

Christianocentrism as an axiological platform for education in the context of the postmodern philosophical paradigm of youth policy

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ABSTRACT

The article provides a theological and cultural reflection of the ideological and theoretical influences of the postmodern paradigm of thinking on the formation of modern models of education and upbringing. The leading line is the justification of the statement about the need to involve the potential of Christian pedagogy in its functional forms, strategic goals and axiological manifestations in the educational process in modern Ukrainian schools at all its levels. Considerable attention is focused on the interpretation of the ideological and value foundations of the theological and cultural understanding of Christian pedagogy and the clarity of the specifics of its functional nature and moral-forming significance. By identifying the leading trends in the development of Christian pedagogy during the "Golden Age" of patristics, it is proved that the Patristic interpretation of the content and functions of Christian pedagogy has not only not lost its relevance, but should also be the basis of the modern paradigm of national education and upbringing. On the example of theoretical developments of K. Ushynskii, the intransitive significance of the foundations of christianocentrism for the formation of modern pedagogical and didactic components of education and upbringing was justified. The subject of the research is the leading foundations of the formation and development of Christian pedagogy in the context of the postmodern philosophical paradigm, its moral and value orientations and ideological and praxeological orientation.

Keywords: Christianocentrism, philosophy of education, Christian pedagogy, post-secular paradigm, education, upbringing, didactics.

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INTRODUCTION

It is absolutely unnecessary to prove that the modern philosophy of education and upbringing took the path of dismantling the Soviet pedagogical experience, which was based on Marxist materialist ideology. Nevertheless, the way it progresses and what she relies on this path cannot but cause warnings and even anxiety. Therefore, the human personality overshadowed by sin is at the center of the current socio-cultural paradigm, and not the perfect ideal that humanity has crystallized for centuries, turning to the evangelical origins of Christian pedagogy.

Anti-values are imposed on the younger generations of schoolchildren and students, which are put on a par with truthful and intransitive moral and ethical principles. For

instance, such characters as a "woman" with a beard who first appeared on the arena show, and later, through the promotion of tolerance for everyone and everything, became almost a typical example of modern freedom in human's choice (including gender!) of a person.

It is quite frustrating to observe how the latest philosophy of education, instead of cooperating with the religious-spiritual worldview with its fundamental spiritual-moral laws, or to turn to the historically formed pedagogical experience, which was established as a result of the synthesis of achievements of theological and secular education and science, also indirectly supports, and sometimes even initiates the leveling of Christian

values in the scientific and educational process. All this is the result of total and aggressive secularization, the origin of which was postmodern philosophy. Having proclaimed herself an emancipator of consciousness, civilizational and cultural experience, ideals and ideological paradigms of past eras, it took the path of radical rethinking, revision and reassessment¹, and often outright destruction.

Ivan Ortynsky, a well-known theologian and practicing priest of the Ukrainian diaspora, describing the immediate spiritual, cultural and moral priorities of the local Ukrainian youth, concludes the following: "if the patriotic attitude to the lost motherland has long been irrelevant and out-of-date, not topical and outdated, then a much more surprising anachronism and a terrifying return is an attempt to combine our aspirations with religion, relying on it in our competitions. However, it would be completely counteracting and contraindicating for our ideologues to invoke and put on the faith in the afterlife, for which there is no place in the current world for God, whom modern humanity does not know and does not need."² Of course, this quote could not have been given if the situation in Ukraine had been more reassuring.

Friedrich Schelling (1775-1854), having high hopes for philosophy, argued that "philosophy must meet great demands and finally bring out of the darkness humanity, which may consciously or unconsciously have lived unworthily for too long, without knowing joy."³ What kind of joy philosophy, and even more so postmodern philosophy, has given humanity, judge for yourself. However, those paradisiacal ideological and semantic berries that modern man consumes today or, on the contrary, rejects as fruits of dubious quality are the result of its development in the struggle and confrontation with religion, especially Christian as declared by God.

The main reason for the failure of philosophy to fulfill its high goal and vocation is its superficiality, and this superficiality is determined by its atheistic enthusiasm. Noticeably, Francis Bacon (1561-1626), one of the leading theorists of empiricism, warned against this trend in philosophy.

The thinker was convinced that it is "superficial philosophy that inclines the human mind to godlessness."⁴ Instead, the depth of philosophy directs him to believe in God, and therefore to undergo religious experience.

¹ N.Burukovska. Philosophy of the postmodern era: evolution of the problematics / N. B. Burukovska // Bulletin of the Academy of Advocacy of Ukraine: scientific journal – K.: B. of the Acad. of Advocacy of Ukraine, 2011 – p.3 (22). – P. 5-6.

² I. Ortynskyy. Christianity in its manifestations and modern problems. Selected works / Father Ivan Ortynskyy / Adj., scient. edit. and auth. stud. A. Kolodnyy / Series "Thinkers of Ukrainian diaspora". – K.: UAR, 2014. – P. 892.

³ O. Hryniv. History of the Philosophy / Oleh Hryniv. – Lviv : 2015. – P. 3.

