

Petrenko O. B.

**MASCULINIZATION OF IMAGE OF CHILDHOOD IN STALIN ERA
PEDAGOGY (THE 1930S)**

Nowadays, history of Soviet childhood is a promising line of scientific research. Of particular scientific interest is the period of the 1930s, when a distinct Soviet model of childhood, gender images of boys and girls, substantiated by culture, art, and mass media, were conceived and born. Moreover, the research in the gender images of childhood helps to understand how the Soviet government constructed the discourse of “the male” and “the female” within schools and families, as well as how the masculinisation of childhood in Stalin era pedagogy was unfolding. It also demonstrates how the mass media reproduced this virile image of childhood specific to the Soviet era.

Philippe Ariès, a famous French scientist, carried out a general integrated analysis of the childhood social context in his work “Centuries of Childhood” (Child and Family Life in Ancient Times) (1973) [1]. M. C. Jonson touched upon the Soviet gender education policy in the 1930s in his article “Soviet Youth Subculture and Stalin Era Pedagogy in the 1930s” (1998) [4]. The works of I. Kon (1997, 1999) [7; 8], V. Kravets (2005) [9], O. Petrenko (2010) [10] are also of great importance: they examine the formation of gender history and pedagogy since the time of East Slavs through the present-day Ukrainian government. The research of O. Chasbulatova (2005) [12] contains the gender analyses of the Soviet policy, national ideology that regulate women’s and men’s social status, as well as gender aspects of social policy in education and family.

The subject of the research is the gender image of childhood in Stalin era pedagogy (the 1930s).

The goal of the research is to reveal specific features of childhood masculinisation in Stalin era pedagogy (the 1930s).

The idea of historical origin and development of childhood was first discussed by P. Blonsky and L. Vygotsky in the 1930s. According to the contemporary psychologists and teachers (I.Kon, M.Bondareva), childhood is an ontogenetic evolution of an individual that begins at the birth and ends with this individual reaching adulthood [8; 3].

P. Aries, analysing history of childhood, came to the conclusion that the childhood itself never changed. It was the cultural image of childhood and its place in school, family, and society that vary. At that, the link between childhood and school is of utmost importance. The scientist proved that the image of childhood is the product of the culture. It was the culture that discovered and formed the image of childhood. Childhood is moulded into a certain period of time. This period of time is both historical and biographical. On the other hand, childhood is shaped into space: that of home, school, town, village, and society. Having its limits, childhood is, at the same time, a dynamic and variable category, it is the social world of children, which is reproduced through their thinking, activity, and experience [1].

M. Bondareva, a Russian scientist, defines image of childhood as a complex of the adults' ideas about childhood, social attitudes to and stereotypes of it. Image of childhood is based on the synthesis of the experience of an individual person and public culture stereotypes [3]. The nature and course of childhood are connected with the health and world outlook of the society.

According to I. Kon, a famous Russian sociologist and psychologist, childhood is "a cultural and historical phenomenon that can be understood only by taking into account the age symbolism, i.e. the system of ideas and images used by the culture to perceive, comprehend, and validate the course of the individual's life and age stratification of the society)" [8, p.422].

Thus, all these definitions emphasise socio-cultural context of childhood and its connection with education and pedagogy. School has been an integral part of the society, it created the environment to satisfy the needs of the state and carry out the

social mandate of forming people with a certain world outlook, social and gender behaviour.

Therefore, childhood cannot be analysed in an abstract manner; the majority of its characteristics are connected with the society and culture where it unfolds.

I. Kon's [8] believes that diversity of childhood requires versatile research. According to the scientist, image of childhood can be represented in aesthetic, sociological, ethnographic, historical, psychological, ideological, and biographical aspects.

Notably, sociological analysis of the image of childhood presupposes the analysis of the influence of class, gender, state, environmental and other conditions of the life and upbringing: a childhood in a city differs from a childhood in a village; village childhood differs from bourgeois or proletarian childhood [8]. It is logical to continue the list by adding the childhood of a girl as different from that of a boy.

