian family to have children, their attitude was not always gentle. Mother had to work a lot, and in the summer, she spent much time outside the house. During this period, infants were with their mothers in special field cradles. Older children remained at home alone or under the supervision of sisters (sometimes 3–4 years old) or family members who could not work. This situation caused high injuries to children, as well as their mortality.

There was a phenomenon of high birth rates and deaths in the rural environment of that time, not only in Ukraine but also in Europe. For example, during the XVII–XVIII centuries in Western European countries, one-fifth to one-third of all newborns died in the first year of life. Less than half of them lived to 20 years (Кон, 1999, p. 450). Polish educator Dorota Żołądź-Strzelczyk provides the following statistics: 35 % of infants died by the first year of life, more than 55 % by the fifth year, and only 35 % by adulthood (Zoladz, 2006, p. 25). Therefore, the attitude of families to the death of a child was often calm (Зидер, 1997, p. 36–40). Children were under the complete control of their parents and were obliged to obey them in everything (Ганенко, 1886, p. 139).

In the works on Ukrainian Ethno pedagogy by M. Stelmakhovych an attempt was made to single out methods of educational influence on the child (Стельмахович, 1991). In particular, among them were: approval, persuasion, suggestion, a positive example. However, earlier ethnographic works, particularly by M. Hrushevsky, N. Zahlady, indicate that the family often used repressive methods against the child: quarrel, threats, intimidation, curses, corporal punishment (Грушевський, 2006). From the second year of a child's life, corporal punishment has become one of the most common methods of upbringing. They were used against a child who was guilty of something. It was believed that if they were not beaten, "then it will grow inhumanely". The word "beat" was used often instead of "education" (Залужний, 1928).

However, despite the lack of maternal attention, the use of punishment in upbringing and attitude to parents, particularly mothers, in the Ukrainian family has always been respectful. In the popular consciousness, the image of the mother is surrounded by a halo of holiness.

The families also gave birth to children from unmarried relationships. The birth of illegitimate children, orphans, was condemned because it deprived the child of harmony in development, forced him to suffer (Павлюк, 2006, p. 192).

Infanticide was the most terrible sin in the Ukrainian educational tradition (Стельмахович, 1991, p. 97). It was believed that after death, a woman would face a terrible punishment: in that world, she would forever eat her unborn children

(Петров, 6–8). Moreover, the prevalent morality of Ukrainians interpreted the very attempt to prevent childbirth as a grave sin. Therefore, in the second half of the nineteenth century - the first half of the twentieth-century women generally did not terminate pregnancies, even if the birth of a child was undesirable (Павлюк, 2006). A lesser sin was considered actions aimed at temporary contraception (Zoladz, 2006).

The next critical moment in human life was baptism and naming. The church accepted all children, but the priest often gave illegitimate strange, rarely used names. However, despite the illegal status of illegitimate children, the people believed that their birth was easy and that they were happy. Such beliefs are characteristic of the Slavic and Germanic peoples. It was an honorable mission to be the godfather and mother of such children.

# The evolution of the notion of "child" and "childhood" in the Ukrainian art.

Ukrainian art, including painting, is inseparable from the processes that have taken place and are currently taking place in Western Europe. As a state at the crossroads from Europe to Asia, Ukraine borrowed both Western and Eastern traditions of art. However, the peculiarities of these borrowings, the degree of independence in the reflection of reality should be studied not by teachers but by art critics. Artistic images for pedagogues can be a reasonable basis for interpreting the child's status in a particular historical era and the peculiarities of the world of childhood in different historical periods.

The work of Ares stands out among the studies of the history of childhood (Αρьес, 1999). The work is interesting because the interpretation of childhood is based on artifacts, including and works of art: icons, paintings, sculptures, tombstones. A comparative analysis of this historian's work with the peculiarities of Ukrainian iconography or painting allows determining the affinity of Ukrainian art with Western European, simultaneously revealing what was familiar and what was different in the child's interpretation in the Western European nations and Ukrainians.

The concept of "child-sacrum" includes a child's participation in the sacred life, i.e., in the life of God, in life with God, and God. The child-sacrum cannot exist in itself, by itself. It becomes only in communion with God, in the presence of personal faith in Him. Through the possibility of communion with God, every Christian acquires dignity and participates in the life of God himself. Therefore, the sacrum of a person arises from its origin, liberation, and purpose.