⁴ M.Shkribliak. Bringing back Christocentrism as the basis of the modern national education in Ukraine / Mykola Shkribliak // Axiosphere of education: historical tendencies and modern priorities : collect. monography / edit. by member-corresp. of NAESU Vasyl Balukh. – Chernivtsi: Yurii Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, 2018. – P. 128.

While fully sharing F. Bacon's statement, we are also aware of the fact that postmodern philosophy has a place for "deep" thinking based on faith in God. Therefore, it is not surprising that despite the propaganda of godlessness, more and more people are turning their eyes not in the direction of scientific and technological progress and scientific achievements, but to ancient religious revelations and the teachings of the church on salvation, thinking not about spaceships, but about finding reliable guidelines for preserving life on Earth.

It is also unnecessary to prove that neither the twentieth century nor the twenty-first century was a period of final departure from religion, but rather the opposite. In this regard, researchers rightly note that the ideological "certainty" of modern man is inspired primarily by the revelation and constant participation of the faithful in the liturgical life, and then in turn serves as a model for the norms of social life.⁵

Yet, postmodern philosophical thought, in addition to the annoying criticism of classical philosophy with its characteristic "logocentrism", "theocentrism", "anthropocentrism" and the intensification of the justification of some kind of "new" paradigms of knowledge, theories of knowledge, methodologies, understanding of the relationship "object – subject", new principles of the formation of the conceptual and categorical apparatus of philosophy and so on, in fact, did not give humanity much to solve the anthropogenic crisis, its spiritual and moral recovery and approval in service truth, kindness and justice. Rather, on the contrary, it accelerated the advent of the post-truth era, in which manipulation technologies play a major role, and populism most often wins.

Taking into account the theoretical and praxeological achievements of the postmodern paradigm of thinking and the comprehensive influence on almost all spheres of human social existence, the problem of scientific and theological reflection of Christian pedagogy in its functional forms, strategic goals and axiological manifestations is actualized. Therefore, the main purpose of our reflections presented in the article is an attempt at theological justification of its moral, cognitive and soteriological potential, the formation of the fundamental foundations of which falls on the era of the early Middle Ages and, in particular, the period of the "Golden Age" of patristics.

In order to achieve the goal, the following research tasks had to be performed:

- to analyze the ideological and value foundations of religious and theological understanding of Christian pedagogy and identify specific forms of its development;
- to find out the features and identify the leading trends in the development of Christian pedagogy during the

⁵ I. Horokholinska. Postsecularism: philosophical and theological intentions of the modern religiousness: monography / Iryna Horokholinska. – Chernivtsi: Yurii Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, 2019. – P. 424.

"Golden Age" of patristics; - to determine the influence of patristic interpretation of the functional nature of Christian pedagogy on the formation of the modern paradigm of education and upbringing;

- on the example of theoretical developments of K.Ushynskiy to substantiate the intransitive significance of the formation of modern pedagogical and didactic models based on the principles of christianocentrism.

The subject of the research is the leading foundations of the formation and development of Christian pedagogy in the early Middle Ages, and the object is the scientific and theological discourse on the role and place of evangelical moral and ethical attitudes as the basis of the theory and practice of education and upbringing.

DEGREE OF SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROBLEM, THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE RESEARCH, METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE NOVELTY OF THE ARTICLE

Justification of moral and value orientations of modern education and science and actualization on this basis of the didactic resource of Christian pedagogy obliged the authors to search for and form such a methodological framework of research that would make it impossible to belittle the role and significance of both scientific and philosophical (secular) and Church-theological (religious) approaches to the interpretation of the key tasks of education and upbringing and, in particular, to determine their cognitive and moral and educational potential. Based on the fact that the Church-theological approach considers positive only that understanding of the tasks of pedagogy and the functions of education, which has an ontological orientation and helps a person to comprehend salvation, we often refer to the Holy Scriptures, catechetical instructions of the Church, as well as scientific, theoretical and practical developments in the field of education and schooling, which it has managed to accumulate over the centuries and which have not lost their relevance to this day.

The discourse is based on a synergistic approach to the study of the problems of christianocentrism as an axiological platform of education and upbringing, and therefore the conceptualization of the main generalizing statements of the article is based on the results of a broad involvement and thorough analysis of both theological and philosophical-pedagogical works – monographs, articles, reports, interviews, etc. – scientists of past centuries and modern leading scientists, for example, K.Ushinsky, Ivan Ogienko (Metropolitan Hilarion), Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, fathers Ivan Ortinsky and Stepan Yarmusia, G. Vashchenko and others, whose works highlight the theoretical, ideological and semantic foundations, and most importantly – outline the mechanisms of moral and spiritual education and, at the same time, reveal the role and place of the Church in

the formation of the Ukrainian national education system. In the context of our research, the works of modern scientists – philosophers, teachers, sociologists and psychologists, whose research highlights the leading trends in the development, content and practical orientation of educational reform in Ukraine during the independence period, are also significant. We are talking primarily about the works of V. Kremen, L. Koval, N. Lysenko, M. Piren, P. Losyuk, V. Andrushchenko, V. Bekh, V. Shinkaruk, V. Krysachenko and others.

