

## THE EVOLUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE 1920S OF THE XX CENTURY IN RUSSIA

### *A EVOLUÇÃO DO ENSINO SUPERIOR NA DÉCADA DE 1920 DO SÉCULO XX NA RÚSSIA*

### *LA EVOLUCIÓN DE LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN LOS AÑOS 20 DEL SIGLO XX EN RUSIA*

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**ABSTRACT:** In the period of global social transformations, it is important to see their perspective, the outcome to which these changes lead. To investigate this issue, it is better to turn to history, building a definite retrospective in this way of those social processes that happened to society at the given moment, which will help to understand the general meaning of the development of education in society. To this end, using the methodology of the evolution of higher education, we turn to the period of the history of Russia from 1917 to 1927 - the period of the Revolution, the Civil War, the concomitant period of War Communism, and the subsequent period of the New Economic Policy (NEP). It is this period that can be characterized as the period of social anomie in Russian society, when the old system of education was demolished, and a new, Soviet, system was created to replace it. As a result of such a historical retrospective, it was shown that the utopian aspirations of the Soviet leaders led to destructive

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consequences, but society, in spite of these social cataclysms, still demonstrated the ability to live in harmony and return to a universal and educational system.

**KEYWORDS:** Social behavior. Education. Social anomie. War communism. The new economic policy (nep).

**RESUMO:** *No período das transformações sociais globais, é importante ver a sua perspectiva, o desfecho a que essas mudanças conduzem. Para se debruçar sobre essa questão, convém voltar-se para a história, construindo assim uma retrospectiva definitiva daqueles processos sociais ocorridos na sociedade em determinado momento, o que ajudará a compreender o sentido geral do desenvolvimento da educação em sociedade. Para tanto, usando a metodologia da evolução do ensino superior, nos voltamos para o período da história da Rússia de 1917 a 1927 - o período da Revolução, a Guerra Civil, o período concomitante do comunismo de guerra e o período subsequente da Nova Política Econômica (NEP). É este período que pode ser caracterizado como o período de anomia social na sociedade russa, quando o antigo sistema de educação foi demolido e um novo sistema soviético foi criado para substituí-lo. Como resultado de tal retrospectiva histórica, foi mostrado que as aspirações utópicas dos líderes soviéticos levaram a consequências destrutivas, mas a sociedade, apesar desses cataclismos sociais, ainda demonstrou a capacidade de viver em harmonia e retornar a um sistema universal e educacional.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Comportamento social. Educação. Anomia social. Comunismo de guerra. A nova política econômica (nep).*

**RESUMEN:** *En el período de las transformaciones sociales globales, es importante ver su perspectiva, el resultado al que conducen estos cambios. Para profundizar en este tema, es mejor volver a la historia, construyendo así una retrospectiva definida de aquellos procesos sociales que le sucedieron a la sociedad en el momento dado, lo que ayudará a comprender el sentido general del desarrollo de la educación en la sociedad. Con este fin, utilizando la metodología de la evolución de la educación superior, nos dirigimos al período de la historia de Rusia de 1917 a 1927: el período de la Revolución, la Guerra Civil, el período concomitante del Comunismo de Guerra y el período posterior. de la Nueva Política Económica (NEP). Este es el período que puede caracterizarse como el período de anomia social en la sociedad rusa, cuando el antiguo sistema de educación fue demolido y se creó un nuevo sistema soviético para reemplazarlo. Como resultado de tal retrospectiva histórica, se demostró que las aspiraciones utópicas de los líderes soviéticos llevaron a consecuencias destructivas, pero la sociedad, a pesar de estos cataclismos sociales, aún demostró la capacidad de vivir en armonía y volver a un sistema universal y educativo.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Comportamiento social. Educación. Anomia social. Comunismo de guerra. La nueva política económica (nep).*

## Introduction

Systemic social transformations lead to the transformation of social interactions, being expressed in the genesis of its forms. Crisis states accompanying transitional periods in the development of society are characterized by an increase in the complexity of the forms of behavior, which are manifested by both individual individuals and social groups. Such conditions of social changes lead to a change in the consciousness of people, their world view, the system of value orientations, which are manifested in new forms of behavior. Using Ch. Darwin's (1907) theory of evolution as a methodological foundation for the analysis of social transformations, one can say that the evolution of social behavior occurs, according to V. Yu. Bolshakov's (2001). However, the evolution of behavior occurs in different aspects - negative and positive ones. And the analysis of crisis periods, first of all, demonstrates such their peculiarities that new forms of behavior, as a rule, are shaped up as behaviors of a negative kind, which are expressed in various types of deviant behavior.

