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FORMATION OF A FARMER BY MEANS OF TEACHING PEASANT YOUTH IN VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN UKRAINIAN SSR IN THE 1920S

The article aims to cover the formation of a network of professional directions in educational establishments to meet the needs of peasant youth. The presented research aims to find out the quality of the functioning of the network of agricultural educational establishments, based on the identification, generalization and critical analysis of the historical local periodicals of the 1920s. The author found out that during the study period, agricultural educational establishments were introduced in the Ukrainian SSR with the aim of training qualified agricultural specialists from the peasant youth category. These establishments included agricultural vocational schools of various types, agricultural groups and special schools of peasant youth. In addition, the publication highlights issues related to the functioning of the existing education network. The logistics and staffing of rural educational institutions was complicated. Therefore, the most common types of educational establishments for peasant youth were agricultural professional groups, which did not require significant financial costs. As a result, the author concludes that the formation of a network of agricultural educational institutions resulted to the attempts of an active part of young peasants to organize exemplary farms and to introduce new methods of management. Therefore, agricultural schools, groups and schools for peasant youth were a serious agricultural factor in the development of rural economy by peasant youth.

Keywords: Ukrainian SSR, education, peasant youth, agricultural groups, “schools of peasant youth”.

In the 1920s, there was an urgent need in the Ukrainian SSR to modernize the country’s agronomic production. Training of qualified young specialists has become essential to ensure these processes. The educational sector of the Ukrainian SSR was in a state of search for an optimal education system. An integral part of this was the direction of professional agricultural education, which was to ensure the development of the agricultural complex and the modernization of agricultural production in the Ukrainian SSR. The solution to this problem was seen in the creation of a wide network of educational institutions that would satisfy the need for professional skills of peasant youth. Based on the mentioned above, it would be appropriate to analyze the historical experience of establishing a network in educational establishments of professional direction for Ukrainian peasant youth during the 1920s.

Educational issues have always attracted the attention of researchers. Among the recent developments in this area, one should single out the dissertation research by V. V. Lypynskyi¹ where the new system of educational development in Ukrainian SSR during the 1920s. L. Berezivska’s² article analyzes the development of the school education system for the People’s Commissar of the USSR during 1920-1924. The dissertation of M.I. Kharlamov³ is devoted to the development of vocational education in the Ukrainian SSR in 1921-1929. Some aspects of the development of professional and technical institutions

¹ Липинський, В. В. (2001). Становлення і розвиток нової системи освіти в УСРР у 20-ті роки: *дисертація на здобуття наукового ступеню доктора наук*. Донецьк: Донецький національний університет.

² Березівська, Л. (1920-1924). Розробка Наркомосом УСРР системи шкільної освіти та її апробація в контексті соціально-економічних та суспільно-політичних детермінант *Історико-педагогічний альманах, 1*, 9-19.

³ Харламов, М. І. (2011). Розвиток професійно-технічної освіти в УСРР у 1921-1929 рр.: автореферат дисертації на здобуття наукового ступеня кандидата історичних наук. Харків: Харківський національний університет ім. В. Н. Каразіна.

of the Ukrainian SSR are considered in the publication by L. Sichayeva¹. Ways of adaptation of rural school to social transformations of the Ukrainian village during the 1924-1929 are investigated in the article by G. I. Ivaniuk². Educational system of the Ukrainian SSR in 20s – 30s of the XX century was the subject of research by S. V. Markova and K. I. Aliluiko³. However, the identified problem that have not considered by historians from the point of view of providing educational inquiries to rural youth of the Ukrainian SSR in the 1920s. The issues of peasant youth schools, agricultural groups and other forms of educational agricultural network operating in the Ukrainian SSR remain insufficiently covered.

The purpose of the article is to reveal and analyze the educational forms that have been introduced for the implementation of educational inquiries of peasant youth of the Ukrainian SSR in the field of agricultural production. The author aims to explore how the existing network of offered institutions could meet the educational needs of peasant youth and facilitate the formation of peasant-farmer.