So, the methodological basis of the article was composed by the works of authors of different eras, schools and social strata, and the source base – various origin (church and secular) documents, treatises, homilies, letters, etc. and, in particular, the works of Vasilii Velykyi, Ivan Zolotous, Ivan Listvichnik, Theophan Zatvornyk, etc. Together they help to reveal as deeply as possible the content of the principle of christianocentrism, which is not only the most cultivated concept in the article, but also the cornerstone, according to the authors, in the post-secular paradigm of education and science.

The leading method of research is the method of theoretical generalization of dominant trends in modern education and upbringing, as well as the content of the National concept of education, its ideological and value orientation, etc.

In general, for the implementation of the research goal, a complex of scientific-theological, historical-pedagogical and general scientific methods was used: search-bibliographic, system-genetic, logical-theological and logical-pedagogical analysis and generalization, as well as content analysis to determine the conceptual and categorical apparatus of pedagogy as a science and academic discipline and in the secular and religious constitution.

Methods of classification, comparison and juxtaposition of data, events, phenomena and facts are also actively used, which allowed us to more clearly justify the advantages of incorporating the religious and theological component into secular education and science, the importance of attracting practical experience in studying moral theology, the theory and practice of Christian (Church) pedagogy.

Important in their cognitive potential are historical-retrospective analysis, chronological, historical-structural methods for studying the problem in dynamics, changes in time and space, which made it possible to clearly identify the leading trends in the development of Christian education and upbringing, as well as the formulation of scientifically balanced statements about the importance of the influence of patristic understanding of the functional nature of Christian pedagogy on the formation of modern didactics.

Conceptualization of the novelty of the article is reduced to articulation on the content of Christian pedagogy, which consists in concretizing the essence of Christian values and ideals that humanity in their most perfect form received in the earthly ministry of Jesus

Christ.

The author's pragmatism of the discourse stated in the article consists primarily in a comprehensive understanding of the moral, ethical, spiritual component of pedagogy, which is carried out on the example of biblical ideals, evangelical models and values, focusing on their free choice by those who teach and those who study. These, without any doubt, are the sources of the Christian faith – the Holy Scriptures and Sacred Tradition, as well as the historical experience of national pedagogy, which has never run counter to church-religious pedagogy, and therefore appear as an indispensable prerequisite for mastering the ontological and value foundations of the national system of education and upbringing.

The leading idea of the article is the idea of the National paradigm of education and upbringing, based on the Ukrainian national pedagogy, deeply rooted in the Patristic spiritual and pedagogical heritage and firmly based on autochthonous ethno-religious sources, the formation of which was influenced by such Ukrainian thinkers as G. Skovoroda, T. Shevchenko, K. Ushinsky, I. Polyui, V. Vernadsky, P. Kulish, etc. This concept is confirmed by the inexhaustible potential of Christian pedagogy as an important factor in the humanization of school education, which is possible only by attracting the evangelical moral and ethical potential and patristic understanding of the ontological and soteriological goals of the great didactics. The authors are convinced that such an approach can not only establish in the system of educational values the idea of the existence of God, but also His Providence, without the recognition of which the world loses its balance and turns into a Hegelian "stupid infinity", and human life – into a meaningless presence in it (this Infinity).

The justification of christianocentrism in pedagogy aims to destroy the false Protagoras' idea of man as the measure of all things (which was extremely reformed in the Renaissance era). In other words, the socio-philosophical myth that everything useful to a person as a social being is allowed. This paradigm creates prospects for the fact that any sin, if it does not harm another, is proclaimed a norm, that is, something that seems to certify the high civilizational maturity of a democratic and legal society.

Main presentation of the material and leading topics of the discussion

In secular thematic literature, it is well-established that pedagogy in its most general definition appears as "the science of teaching and upbringing of younger generations"⁶, that is, the theory and practice of education and upbringing. Of course, there are more

detailed and specified content of the concept of pedagogy. And whatever we put into the definition of pedagogy and whatever accents we place, it was and will remain the "art of Education". However, we emphasize that this art or skill, like any other fruit of human genius, can lose its inner potential, and, consequently, itself, if they are deprived of their spiritual principle. In this vein, pedagogy becomes particularly vulnerable, and even more so in conditions when it is sought to "cut" according to the patterns of postmodern philosophy, for which the spiritual is secondary.

Based on the fact that the main impulse of the development of modern pedagogy is the search and justification of original pedagogical systems, built mainly on philosophical guesses of the postmodern era or due to the needs of a specific historical period of humanity's existence, the need for personal self-realization of teachers is manifested, their desire to create something corresponding to the spirit of the time, that is, modern, innovative. In fact, this intensifies the idea of many innovative educators to liberate the teacher's consciousness and their pedagogical practice from the established principles of education and upbringing, the historical experience of their implementation, general standards and state requirements. Such educators, as well as those for whom their experiment is intended, console themselves through the fact that the road to knowledge is open and unrestricted to them, and thus to the methods and principles of their assimilation. Everything seems to be happening according to the command of the Apostle Paul: "Everything is permissible for me," but the apostle immediately warned that "not everything is useful" (1 Cor. 6:12). At the same time, experience shows that modernization and innovation for the sake of modernization and innovation do not give the desired results, but rather the opposite.