An example of the sacrum child is the image of the little Christ, the god-like being, the Son of God, who came into this world in human form to fulfill his mission of freeing humanity from sin. His image on the icons testifies the perception of people of different eras, not just the image of God, but also the image of the child and childhood. The first images of Christ the Child can be observed on

medieval icons. However, the style of his depiction has its peculiarities, which gave Ares reason to believe that the Middle Ages did not know childhood (Apьec, 1999). This conclusion was prompted by the fact that children were rarely depicted in paintings, and the way they were depicted resembled adults, only in a reduced size.

Medieval Ukrainian art followed the path taken by European art. However, unfortunately, in "History of the Ukrainian icon of the X-XX centuries". D. Stepovyk has not mentioned the reproductions of Ukrainian icons that would belong to the period of X-XI centuries and depicting children's images. However, according to the author, there were icons with the image of the Mother of God and the little Jesus Christ (Степовик). In general, the cult of the Virgin Mary is characteristic of Ukrainians, and therefore icons with her image have always been highly valued. The icons of the Mother of God came to Rus' from Byzantium. "The most common plot was different in inner spiritual content and composition of the image of the Virgin Mary with her only begotten Son Jesus: total length (Oranta); seated (Hodegetria); when she tenderly caresses her Son (Adoration, or Tenderness, or in Greek - Eleus, or Glycophilus), when Jesus plays with the Mother (Game) and even when the Virgin Mary feeds the Son with the milk of her breast (Nurse, in Greek - Galactotrophus, in Latin - Virgo Lactams). Not all of these plot-compositional variants of the image of The Virgin Mary were equally widespread in Kyivan Rus during the Middle Ages. Artists had their favorite images, such as the seated Virgin Mary, Tenderness, and a little later - the image of the Virgin Mary of the Intercession..." (Степовик, 2004, p. 32–33).

The evolution of the image of childhood on icons continued in Europe. There are several types of an image of children, close to modern perception by the thirteenth century. The first is an angel, depicted as a very young man with feminine facial features, a teenager. The second type of child will become a model for all children's images in the history of fine arts: the child Jesus or the Mother of God with the Son because childhood is also connected with the mystery of motherhood and the cult of the Virgin Mary. The third type of child appears in the Gothic era: the naked child. The little Christ is rarely portrayed naked. Like other children his age, he is often wrapped in a diaper or dressed in a shirt or dress. The image of young nudity entered the fine arts as an allegory of death and the soul (Apbec, 1999).

To some extent, the depiction of a child on the samples of Ukrainian paintings reflected the changes that took place in Western European art. Accordingly, the evolution of Ukrainians' perceptions of childhood followed the same path as that of Western Europeans.

#### The image of a child and childhood in Ukrainian art.

The end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries in Ukraine became the boundary that distinguished art based on religious principles from the

new, secular one, in which aesthetic guidelines were connected with the real, devoid of scholastic dogma perception of man and the environment (Національний музей України). Representatives of the nobility, those who served the fatherland, had a chance to be immortalized in the portrait. The child had to come from a noble family to get on the canvas, or the artist had to be her father. This may indicate that there was no serious treatment of children or attempts to preserve their childlike image in memory and on canvas for a long time in the eighteenth century. However, it can also be evidence of the Ukrainian tradition of preferring sacred images.

There are several portraits of children among the exhibits of the National Art Museum of Ukraine. These are, in particular, "Children of the artist" (K. Pavlov, 1830s), "Portrait of the artist's children – Daria, Elizabeth, Michael" (E. Krendovsky, 1849), "Portrait of a young man from the family of Tomara" (G. Vasco, 1847). These are not family portraits. They show only children whose images are painted with love and admiration. However, among the exhibits of the XIX century, there are no portraits of peasant children, which is quite natural for this time.

The plot depicts various aspects of the lives of both noble and peasant children: games, education, participation in rituals, etc. However, no matter what the plot of the canvas was, no matter what angle the child is depicted, she is always either in the center of the canvas or in the foreground. Her life is recreated as realistically as possible. The paintings of Ukrainian artists can be connected to the life of a Ukrainian child: how she is dressed, what she does, with whom she spends time, what objects surround her.