The 1920s were a period of experimentation in education reform. The agenda included questions about developing educational concepts that would, in particular, meet the needs of peasant youth. In addition, against the backdrop of the deployment of industrialization, the state experienced a shortage of agricultural specialists to grow agricultural production. It's natural that agricultural education of peasant youth played a significant role in achieving social growth. It's highest link in the countryside was agricultural vocational schools. Winter adult agricultural schools also worked somewhere. One of the first operates in the village of Suprunivka, Poltava district, organized in January 1926 by the Poltava Agricultural College. The Agricultural School initiated the organization of the garden society, agricultural groups⁴. Despite the lack of financial, material and educational support, which hindered the work of the school, its existence testified to the high demand and interest in such educational institutions. The specific feature of the existing agricultural vocational schools was that, given the seasonal employment of peasant youth, they were quite flexible in their work.

The network of agricultural schools in the geographical areas of the Ukrainian SSR was uneven. Thus, there were 14 schools in Polissya in 1925, 112 in the forest-steppe and 32 in the Steppe zone⁵. The dynamics of the organization of agricultural schools in the Ukrainian SSR remained at approximately the same level. Thus, during 1927-1928 there were 143 agricultural professional schools, 147 winter agricultural schools, with a total capacity of about 14,000 students⁶. An illustration of the activities of agricultural schools can be their work. So, on January 1, 1928, there were already 7 such schools in Poltava district, covering 242 people. It should be noted that the most widely represented age groups in agricultural schools there was peasant youth. There were 45 people under the age of 20, 74 from 20 to 25 and 37 from 25 to 30⁷.

As for the statutory age of the students of the professional agricultural schools, it is being brightly illustrated by statistically informative data in yearly reports from 1924-1925 years provided by Narcomos. You can find the data in the table 1 made by an example from the professional agricultural school named after T. Schevchenko in Starobilsk city, Starobilsk region⁸.

The provided above data show us that the most active students were adults and people over the age of 18. In general this situation was typical for all professional agricultural educational institutes.

As a rule, the curriculum was tried to adapt to the economic development of a particular countryside. Before studying, the most developed branch of agriculture was selected, whether it be arable farming, horticulture, gardening or animal husbandry. However, the study of collectivization and cooperative issues remained in all cases. The theoretical part of teaching in such schools began with the completion of agricultural work and continued until their beginning. Usually, it was November – March. Classes were held 4-5 days a week in the evening. The leading methods of mastering the educational material were the lecture-talks, which were combined with the laboratory method. It should be noted that the offered lecture topics, as a rule, were not abstract in nature and were as close as possible to the everyday economic life

¹ Січаєва, Л. (1997). Сторінки історії розвитку професійної освіти в Україні (1920-ті роки). *Педагогіка і психологія професійної освіти*, 2, 103-107.

² Іванюк, Г. І. (2015). Шляхи адаптації сільської школи до соціальних трансформацій українського села (1924-1929 рр.). *Проблеми сучасного педагогічного образования Серія: Педагогіка і психологія*, 47, 91-98.

³ Маркова, С. В., Алілуїко, К. І. (2011). Освітньо-виховна система УСРР 20-х-30-х рр. XX ст. як чинник легітимізації правлячого режиму. *Освіта, наука і культура на Поділлі*, 17, 340-349.

⁴ Білецький, І. (1928). Зимові с.-г. школи для дорослих на Полтавщині. *Шлях освіти*, 4, 80-86.

⁵ Березов, Л. (1925). Освіта селянської молоді. *Сільський театр*, 4, 54-56.

⁶ Білецький, І. (1928). Зимові с.-г. школи для дорослих на Полтавщині. *Шлях освіти*, 4, 80-86.

⁷ Ibid, 80-86.

⁸ Центральний державний архів вищих органів влади та управління України, Ф. 166, Оп. 5, Спр. 284, Арк. 21.