It seems to us that the Ukrainian education system is following the path of "permissiveness", which in the context of the postmodernist paradigm is becoming commonplace. And this permissiveness is put on a par with pedagogical traditions and experience that are crystallized by ages and generations.

Formally, all this is presented as care for mental, spiritual, moral, national-patriotic, environmental, economic, aesthetic, physical, sports and health and other education⁷, but for some reason the indicators of EIT become lower, the number of able to confirm school physical standards decreases, as well as the number of young men who are morally and physically fit for service in the Armed Forces, etc.

The opposite result of this postmodern philosophy of education is confirmed by the fact that aggression,

⁶ S. Honcharenko . Ukrainian pedagogical dictionary / Semen Goncharenko. - K.: Lybid, 1997. - P. 250.

⁷ Anthology of texts on Ukrainian education reformation: programs, concepts, projects (1991-2017) : anthology. NAESU, Vasyl SUKHOMLYNSKYI SSPLU ; [adj.: Sukhomlynska O. V., Beresivska L. D., Havrylenko T. L. and others; scient. edit. Sukhomlynska O. V., Beresivska L. D.] . Vinnytsia : PLC "Tvory", 2019. 526 p.

violence and suicidal tendencies are growing among student youth. This mosaic is complemented by statistics on young convicts because of bloody crimes, robberies, and rapes, which are often committed by those who are called to guard law and order.

At first glance, it may seem that the authors are somewhat dramatizing, but the fact that Ukrainian society is in a deep and possibly bleak crisis is recognized at the national level, because otherwise what is the point of enshrining it in many official documents, including the Constitution of Ukraine. At the same time, the problem of moral and spiritual education of pupils and students has become one of the key ones. This can be easily confirmed by the fact that in the last decade, hundreds or even thousands of studies, monographs, and scientific articles have been devoted to it. And how many different projects, concepts, programs and strategies have been developed, approved and even implemented at public expense. Let's take, for example, the works of S. Goncharenko and Y. Malovany who are the authors of the concept of humanization and humanization of education (2001), O. Sukhomlinskaya who is the author of the concept of principles "formation of individual spirituality based on Christian moral values" (2002), and I. Bekh, V. Kreminya, M. Stelmakhovych, Y. Rudenko, B. Stuparyk, O. Vyshnevsky⁸ and others. However, there is no opportunity to rejoice in the results.

Despite the fact that the conceptualization of the modern paradigm of education and upbringing is focused on spiritual and moral recovery⁹, there are no positive changes. And in our deep conviction, this will continue until the Ukrainian national educational system rejects the postmodern philosophical ideology with its relativism and returns to Christian-centrism in education and upbringing.¹⁰

It is known that the basis of any pedagogical areas is the search for ideological sources of spiritual and moral growth of the individual.

But not everyone who considers himself a teacher is able to realize that this source cannot be identified, based only on theoretical considerations and methodological innovations, to understand that it is determined by the free will that God has rewarded a human being, creating them in His own image and likeness (Gen. 1, 26), which leads either to the recognition of the existence of God, or to His denial and contempt. The desire to do without God, to hide from God, or to avoid meeting Him is manifested in various forms, primarily through ignorance.

Etymologically, "school" comes from the Latin "*scola*" - stairs, steps, and we are talking here primarily about the

steps (ladder) of spiritual ascent of human. At least this understanding of the inner nature, meaning and significance of this word was insisted on by the famous Christian thinker, devotee of faith and piety Ivan Listvychnyk (579 - 649) in his extremely popular work "Listvytsi"¹¹.

In it, the reverend substantiated 30 steps of spiritual ascent, the last and highest of which is Love. Thus, school in his understanding means a rocky ladder, the steps of which inevitably lead to perfection, and, consequently, to the heights of heaven. In the spiritual-moral and educational sense, it is a school of educating a child of such moral qualities and cognitive abilities, which are designed to promote their physical and spiritual improvement not only so that they can rise to the highest stage of this process, that is to achieve holiness.¹² It should not be forgotten that precisely because of the loss of its own spiritual essence and orientation, the modern school, like pedagogy in general, has become a laboratory where most knowledge and skills are produced, but no account is given of the dangers and threats posed by "literate savages", namely people who are smart, but spiritless and immoral.

After all, knowledge is a truly great force and a powerful weapon, but its axiological potential directly depends on the purity of the heart and the spiritual and moral principles of man, which must be instilled and nurtured constantly.

The crisis of education inevitably leads to a crisis of society, its degradation, the most terrible of which is the spiritual crisis of the "homo sapiens". For modern Ukrainian society, it is more obvious and acute than ever.

It is known that a child's worldview is based mostly on the actions and examples of adults, the moral basis of which allows for immoral behavior. The media constantly propagate the cult of power, promote debauchery, and enrich themselves at any cost – all of which are a significant counteraction to healthy family and school upbringing. The distorted social process tragically affects the lives of many people since childhood, namely homelessness, domestic violence, child trafficking, begging, and so on.