The life of an urban and rural child is different. Urban children are often depicted either in the process of learning or on vacation. A good example is a work of S. Kostenko, "In the lesson" (1891): three boys leaned over the table and wrote something carefully. Scenes from rural life are more diverse. Almost every picture depicts children in national clothes. They take part in wedding ceremonies, meet parents from the bazaar, etc. However, there are examples in which children's lives are depicted as realistically as possible: a little girl holding a minor child. Another child is already a nanny (I. Izhakevich "Mother goes", 1898); or a tiny boy in peasant clothes, barefoot... In the background – cattle. The boy is a shepherd. He works on an equal footing with adults (W. Sternberg "Shepherd", 1836–1838).

The life of orphans was even more difficult. One can see such a boy on L. Zhemchuzhnikov's canvas "Kobzar on the Way" (1854). A little boy accompanies the kobzar (Kobzar – itinerant Ukrainian bard who played on traditional Ukrainian musical instruments kobza or bandura). His figure exudes loneliness and misery. He is in rags. His joyless life is recreated on canvas with the same dark colors.

There are almost no images of children's toys or entertainment in these paintings. Children are busy with household chores, helping adults. Their childhood was not similar to what it is today.

Children's images have often become the subject of interest of various artists. It can be seen in the works of the genius of Ukraine – Taras Shevchenko, a man of diverse talent. As an artist, he did not limit himself to choosing themes for drawings. "In Shevchenko, we see self-portraits, and portraits, and landscapes, and household drawings, and historical and religious, and allegories and mythological, and even illustrations to literary works" (Новицький, 1930, р. 16).

Many of them are dedicated to children, in particular, "Self-portrait – Shevchenko and Baigushi", "Portrait of Uskova with a child", "Children of Repnina-Volkonsky", "Baigushi", "Family scene near the house" and others. Actually, in the center of each of these pictures – children. Even in the "Self-Portrait", Kazakh children are depicted in the foreground, Shevchenko himself peeks out from behind the door in the background.

### The image of a child and childhood in the Ukrainian poetry and prose

The problem of reflecting the world of childhood in the Ukrainian literature of the XIX – first third of the XX century has its own characteristics. Among the variety of literary works, the main characters are children; one can observe the works for children and about them, which are not always the same. In particular, S. Prysyazhniuk points out that the concept of the addressee in the prose devoted to childhood is not the same. The stories about children can be distinguished into two groups. The works of the first, more quantitative, represent the social reflections of the world of childhood in Ukrainian literature. They are designed for the reader of unlimited age, "Father-humorist" by I. Franko, "Bell", "Katorzhna", "Paliy" by B. Hrinchenko, "Birthday present" by M. Kotsyubynsky, etc.). The authors of the stories study the position of children in society, their social status, ways of life, relations with adults and peers. In some works, the image of the child acquires a symbolic meaning. The second group constitutes the works of expressed didactic character, addressed to the small reader ("Olesia", "Watermelons" by В. Hrinchenko, "Kharytia", "Pine tree" by M. Kotsiubynskyi, etc.) (Присяжнюк, 2006, p. 140).

However, both categories of literary works reflect the life of a small child, illustrating the thoughts and experience of a growing individual. Works for children and about them have a colorful educational character; depict the ethical model that best fits the author's ideas about the ideal. "And this intentionality makes children's literature a unique document, which, like a drop of water, reflects the aspirations of a particular era, the dominant trends of social consciousness" (Іванюк, 2007).

The study of literary samples belongs to the field of literary criticism. However, for pedagogues, the analysis of artistic heritage can be an essential

source of information about the child's world and childhood in different eras, the child's place in the educational process, his status in relations with educators, etc. While examining the works of Ukrainian literature, one can observe the life of a Ukrainian child who has his sorrows and joys, aspirations and desires, problems, and finally, his subculture, and they meet the Ukrainian realities.

Literary works of Ukrainian authors about children can be divided into three groups:

- 1) works written in the second half of the nineteenth century the first half of the twentieth century;
  - 2) literature published in the 1920s;
  - 3) works created in the 30s of the twentieth century.

Each group has its features that characterize the world of childhood differently and carry a different value content.