**The dynamic and the statutory age of the students by an example
from the professional agricultural school named after T. Schevchenko
in Starobilsk (1924-1925)**

Age statutory of the students	On the beginning of the year before the application period			Application during the reporting year			Retired during the reporting year			Graduated from the school in the reporting year			The number of the students during the academic year		
	boys	girls	in all	boys	girls	in all	boys	girls	in all	boys	girls	in all	boys	girls	in all
15 years	5	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	2	7
16 years	4	2	6	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	8
17 years	4	1	5	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	1	8
18 years	5	3	8	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	3	9
over 18 years	29	4	33	2	1	3	6	4	10	23	-	23	5	1	6
in all	47	12	59	8	1	9	6	4	10	23	-	23	29	9	38

Source: compiled by the author.

of a rural person, and therefore enjoyed considerable interest, as evidenced by the high attendance of the classes. Nevertheless, students often registered at the classes, and besides the youth, peasants of different ages came to the lectures. In such classes they studied topics such as the yield of dairy cows, breadcrumbs, the treatment of spring wheat, various varieties of sunflower, corn, beets, the impact of autumn plowing and previous crops on yield and more¹.

Using the knowledge gained, the most productive part of the village – the youth – undertook the organization of a model farm. Thus, the Yaresk youth of Poltava district organized an exemplary feeding of cows, for which the best breeds were selected and special feeds were purchased with common funds. And in Berestenenk in Poltava region an agricultural school was formed cattle society. There has also been active work on the promotion of vaccinations for cattle and pigs. In addition, the students of the school carried out pest control, seed treatment and organized a grain-cleaning point. A wide range of activities in the field of horticulture was conducted by the Obishnyan Agricultural School of Poltava District².

Working in the laboratory, young people learned how to germinate seeds of different plants, analyze their germination and examine the economic feasibility of breeding in the farm. As a result, we created custom diagrams. Also, the method of assimilation of the material were the summary reports with the discussion of the studied. Practical classes tried to transfer directly to the students' farms in the midst of field work. They learned to prune, to plant trees, to look after gardens. In the course of the training, a newspaper was published in which, together with the public life of the village, they covered the current problems of agriculture. It should be noted that educational activities were often hindered by the lack of educational materials and literature.

It is worth noting, that all activities of the agricultural schools turned them to the serious agricultural element for the development of the agriculture in general. As, for example, the professional agricultural school in Zolotonoscha, Schevchenkivskiy region, maintained 7 closest villages and hamlets, which had 1706 houses all together. As the educational institute and agricultural center it had such additional departments as: department for the animal mating, grain processing department, field for the agricultural investigations and the workshops for the agricultural tools. The village young people, who studied in the school, performed wide range of agricultural works with the help of those additional departments. In particular, 38 purebred species of animals and 48 tons of purebred grain for the sowing were spread, 94 points for seed treatment were arranged, 3 thousands of tree plans were planted³.

¹ Білецький, І. (1928). Зимові с.-г. школи для дорослих на Полтавщині. *Шлях освіти*, 4, 80-86.

² Ibid, 80-86.

³ Воропай, І. (1928). Золотоношська с.-г. профшкола. *Сільсько-господарська освіта*, 11-12, 75-77.

The best students of the professional agricultural school in Zolotonoscha, Schevchenkivskiy region were involved in the field of the organizational maintenance of the agricultural fraternities. In particular, it was applied to the development of the production plans for the crews, granger's cattle crews of Schevchenkivsky region, examination of the individual village households with further instructions for their improvement. The students also showed high activity level during the sowing season of 1927-1928 years. 10 fraternities of the common land cultivation, 3 agricultural equipment and tractor parks, 1 granger's cattle fraternity and also 3 fraternities for the purchase and use of the agricultural machinery were created during this period¹.