Analysis of the gender aspect of the Stalin era image of childhood suggests that in the 1930s Soviet ideologists did not pay attention to the gender differences, gender roles and statuses of children. Their aim was to assure that all children, irrespective of their gender, were so called "organized children" (pioneers or Little Octobrist). Propaganda, literature, and cinema depicted children as "little adults", mature and of an unbending spirit. The main function of education was to ensure the industrial advance of the country by means of preparing the cadre possessing the necessary skills (polytechnization of school) and necessary outlook (party ideology). The only entertainment available for children was pioneer meetings, conferences, political debates, and civil service. Intellectual and moral education became anti-gender – the system bridled all gender characteristics of the new generation (unlike during the previous decade, when gender socialization and readiness to family life were considered important). Gender asceticism was a leading idea in schools and youth organizations. At the same time, in the 1930s, the masculinity was coming to the fore of the national ideology, regardless of the natural gender of a person.

According to K. Kelly, the Soviet government of the 1930s was forming "the universal masculinity" – an extremely rationalistic, dispassionate person. The main

idea is that of "hardening"; there existed a rigorous and demanding code of psychological and physical self-discipline that prescribed morning exercises, hydrotherapeutic procedures (e.g. contrast shower), and conscientious work and dedication to the common good [5, p.389]. This project of the Soviet hegemonic masculinity was based on the traditional segregation of gender roles, under which public sphere was the area of the self-realization of the males. The government considered the Soviet person to be a labour and/or fighting unit not burdened with private property or family obligations. This was done to assure mobility, i.e. ease changing places of residence and employment, as well as readiness to carry out the tasks of the party at any time (to take part in socialist construction, to guard the border, etc.). This being said, the subordination of one's interests to the public good became a distinctive feature of the Soviet ideal of masculinity.

The analysis of pedagogical periodicals of that time suggests that, from the point of view of Stalin ideologists, the ideal child in the 1930s was a boy (usually blond), politically active, pioneer, lively, self-confident, and eager to grow up as soon as possible. For example, the Soviet magazine "Vozhatiy" gave the following description of an average Soviet child: "He is under 13. Blond, with brisk eyes, agile, he can impress everyone favourably already at first acquaintance. He is a favourite in his Pioneer detachment. However, he did not become a pioneer from the very beginning. He endured many difficulties, changed himself, fought with his family; several times he even tried to pull out of the pioneer detachment... He looks like an average pioneer, but he is a person of strong will who shows great promise. Now he is getting ready to join All-Union Lenin Communist Youth League. He is used to getting the work done. He is as hard as nail" [11, p.9-10]. This type of character was prominent in the Soviet propaganda, Stalin pedagogy, belles-litres and cinema of the 1930s. Character and moral qualities of the pioneer, such as leadership, courage, energy, resolution, are openly masculine.

As for girls, in order to become true pioneers, they were to get rid of their girlish habits, such as easy crying, cowardice, indiscretion, etc. Photographs depict girls-pioneers resembling boys with their short haircut, gross features, and similar

outfit. Behaviour and looks normally typical for boys were considered appropriate for girls as well, whereas the desire to look good, wear decorations, visit theatre and cinema was considered to be a relic from the past and was strictly condemned. Indicative is the publication of the children's letters to the editorial office of the Soviet newspaper "Pionerskaya Pravda". The article was titled "The Jobs of Our Children's Dreams: The Collection of Children's Letters for Parents" (1929). In these letters, Soviet children condemned a girl named Katya who openly wrote in her letter that she wanted to be a beautiful and famous actress [6].

The analysis of these and other notes written by young reporters indicates that the majority of their authors were boys. If a girl was mentioned favourably, this was exclusively a girl residing in a city or a town. In villages, lifestyle and models of gender behaviour had remained unchanged until the very end of the 1930s, and girls were not mentioned at all.

These examples argue that there is every reason to believe that the 1930s gave rise to the formation of distinct Soviet gender models, stereotypes, norms of behaviour branded acceptable for, correspondingly, males and females. As a result, declared sexual equality provided for the equal access to education for boys and girls. As M. C. Jonson notes, this educational system has to be given credit because "an ideal of the equal access to education for all, regardless of race, class and *gender*, was gradually put into life, but in a rigid and authoritarian way, ... *offering the same "polytechnic" curriculum for everybody*" [4, p.53]. At the same time, "the Stalin regime launched the offensive on ... youth organizations, punishing and condemning *promiscuity* [emphasis mine] and unauthorized political manifestations. Authoritarianism and punitive measures came to the fore" [4, p.53].