This difficult experience of social development, and hence its reflection in theory and practice, is well reflected not only by church educators and theologians, but also by philosophers, theologians, sociologists, and representatives of many other humanities. There are dozens or even hundreds of scientific articles and monographs on the axiological justification of the nature and goals of Christian pedagogy, its role and place in the

⁸ O. Kyslashko. Christian pedagogy. O. P. Kyslashko, I. P. Sidanych. *Dukhovna vis'* publ., 2015. – P. 103-113.

⁹ L. Khoruzha, V. Kyrychok. Spiritual and moral education of schoolchildren in Ukraine: experience and ways of improvement // *Native school*. - K.: Press, 2013. - C.26.

¹⁰ M. Shkribliak. Bringing back Christocentrism as the basis of the modern national education in Ukraine. – P. 134-135.

¹¹ Listvychnyk Ioan. Spiritual ladder. Holy venerable fathers Barsanufiy and Ioan. About feats and the struggle with passions. Saint Abba Dorotheus. *Ascetic instructions*. Trans. from the Russian Damyana Kichi. Lviv: Misioner publ., 2002. 185 p.

¹² M. Shkribliak. Bringing back Christocentrism as the basis of the modern national education in Ukraine. – P. 134-135.

modern system of education and upbringing¹³. And although most of them confirm the need to incorporate religious and theological knowledge into the modern educational process, many still advocate the autonomy of both secular education and upbringing. And instead of humanizing and spiritualizing education, they carry out its mechanical humanization, which, however, without involving the spiritual potential of Christian pedagogy, gives little, and often has the opposite effect. After all, the humanization of education, which is currently reduced to an increase in the number of subjects in the humanities, without a religious and spiritual component, is more like the sower abundantly sowing wheat, the grain of which has no core.

Thus, a reasonable question arises as to why Ukrainian society and the scientific and pedagogical elite in particular, realizing the existing problem, have actually done so little to correct this stalemate. In our opinion, it is due to the fact that modern education on the one hand did not have time or, perhaps, did not hurry to get rid of Marxist-Leninist determinism, and on the other hand – completely devoted itself to ideological webs of postmodern philosophy, where pantheism, deism and naturalism celebrate their debauched ball. The most mundane scientific and philosophical form, which, of course, has negatively affected the pedagogical thought and practice of education, is naturalism. The detrimental effect of this ideology is not that it promotes the search for driving forces of personal growth in nature, including human nature as part of it, but that it, by absolutizing the role of scientific knowledge in pedagogy, deprives pedagogical thinking of inspiration and reduces it to the level of elementary causality, and all manifestations of spiritual life – to psychologism. It also "psychologically" proposes to solve other ontological problems of human existence, and especially personal immortality. It seems to continue in other people or lower-level beings.

Another philosophical extreme, deism, seeks to overcome the naturalistic-pantheistic orientation of pedagogy. His theorists tried to take the problems of pedagogy beyond the inherent causality of naturalism, offering man a recipe for self-exaltation not only by the forces of nature, but also by formulating for himself a higher goal. To this end, the concept of the inalienable meaning of universal values, the source of which still remained man, was substantiated. And it would seem that a good solution has been found. But in reality this is not the case. After all, transcendentalism, not recognizing God as the only higher principle, deprived pedagogy not only of a clear definition of its main goal - spiritual perfection to the likeness of God in holiness and truth, but also by cultivating the ideology of God's transcendence, made him "deaf" to any requests and inquiries of all

participants in the educational process – both those who teach and those who learn. In fact, the idea of God's transcendence inclined the human mind to the occult.

Hence the crucial dilemma: what is the source of pedagogy and what should be the real education and upbringing? Meanwhile, the modern educator's appeal to the substantiation of pedagogy from a Christian point of view necessarily leads to the understanding that pedagogy is not an ordinary set of knowledge, theories and practices, but a vocation and choice of heart, which sometimes makes it even harder for a theologian and pastor than for any other secular person. This is primarily due to the fact that such teachers and educators consider human freedom to be the highest value.

At the same time, the authors are sure that propaganda of abstract freedom and fear of even the slightest 'violence against the person' that we can see today is just historically determined kind of fear. It is being generated because of the 'memory' of totalitarianism in recent year. As a result, this fear created a scholastic approach to education that prevailed in both secular and church schools and gained popularity at the end of the XIX-XX century. It laid social and moral foundations for alternating personality. Researchers demonstrate that the human mind (and especially the mind of a child) has this protective ability: "if parents <...> deny the facts of child abuse, the child may decide to forget that information. It may afflict their perception of reality because children should remember that event and erase it from their memory at the same time to avoid a similar situation in the future."¹⁴ But the same thing may happen between a child and a teacher in school. In Soviet times it was a common phenomenon.