So the task of the mainstream agricultural schools was not only to prepare the new generation of the educated agricultural owners, but also in the creation of the cultural center which could contribute to the improvement of the agricultural field of the region or district in general. And such educational institute gave the general idea of the separate region as the independent household. The professional agricultural schools gave the general idea of the separate region as the independent household. In particular, the agricultural school in Maharinetsk, Berdichiv region worked towards this goal. District land office gave the approval of the investigations of the region. This office provided students with the approximate questions for the surveys. Students studied 40 villages and 1437 households in Kasatinsky district, Berdichiv region during 1927-1928 years according to the results of works. It is worth noting that it was rather laborious work. As, for example, they calculated land provision as for one household and one person, the number and species of the cattle, agricultural equipment and machinery; they did financial analyses of the crews; they investigated the condition of the rural retail trade; and also they investigated the productivity of grain and so on. The final results were collected in the diagrams. Besides it, the results of the activities of the rural youth from Maharinetska school were actively published in the local newspapers².

It should be noted, that the first attempts of the reorganization of the professional agricultural schools were done in the end of the 1920s. The main discussion was made over the content fulfilment of their curriculums. If to take to the consideration the fact that such agricultural schools existed on the basis of the general-education schools and gave the knowledges of the secondary educational institutions, they had to provide students with the full secondary education. So among the gaps of the professional schools was such factor as: not enough hours for the general subjects. Instead of those subjects more time during the summer trimesters were given to the in-work training which in some schools was not enough for the full educational practical activities. In addition, if to consider the fact that the most of the students got their professional skills in the households, the strong importance of the deepening their theoretical knowledges occurred. That's why the educational plans of the agricultural schools were modified in 1929. The general subjects were equally distributed during the whole course as well as added to the certain trimesters, adding hours to them. The hours of the in-work trainings and the agricultural works were shortened³.

Another problem was the irregular dynamic in the routes of the agricultural specializations. For example, there was bigger number of cropping agricultural than zoo-technical schools. It was the lack of zoo-technical schools at that time. Similar to this, the chain of the educational institutions for narrow knowledge specialists of the agriculture remained weak. The solution of this issue was seen in the reorganization of the agricultural schools according to the agricultural regions of the republic and division of the definite specialization to more narrow departments. Let's say out of the cropping field they distinguished following departments: crops, beetroot crops, and cattle, swine-breeding, dairy. Another issue was whether to development huge professional agricultural school-giants or to leave them as small schools with the application number 30-40 students each year. Finally the idea to create bigger schools with the application number 160-240 students was more appealing, so such schools could become local agricultural centers⁴.

In addition, the creation of a network of agricultural groups has been launched to provide broadly educational services to the population, including peasant youth. In 1925, there were 1,517 agricultural and 200 agronomic groups in Ukraine. The vast majority were young people. However, the groups could include

¹ Ibid, 75-77.

² Малюта, М. Д. (1928). Агрикультурна робота Махаринецької с.-г. школи на Бердичівщині. *Сільсько-господарська освіта*, 2-3, 83-87.

³ Кіналь, К. (1929). Про зміни до навчального плану для сільськогосподарських шкіл. *Сільсько-господарська освіта*, 9, 29-31.

⁴ Рум'янцев, В. (1930). Про реорганізацію сільсько-господарської освіти на Україні. *Сільсько-господарська освіта*, 4-5, 8-12.

people of all ages – from schoolchildren and to quite old people¹. Usually, agricultural groups are organized at farms and special reading rooms. Their leading task was to acquire farmers' agricultural knowledge and adapt them to practical economic needs.