The new Stalin pedagogy was based on order and discipline, rejection of everything that was not favoured by the party. In M. C. Jonson's opinion, "the progressive conception of breadth and accessibility of education existed along with the fundamentally traditional approach to curriculum and instructions, as well as with such conservative values as *patriarchy* [emphasis mine], patriotism, total submission to the state power and parents". [4, c. 52].

The established gender code influenced the formation of gender stereotypes, subjective perception of the Soviet men and women in the context of totalitarianism. According to B. Kravets, “Soviet totalitarianism developing in the 1930s was, in its core, a male culture” [9, p. 355]. Soviet “unisex” in pedagogy was heavily masculine: men and women worked the same, both were trained for industry and army, peculiar “women’s” problems were non-existent. Soviet “sexual equality” moulded women, by default, into new male standard of a hero, a collectivist, and a fighter for the bright new dawn. This virile standard was, at the same time, an ideal for women, who at that time (and during the following decades) still retained her feminine image. Lack of social freedoms was aggravated by the global feminization of the institutes of socialization and was attributed to dominant female images (upbringing by mother, female kindergarten nurses and school teachers) [9, p. 355].

According to I. Kon, the totalitarian gender policy of the Soviet state, which blurred out distinctions between men and women, led not so much to the desexualisation of the public and private life, but rather to its impoverishment and primitivization [7, p. 410].

Ideological guidelines, standards and attitudes were realized through education, which addressed political and ideological development of children, implanted new ideology to prepare youth to performing their new gender roles. Declared gender equality brought about labour equality, when both boys and girls were prepared to follow the same lifelines: obtaining education and working. On the other hand, girls were expected to perform not only professionally, but in their families, as motherhood was an additional sphere of socialization for them. Men role in domestic chores was not defined, their self-realization being confined to the public sphere, where their domination was considered to be rightful and “natural”. The status of the man was determined by his status at the workplace [2, c. 64]. This social situation promoted, both in girls and in boys, the development of such masculine features as competitiveness, leadership, dominance, and hyperactivity, these character traits operating in the society with traditional gender standards of hierarchy (dominance of men, submission of women).

Gender model of “the Soviet childhood” in the 1930s was not static. It was changing along with the state gender policy and ideology. In early post-revolution years it was egalitarian, in the 1930s it turned into “universal masculinity”: the government was deliberately forming certain gender patterns with masculine characteristics for all Soviet citizens, particularly for children.

We believe that the reconstruction of the gender model of “the Soviet childhood” as a system of cultural and historical norms and stereotypes typical for representatives of this or that gender or dictated by the national ideology, deserves further examination.

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Petrenko O. B. Masculinization of Image of Childhood in Stalin Era Pedagogy (the 1930s)

The article analyzes the peculiarities of the formation of a male and female discourse by the Soviet state within educational institutions: specific character of the masculinization of the image of childhood in Stalin pedagogy.

Key words: image of childhood, Stalin era pedagogy, masculinization, Soviet gender code.

Петренко О. Б. Маскулінізація образу дитинства в сталінській педагогіці (30-ті рр. XX століття)

У статті проаналізовано особливості конструювання радянською державою дискурсу чоловічого і жіночого в межах освітніх закладів, специфіка маскулінізації образу дитинства в сталінській педагогіці.

Ключові слова: образ дитинства, сталінська педагогіка, маскулінізація, радянський гендерний контракт, радянський гендерний порядок.

Петренко О. Б. Маскулинизация образа детства в сталинской педагогике (30-е гг. XX века)

В статье анализируются особенности конструирования советским государством дискурса мужского и женского в пределах образовательных учреждений, специфика маскулинизации образа детства в сталинской педагогике.

Ключевые слова: образ детства, сталинская педагогика, маскулинизация, советский гендерный контракт, советский гендерный порядок.

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