But totalitarianism not only oppressed people in their practical and professional activity while trying to widen the dictatorship over people's consciousness and self-identification. It also forced those people to be a passive tool in the hands of the regime. It would usually execute public 'penitence' for loving something cherished and 'abandonment' of the closest and like-minded people just because they had been said to betray the party, the leader or the ideology, or declared a public enemy. Perfect examples are some soviet Ukrainian writers – Volodymyr Sosiura in particular. The transformation of his outlook under the influence of the communist-bolshevik became a subject of investigation of many researchers¹⁵.

Another thing to be said is that the soviet atheistic educational system induced the growth of such infamous phenomena as conformism and double standards. Unfortunately, schools and universities suffer from it even today. For that, Christian morals and pedagogics strongly condemn those phenomena. And because the modern

¹³ O. Hasiak. Religion as an integral part of humanization of education of intellectually and spiritually mature personality. Hasiak O., Shkribliak M. Scientific Bulletin of Chernivtsi University: scientific journal. Philosophy. Chernivtsi: Ruta, 2008. Issue 389-390. P. 82-88.

¹⁴ I. Reva. Beyond yourself: socio-psychological and cultural consequences of Holodomor and Stalin's repressions Popular Science publication. - 2nd ed., reworked. and add. – K.: K. I. S., 2019. – S. / Institute of public research. –Dnipropetrovsk: A. Svidler, 2013. – P. 156.

¹⁵ I. Reva. Ibid. - P.33 - 40.

educational system doesn't aim to change that, conformism is in the top 10 core values of Ukrainians, according to sociological polls conducted in 2013¹⁶. In the meantime, Ukraine is perhaps the only former Soviet nation with constant resistance in the past, nowadays and probably in the future. It was possible to tyrannize and manipulate Ukrainians, neglect their moral and cultural values, mock their history, disrespect their political and ideological amenities but only to a certain extent. Revolution of Dignity and sacrificial answer to Russia's occupation in Eastern Ukraine, which had been demonstrated by the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred, Heroes-Cyborgs, and various Volunteers proved that Ukrainians even have no fear of death.

In general, teachers treat God, the experience of the Christian Church, the involvement of priests in the educational process infrequently, formally, and insincerely. Their behaviour is being dictated by the vestige of the soviet past. Homo sovieticus perspective had been the main direction in educating society and individuals for seventy years. Although this study first appeared and began to assemble in the second part of the XIX century. "A decrease in the level of religiousness becomes a sign that the quality of education increases. As a result, the best-educated people say that the demonstration of any religiousness is a sign of ignorance or even madness... We tend to disgrace great personalities just because they claim to believe in God, consider praying and keeping up with commandments of Christ necessary."¹⁷ Konstantin Ushinsky said.

Why is it so crucial to endow pedagogics with Christian meaning and change educational system back to Christocentrism? First of all, it will allow enlightening people with Christ's studies about Humans as the Master and the apostle. Christianity believes and knows way more about the Human than the whole Enlightenment philosophy; it understands the Human deeper than post-modernist philosophical anthropology¹⁸. Christocentric pedagogics is ontological. It exists to help us comprehend if Humans can achieve or learn anything or if their accomplishments are a result of Divine Grace. Secular pedagogics does not even consider the latter though it may be more important than anything else.

Secular pedagogics consider human life as a temporary period that will inevitably come to an end, and that is why it should be subject to self-assessment. Christocentric pedagogics, on the other hand, interprets human existence through the prism of 'eternity' and 'immortality'; it aims to educate individuals, which are responsible to God not only for their own lives but also for keeping and developing historical and cultural traditions of their nation. The fate of the society goes into the

eschatological perspective, which we will eventually join through death. "If we can understand that there is no life without death, then we should educate ourselves with the same concept."¹⁹

While addressing the spiritual life, secular pedagogics only refers to its psychoemotional state. It substitutes spiritual means for mental, tries to deny the existence of God and the spiritual world in general. Essentially, this pedagogics is trivial though common. This trend appears not only in pedagogics and psychology but also in culture and history. In return, Christocentric pedagogics acknowledges the existence of God as an ontological premise of all things, and Humans in particular. It admits the existence of the spirit world – angels, including celestial spirits, or demon spirits. One cannot 'create' the spiritual life for a person only by developing their psychophysical functions. One cannot achieve their spiritual growth and improvement through brain building, development of willpower or senses, though spiritual life can mediate through this development. Therefore, the concept of the good and the evil in secular pedagogics is relative, in Christocentric pedagogics it is ultimate: the evil cannot be justified and rejected.

Ontological understanding of nature and educational functions is characteristic for the Christocentric pedagogics. In XIX century St. Theophan the Recluse wrote that the true meaning of education is being lost either due to poor awareness of its true sense, nature, aim, importance or due to neglect. This kind of education usually takes the wrong path, it becomes fake and harmful. Education may not bring desirable results even when it is based on established principles just because it deviates from the ontological goal. St. Theophan thought that the main reason for that problem is fake references²⁰. And this point of view is fair since the concept is not based on the worshiping of God or salvation. It is something else, something that we call physical health and beauty, and adaptation to the modern world with its trends and concept of 'fitting in'. This motto becomes the guide even for those who get theological education. Instead of trying to follow their patron saint and Christ the Saviour, they replicate their contemporaries from secular professions and declare that they 'want to fit in'. In all fairness, there are not many such 'individuals' but it is a solitary example.