As for their work it wasn't very different from the professional agricultural schools. They were organized on the voluntary basis by the active part of the village population which had desire to work on the improvement of the agriculture. They spread knowledges via conversations, readings, reports, organized tours etc. In general the activities in the interest groups united 4 directions. The first direction was educational. The leader of the interest group picked up the specific subject for the study. The most widespread methods of the studies were reading loud and discussions. The second direction was the individual work with the agricultural literature. The third direction– the practical household works. Everything they learned they checked on the practice or working in their own households, or on special investigation lands. The fourth direction was the popularization of the agricultural knowledges and works among the population. In particular, the young village people who were part of the interest groups were responsible for the organization of the thematic exhibitions, creation of the reports about the agricultural questions of the current interest, the provision of the local theatrical groups with the materials for the scenes, etc. Furthermore, the agricultural groups of interest had to support the organization of collective farms, catteries, crews, cooperatives which specialized in the purchase of grain, seeds, agricultural machinery, etc. Moreover, village youth, which worked in the groups of interest, had to become active promoters of the land and agricultural politics of the communist power in the rural area. The young people had to learn about all activities of the party in the agriculture and transmit news to the rural population. They brought up future farmers and good members of the communist community in those groups of interest. But their main task, according to the statute, was support of the village population with the obtaining and spreading knowledges, skills and acquired habits in the agricultural field and also adjusting those knowledges and skills to the practical household use².

As a rule, an agronomist or teacher was chosen as the head of the circle. However, any person who had an interest in farming could be the head of the agricultural groups. It could also be a land surveyor, a veterinarian, a farm manager, a reading room head, a librarian, a board member of a cooperative, an engineer, a head of an agricultural commune or an artel. However, if there were no initiatives of such persons, they invited a „cultural host”, an exemplary person with respect to agriculture, who could, on his own example, teach him how to successfully lead³.

The optimum number of groups was determined by 25 people. In case of exceeding the number of those wishing to work more effectively, it was recommended to form separate groups. Their members could be both the younger generation and adults with no gender difference. The specificity of the training was that its program depended on the geographical location and development of a particular branch of agriculture. Special training programs were tried for each geographical region. For example, according to the perspective annual plan of the People's Commissariat of Land Affairs, such a training program was created for the forest-steppe strip of Ukraine. It envisaged 35 topics covering the basic tenets of agricultural knowledge and appropriate measures to improve the forest-steppe farming. A typical program of agricultural The optimum number of groups was determined by 25 people. In case of exceeding the number of those wishing to work more effectively, it was recommended to form separate groups. of the forest-steppe strip had such sections as: introductory part, basic information about nature, improvement of tilling, improvement of horticulture and gardening, improvement of meadows, cattle-breeding, land management, organization of peasant economy, agricultural cooperation and collectivization. Various specialists were trying to involve in the development of program training: agronomists, land surveyors, veterinarians⁴.

In the process of teaching agriculture tried to combine theory with practice. The training program provided that each student had to learn to use theoretical knowledge in practice, including in his own economy. In most agricultural groups, theory has prevailed over practice. As a rule, their educational activities were limited to lectures, conversations, reports and readings of agricultural literature. However, among the teaching methods tried to apply the visual method. For this purpose, the group members directly selected and produced various exhibits. For example, wooden mock-ups of farm buildings such as greenhouses or stables, as well as posters, diagrams and samples of crops. Especially for young people

¹ Березов, Л. (1925). Освіта селянської молоді. *Сільський театр*, 4, 54-56.

² Дубко, Г. (1926). Найголовніша робота с.-г. гуртка. *Радянський селянин*, 22, 8-9.

³ Майстренко, Х. (1925). Закладаймо сільськогосподарські гуртки. *Майбуття зміна*, 132, 3.

⁴ Івановський, А. (1926). Програма занять сільськогосподарських гуртків при селбудах і хатах-читальнях для лісостепової смуги України. *Самоосвіта*, 9, 11-14.

organized excursions to the fallow deer in the sample farms of peasants and members of the group, research stations, farms¹.

According to the census of All-Ukrainian Selbud (the organization that kept records of such groups) as of November 1, 1925, 1240 groups operated in 5 provinces². However, the figure may not be accurate, since the groups operated not only in farms or reading rooms, but also in schools, sugar refineries and other non-farm buildings. In addition, often such groups existed only on paper. In their work there were problems of logistical and educational character. For example, such was the Dopropil agricultural circle of Kharkiv district. There was neither a proper educational and methodological support nor a specialist, which made it impossible for the groups to work³. However, the proliferation of group activities clearly demonstrates their need and the considerable interest of peasant youth in this type of employment.