The works of the first group characterize childhood as a world of poverty, misery, exile, pain, and suffering. A child lives in a world of adults and very quickly becomes an adult. The names of toys or children's games are rarely mentioned in these works. Mostly, children use the tools of adults. However, despite the difficult living conditions, the heroes show the best character traits: nobility, justice, kindness, honesty, prudence, receptivity. They are often depicted as orphans or, for some reason, deprived of parental care. Despite this, they grow up to be good people. In school, the characters are positioned as objects of the educational process, and they are influenced and expected to react. There is no individual approach to children in educational institutions, which further deepens their suffering.

The works of the second group tell about a child in the dream world of a beautiful future. Children live, work on an equal footing with adults, and sometimes are better than them. They are the bearers of the best values: educated, honest, fair, active, ready to build a new state. They are the subjects of self-creation, self-formation. However, one must not forget about the ideological direction of the literature of the period.

The works of the third group sensitively determined the child's status – she is the object of education. Educational models are offered to her, educational influences are directed at her, and a particular reaction is expected, up to self-sacrifice for the communist homeland. The world in which Soviet children live is depicted as the fairest, the best, and the most humane. The child remains at the center of the educational process. Literature, educational institutions, out-of-school institutions, libraries, etc., are created for it.

Thus, despite the specifics of Ukrainian literature of the second half of the XIX – the first half of the XX century for children and about children, it depicts a child-centered world. The child is at the center of either the educational process or

self-development, regardless of its position: the object or subject of educational influence.

#### Conclusion.

Folk pedagogical views on the development and education of the younger generation are the material that points to the role assigned to children within the folk culture. The attitude of Ukrainians to the child as a gift of God determined her future destiny.

Modern ethnopedagogical research often mythologizes the Ukrainian family and the upbringing of children because the treatment of the youngest family members was often contemptuous, harsh, and repressive methods of upbringing were widely used. Children with disabilities, as well as illegitimate children, were in a challenging situation. The latter often had no rights, were the object of ridicule and abuse. The fate of the orphans was somewhat better, as the people have always been sympathetic to them.

The first image of a child depicted in art was an infant Jesus. Its implementation has undergone some changes over time, as has the attitude towards children in society. These changes concerned the way the baby was portrayed first as a small adult, later – this child acquires childish features and is depicted not only on the mother's lap but also on her hands in diapers or naked. Children's types of the Middle Ages, close to modern perception, also include images of angels.

The world of childhood was also embodied in Ukrainian literature. Based on the analysis of literary works, the world of childhood changed following historical realities and attitudes in society towards children and childhood. In most Ukrainian literary works, regardless of whether a child is a subject of self-creation or an object of educational influence, he has high hopes and expectations.

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### ПОНЯТТЯ ДИТИНИ ТА ДИТИНСТВА В УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ ОСВІТНІЙ ТРАДИЦІЇ

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Дитинство – дуже важливий період у житті людини, який починається з народження дитини. Кожна культура і народ у світі по-різному ставилися до навчання та виховання дитини. Поняття «дитина» в українській культурі зустрічається в кожному елементі життя суспільства. Саме тому метою статті  $\epsilon$  аналіз особливостей сприйняття світу дитинства через призму народних уявлень та культури в Україні. У статті розкрито поняття дитини та дитинства та їх місце в українській народній культурі, традиції та мистецтві. Стаття охоплює періоди від Київської Русі до сьогодення. Розглянуто всі значущі сторони української культури: живопис, скульптура, проза, традиції та звичаї, побут, вірування. Крім того, у статті наводяться різні приклади представлення поняття «дитина» у сферах української культури. Доведено, що дитина була значущим елементом у суспільно-культурному житті українців різних періодів. Українська освітня традиція приділяла велику увагу процесу виховання дітей. У статті продемонстровано життя та ставлення до дітей різного віку, що також відображається у творах різних художників, митців, письменників, скульпторів. Важливо зауважити, що релігія відігравала вирішальну роль у вихованні дітей до середини 21 століття, що відображалося в культурі. Крім того, у статті представлено ставлення суспільства до дітей різного походження, тобто дітей-сиріт, дітей з одним із батьків, безпритульних дітей тощо. Народні педагогічні погляди на розвиток і виховання дітей є матеріалом, який вказує на роль, яка відводиться дітям у народному житті. культури. Тому важливо досліджувати історію та еволюцію цих поглядів, щоб впровадити найкращі приклади у навчальний процес.

*Ключові слова*: дитинство, дитина, методи виховання, звичаї та традиції, історія педагогіки.