Meanwhile, education is a path that leads to a process of proper self-fulfilment spiritually and culturally. This path also leads to salvation. Only providing that it unfolds its sense and performs needed functions, the main of which is to prepare for eternal life that starts here on earth, in the womb. That is why we baptize our babies and educate them since they are little.

Summing up theological and cultural interpretation of the theoretical and methodological principles and aims of

¹⁶ I. Reva . Ibid. - P.156

¹⁷ K. Ushinsky. Collection of unpublished works. Materials for pedagogical anthropology and materials for a biography. - SPb., 1908. - 142-143.

¹⁸ V. Zenkovsky. Problems of education in the light of Christian anthropology. - M., 1993. - P. 17.

¹⁹ V. Zenkovsky. Problems of education in the light of Christian anthropology. - P.132.

²⁰ Theophanes Zatvornyk. The way to salvation. - Moscow, 1899. - P. 62.

education, we may conclude that religious and axiological justification of the theoretical and practical teaching significantly differs from the secular understanding of the structural and functional nature of the didactics. It means that the times when morals and values of Christocentric pedagogics will be properly appreciated by secular humanities and even integrated into the modern educational system are still a while away from now.

Moreover, we have not yet formulated a clear concept of the Ukrainian school that would meet national ethnopsychological demands and Ukrainian-centric and Christocentric visions. One can agree with the assertion that the time has not yet come. That society needs to mature. Indeed, we have been wandering in this desert not for forty years, as was the case with the Israelites, but only for a third of a century. However, it is not worth rejoicing, because the Jews had their Moses, and in the case of the Ukrainian people, it is still more reminiscent of ritual dances around the Golden Calf. But this does not mean that this time should not be approached. For, as it is written in the Holy Scriptures, "from everyone *who has been given much, much will be demanded*; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48). Numerous choirs of moral authorities of the Ukrainian nation, which are present in virtually all intellectual environments — one of the pieces of evidence that we are on the verge of making a fateful decision: whether we will continue to sew new patches to old clothes and pour new wine into old wineskins (Matthew 9, 14-17), whether we will embark on the path of substantiation of a truly qualitatively new national strategy for the development of school education and upbringing, the applicants of which would have every reason and opportunity to integrate into European and world intellectual and spiritual-cultural space without losing their identity.

It is obvious that all these concepts are sinful with one important defect - they do not contain mechanisms for returning the national system of education and upbringing to their inherent nature of theocentric axiologems, but are reduced to the mechanical use of phrases "spiritual-moral", "moral-spiritual", not understanding that both must be verified not by artificially constructed "isms" and ideologems, but by the invisible and unchanging tuning fork, which is God himself is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Heb. 13: 8).

In other words, today we should not talk about anthropocentrism in educational processes, not about their humanization or humanitarianization, which is currently limited to increasing the number of subjects of the cycle, but about such an educational paradigm in which all its components are subject to the one goal – for all subjects of the educational process to acquire the likeness of God, which consists of holiness and truth.

The system of education and upbringing must provide all the opportunities for its applicant to receive the true knowledge of Good and Evil, Love and Hate, Justice and Injustice, Virtue and Consumption, Humility and Pride.

After all, about all the virtues and opposing sins and vices, up to those who call for revenge from heaven and are not forgiven. And this incorporation of Christian morality, without Christian-centric relations in pedagogical communication, is not possible. Thus, all, even the smallest, components of modern pedagogy must be carefully verified with the inalienable didactic guidelines that mankind received in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, must be based on Christian legal consciousness, on the evangelical socialization of the individual. Otherwise, humanity is doomed, and the Ukrainian people are no exception.

Christian-centered pedagogy is a must. Without this, no school will be able to teach its students the realization of whose will they came into the world, *who* and *for what* put all earthly goods at their feet (Ps. 8: 6-9; Heb. 2: 6); why father and mother and teachers and educators put so much love into the fact that the child was formed and had a decent future. So to affirm them in the conviction that God loves the whole world, all people, and cares for the "children of faith" more than having his children, that He is our shepherd (Ps. 23: 1) and leads us, the humble, what is right and teaches us, the meek ones, His ways (Ps. 25: 9), that the Lord is our light and salvation (Ps. 27: 1).

This is what should be emphasized when formulating concepts and programs for reforming education, and not on the Leninist-Stalinist principle of separation of church and school. This attempt to automate the educational process has disastrous consequences. This phenomenon is artificial. Its formalization contradicts family values, where schooling (education) is far from the main segment. Moreover, this approach indirectly prohibits parents from raising a child in the church-religious spirit, or at least provokes conflict, because the school's emphasis on the secular nature of education may run counter to family visions of education and upbringing.