The solution to the educational problem of peasant youth was also seen in the organization of the so-called “school of peasant youth” or “extracurricular of peasant youth school”. The idea to create “school of peasant youth” was heard for the first time on the XIII summit of the Bolshevik Party in 1924. At that time such school was on the same level as the agricultural groups of the interest and they were supposed to play important role in the development of the agriculture⁴. And further XIV and XV summits of CPSU, taking to the account positive experience with the opening of schools for peasant youth, gave the orders to develop and spread such schools on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR.

Discussions have been ongoing for a long time to determine the status of such schools. The question was whether the “school of peasant youth” was to be the main high school or a temporary supplement in the education system. In general “school of peasant youth” gave broad polytechnic education with the thorough study of the agriculture production and cooperatives which could give the skills to become independent specialist in this field and active member of the communist state formation. Its main difference from the professional agricultural school was that this school included learning of all fields, while professional agricultural school prepared specialists of more narrow specialization. School for peasant youth was different from the secondary labor school because it was more oriented on the practical and theoretical study of the agriculture and could be situated only in the rural area.

The concept of the “school of peasant youth” took into account that for illiterate education it would not be possible, so the plan of study was calculated for persons who had knowledge of a single four-year labor school. It was envisaged that the school would be a continuation of the four-year program and to give adequate knowledge of the two concentric groups’ blocks curriculum. The first concentric circle provided the knowledge for three years of the second concentric circle, and the second – focused on the first, provided directly professional knowledge, skills and experience. The curriculum was calculated for 300-350 hours with the calculation of 150-175 working days per year. The general term of study lasted 4 years. Such schools were not intended to provide students with comprehensive knowledge, but focused on the most important subjects that were needed by the farmers in one way or another. The following subjects were offered: native language, mathematics, economic geography of the Ukrainian SSR, the natural sciences, social sciences, agricultural elementary education and a short course of cooperation. However, the choice of studying particular subjects remained with the students⁵.

It is worth mentioning that “school of peasant youth” had two main departments: agricultural and socio-political. Study groups were built according to those departments. The peculiarity of the school program became the adjustment of the school subjects to the seasonal agricultural works. Local agronomist, practitioner landlord, teacher, cooperative and Komsomol members were engaged in the development of the school program. It was highlighted at any opportunity that school is preparing not scientist – agronomists, but practitioner landlords, organizers of new collective life in the village.

Each of those educational institutes had to organize school household which was simultaneously experimental and exemplary for the whole region or even district. The radgosp or agricultural point was involved in the works in case of the absence of the household in the school⁶. At this point we have to mention that the establishment of the connections with different enterprises, institutions and organizations which

¹ Кушніренко, А. (1925). Сільсько-господарські гуртки. *Селянський будинок*, 9-10, 60-61.

² Скорбач, М. (1925). Сільсько-господарські гуртки на Україні. *Селянський будинок*, 1 (3), 28.

³ Молодий більшовик (1928). *Де найкращий порятунок с.-г. гурткові*, 2, 17.

⁴ Егоров, А. Г., Боголюбов, К. М. (ред.) (1984). КПСС в резолюциях и решениях съездов, конференций и пленумов ЦК. (1922-1925). Москва: Политиздат, 3.

⁵ Бограт, Є. (1927). До організації «Школи селянської молоді вдома». *Самоосвіта*, 3, 77-79.

⁶ Евг., К. (1926). Про школу селянської молоді. *Молодий більшовик*, 26 (161), 4.

functioned in the village became one of the main terms for the possibility to keep the schools of peasant youth going. Those were agriculture points, radgospo, sugar mills, stations for the experiments, cooperatives, etc which made practical side of its existence possible. They made it possible to use their households for studies and also supported them with the arrangements of school yards, fields or other agricultural objects.