In our deep conviction, the ideas, views and principles cultivated by Konstantin Ushinsky (1824-1870) are more relevant today than ever. First of all, he emphasized that "pedagogy grew exclusively on Christian soil, and for us non-Christian pedagogy is an unthinkable thing - a headless monster and meaningless activity <...>. Can we imagine even a middle-level literacy teacher who does not touch on religious truths, unless, of course, he is engaged in a mere reading technique that is harmful to the child's head. We demand that the Russian language teacher, a history teacher, and so on, not only to instill in students' heads the facts of their sciences but to develop them mentally and morally".²¹

An attempt to automatize education and upbringing is categorically unacceptable. "If such a distinction is made consistently,"²² he warned, "then even a father or mother can

²¹ K. Ushinsky. On the moral element in Russian education // Collected works. – Moscow: Publishing House of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the RSFSR. – 1945. – V. 2. – P. 452.

²² K. Ushinsky. Ibid. – P.452.

be forbidden to instill religious truths to their children."²³ And indeed, what kind of teacher or educator it is, if he is not familiar with the religious pursuits of mankind, if he is not able to explain to the child who and from what he wants to "save" people. What is the role of the Christian religion in shaping the spiritual and material culture of mankind and nations? And what is the purpose of religions, cults, and sects? K. Ushinsky was convinced that "a public school a teacher cannot be a person who is unfamiliar with the Christian religion as much as it is necessary to be able to explain to eleven-year-old children those Christian concepts, the idea of which they can understand according to their age and level of development".²⁴ Self-reflecting on the vocation of the teacher, he wrote: "We find it perfectly acceptable and even highly useful that clergy can not only lead public schools but also be on a par with secular peoples as administrators in other higher schools."²⁵

K. Ushinsky quite convincingly substantiated the advantages of involving clergy in the educational process at school. And, sadly, we have to state that this problem in Ukraine is still unresolved. Exceptions are some regions of Western Ukraine, which have independently decided to teach Christian ethics at school. He also drew attention to the importance of secular teachers to be spiritually and religiously literate. Nowadays, no one denies this need, but the number of subjects that would provide basic religious and theological knowledge to students of pedagogy is diminishing, or they being removed altogether. "Spiritual shepherds have preserved for us precious treasures <...> – dogmas of faith, but they must introduce the people to the hidden content of these dogmas and the moral temple of Christianity. But one who wants to teach must look into his soul, be not only a Christian priest but also a Christian teacher," K. Ushinsky emphasized.²⁶

"But if it is necessary for clergymen who aspire to devote themselves to educational activities to become good teachers, then, on the other hand, it is also necessary that secular individuals who undertake education, especially the common people, were not only good teachers but the true Christians according to their aspirations and beliefs to the extent that these beliefs can be captured by the eyes of others" – summed up K. Ushinsky.²⁷

It is difficult to add anything to this, except that: "Literature and society as a whole must take part in solving this extremely important social question because in public education the general opinion will play an important role; however, the main participants in its practical solution, no doubt, should be, on the one hand – the Church, and on the other – our entire educational and scientific community – representatives of both spiritual

and secular education."²⁸

It would not be fair to say that Ukrainian society is using a different pattern. It seems that K. Ushinsky, with his ideas, concepts, and principles, is on everyone's mind, and we have the widest opportunities for the realization of the most refined forms of cooperation between the Church and the school, but for some reason, the result is the opposite. Mazepa's words still prevail in this process – "they all strive for one thing and do not pull in one tug"!

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, after these generalizations, can anyone doubt whether spirituality should be studied in a modern school, considering it as the foundation of Christian morality, or whether the spiritual and educational potential of the Church should be involved in the system of secular education, judge for yourself.

And for us it is the cornerstone of the national paradigm of education and upbringing. And they are needed primarily to help the student form a sense of responsibility for what direction the historical development will take if it has to make decisions or influence the adoption of fateful programs in the future, and it does not matter whether they will determine personal progress, the path of development of his nation, spiritual and cultural development of the people.

In order to help him choose a path of development that will allow him to find not only himself, but also to realize his own vocation, that is to serve God and people, whose benefits he enjoys when he comes into the world.

Meanwhile, current debates over the formation of a national paradigm of education and upbringing, where for a long time, involving a wider range of discussants, deliberately discusses the incorporation of the religious component into the school system and, in particular, the study of Christian ethics or Christian morality and ethics of faith, separate Ukrainian national pedagogy from its ethno-religious sources.

Finally, Christian-centered education and upbringing are needed for modern young people who are in school or higher education, but are naturally intellectually oriented to computer technology and modern information communication systems, in order to create for them the best possible conditions for spiritual search which would elevate above these external priorities, would make them stronger and more responsible to their own vocation and chosen profession. Because only a spiritually mature person with his knowledge and skills will be able to influence the world around him, thus growing himself and regenerating others into a new quality of national community, where God and Ukraine are not just a slogan, but the meaning of life.

²³ Ibid. – P. 453.

²⁴ Ibid. – P. 451.

²⁵ Ibid. – P. 451.

²⁶ K. Ushinsky. On the moral element in Russian education. – P. 455.

²⁷ Ibid. – P. 453.

²⁸ Ibid. – P. 453.

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