There were 8 “school of peasant youth” in the Ukrainian SSR, with 755 students enrolled¹. The common cause of the small number of peasant educational establishments was the problem of their financial and material support. So, not every school had dormitories, and if they did, they were not equipped for living. A striking example is the Ozerian “school of peasant youth” in Poltava district, which out of 28 people lost 19 students during the period of study from 1926 to 1928 due to financial and financial insecurity. Similarly was in Kharkiv district, out of 122 students enrolled, 31 students left school in the period 1927 to 1928².

It is worth mentioning, that the attitude towards the development and organization of the “schools of peasant youth” changed towards the end of 1920s and with the spread of the cooperative politics of the Ukrainian SSR. On the one hand, such schools with special stations for the experiments and practices played important role in the reconstruction of the agriculture economy, became the preliminary stage for further higher education of the rural youth, provided solid practical knowledges in the run and improvement of the individual household and fully responded to the new economical politic of the Soviet Power. On the other hand – with the beginning of the end of New Economic Policy (NEP) and with the start of the new course towards the collectivization, the school program of the “school of peasant youth” did not respond to the needs of new economy. And, so, party politics of the end of 1920s required not a cultural landlord who would develop the individual household, but an organizer of the collective household³. On contrary, it was peasant youth from those schools who dreamed to continue studies in the higher educational Institutes, work in private households, workshops, factories; and such ideas as collective land works, cooperatives were not popular among young village people⁴.

The dispute about the place and role of the “school of peasant youth” was brought during 1928-1929 years. In particular, they suggested rebuilding of the school program so it could prepare, on the first hand, the organizers and workers of the farming collectives and fully respond to the new tasks of the socialist reconstruction of the agriculture. Finally the II All-Union Party Congress, devoted to the social education, which took place in April of 1930 ended up all discussions towards the schools and made decision about the unification of the system of social education and creation of new rural educational institute – the school of the youth of collective farm (kolkhoz). The secondary polytechnic labor school was proclaimed as the main element of the system of the school education, in particular, secondary schools based on the factories and plants and schools of the youth of kolkhoz which step by step were turned to full secondary general education⁵.

To sum up, in the 1920s the searches were made for optimal forms of providing the cultural and educational level of peasant youth. Among them were agricultural vocational schools, groups and “school of peasant youth”. However, because of the financial and material difficulties, the most common form of such education was agricultural professional groups. The latter were formed both at public organizations – farms, reading rooms, and at schools. Their activities were focused on providing professional knowledge, skills and experience for farming. The peculiarity of the activity of agricultural groups was their attempt to provide knowledge in accordance with the geographical location and development of a particular branch of agriculture. Agricultural education of all educational forms combined theory with practice. However, theoretical classes were overwhelmingly practical. Instead of financial and material problems, there were difficulties in teaching and methodological support in the development of agricultural training. It is noticeable that the existing network of various schools, amateur-talent groups and courses could not fully meet the existing demand and ensure that the educational process of all peasant youth is ensured. Finally, their formation and activities marked a whole range of problems related to professional staffing as an important social factor in the effective functioning of the agricultural sector. And the organization of a sufficient network of agricultural educational establishments, under the conditions of the NEP, could ensure the young peasant generation of scientific and practical knowledge, skills and experiments in conducting a successful economy.

¹ Україна: статистичний щорічник. (1928). Харків: Центральне статистичне управління УСРР, 387.

² Разьботов, В. (1929). Школи селянської молоді. *Шлях освіти*, 7, 6-17.

³ Вовк, П. (1929). Школа глитайської молоді. *Молодий більшовик*, 13(528), 2.

⁴ Нагірняк, А. Я. (1929). Вчорашні школи селянської молоді сьогодні непридатні. *Молодий більшовик*, 13 (528), 2.

⁵ Гриценко, М. С. (1969). Развитие общеобразовательной школы в Украинской ССР (1917-1967 гг.):

диссертация на соискания научной степени доктора педагогических наук. Киев: Киевский государственный педагогический институт им. А. М. Горького.

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