One of the important functions of science is the prognostic function, which consists in obtaining such knowledge about an object that would allow forecasting its (this object's) behavior (KOZLOV, 2005). This function of science performs an important pragmatic task, which becomes the foundation of the value of science itself as the most important form of cognition. Since forecasting makes it possible to create a scientifically grounded perspective of the development of an object, which determines the possibility of controlling the process of its development. In addition to it, to make a forecast, it is necessary to know the previous dynamics of the object's behavior, and, in this aspect, to build a perspective. It is necessary, first of all, to form a retrospective of the object, which the scientific gaze is focused on. All the foregoing applies, of course, to society - in order to forecast the further development of society, it is necessary to study the patterns of its development, to build a social perspective, a social retrospective is also needed. And here, history as a science comes to the fore. Of course, society is studied by many sciences, making it possible to obtain multiple disciplinary knowledge about social phenomena, but it is historical analysis that makes it possible to obtain that necessary retrospective of the development of society, which will make it possible to construct the prospect of social processes. In this regard, contemporary crisis, transitional processes that occur in society undoubtedly have similar periods in the history of the development of society, studying which it may become possible to understand the features of behavior and the contemporary social system (MASALIMOVA *et al.*, 2017).

It is the period of post-revolutionary development of Russia that is of paramount importance, and precisely the period of the 1920s - the time of the building of Soviet society can serve as a historical example of cardinal social transformations. The historical analysis of the features of the development of Soviet society in the 1920s makes it possible to deeper understand social behavior, as it were said, expressed in new forms, among which deviant behavior is an important part. Therefore, the study of the evolution of deviant behavior in the period of the 1920s in Soviet Russia will help to obtain a scientifically substantiated retrospective of social transformations in a society where the entire system of social relations is radically changing (EFIMOVA *et al.*, 2018; SALAKHOVA *et al.*, 2019).

### **Methodological Framework**

Debatable points. First of all, it should be pointed out that a formalized historical and sociological tradition of studying deviations in social behavior has developed in domestic science, which dates back to the pre-revolutionary period and is characterized by a number of features required to search for an ideal social structure and a new perfect person. In this regard, we can call the ideas of “reality according to the principle of obligation” proposed by S. N. Krivenko (1879); the theory of values proposed by M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky (2014) (TUGAN-BARANOVSKY, 2014; MOKSHIN, 2012; AKHMETOV, 2019). All these ideas became the foundation of the nascent domestic deviantology, highlighting criminality, drunkenness and prostitution among the most important behavioral anomalies (KOPCHENKO, 2005). In the criminological aspect of studying deviant behavior in the pre-revolutionary period, owing to the works of M. N. Gernet (1906), V. F. Pirozhkov (1998) and others, the idea was laid down of a connection between deviant behavior and social conditions which are determined by the prevailing sentiments in society (BYTKO, 2015; LUTSKIY *et al.*, 2019; KOPCHENKO, 2005).

Accordingly, the scientific traditions laid down in the pre-revolutionary period in the study of deviant behavior had an impact on the subsequent development of research in this area, giving its legacy to research in the 1920s - 1930s. Along with this, scientific interest in deviantology in the 1920s acquired its own peculiarities, because the society as a whole, and scientific research in particular, were influenced by the preceding events associated with the Revolutions and the Civil War in Russia, and brought about global social transformations, expressed, first of all, in the growth of deviance on a large scale, which urgently required scientific understanding. Along with the need to form interdisciplinary research in the field of

studying social anomalies, society urgently needed a new system of values (KOPCHENKO, 2005). In connection with the victory of the Bolsheviks, a social order was formed to determine new social norms in the conditions of building socialism, which corresponded to the new model of the “Soviet” man and the model of mass social behavior, which also required studying social anomalies, various kinds of deviations in human behavior. All of this should have become the basis of the new Soviet propaganda and ideology.

Among the scientific works in the field of deviantology of the period of Russian history in the 1920-1930s it is worth noting the works devoted to the analysis of the causes of alcoholism (BASHMACHNIKOV, 1928; DEICHMAN, 1928; LIFSHITS, 1931), the description of various forms of crime (GRISHAKOV, 1923; KUFAEV, 1927), phenomena associated with crimes in the sexual sphere (LYUBLINSKY, 1923; VASILEVSKY, 1923). However, unfortunately, it should be noted that in the 1930s scientific research on deviantology was curtailed because it was recognized as “ideologically harmful”.

Only by the 1960s, and up to the mid-1980s, the period of the beginning of perestroika, in Soviet social science attempts were made to explain the manifestation of various forms of deviations in human behavior under the conditions of a developed socialist society. Deviant behavior in this period was traditionally considered to be alcoholism, crime and prostitution (KURITSYN, 1972; TKACHEVSKY, 1996). With the beginning of perestroika (mid-1980s) and later, in the 1990s there was a wave of criticism in Soviet society and the substantiation of new forms of social structure. Along with this, a complex social situation was taking shape in Russian society under the conditions of all-pervading social transformations, which was associated with an increase in the level of manifestation of various forms of deviations. Some of the new ones, previously unexplored forms of deviant behavior are beginning to play an important role. A historical and anthropological trend of deviantology emerges owing to the study of deviant behavior in a given period, together with the analysis of scientific heritage devoted to the study of deviant behavior in the period and during the transition from War Communism to the NEP. The works that came out in this period are distinguished by a high scientific level and, undoubtedly, made a significant contribution to the development of Russian deviantology. This came about thanks to the establishment of historical deviantology, and, above all, the development of the history of deviant behavior in 1920 -1930 (KOCHEPASOVA, 2000; KOPCHENKO, 2005; LEBINA, 1994; TIKHOMIROVA, 2001). At present, the development of theoretical aspects of deviantology continues through the prism of studying deviant behavior in the period of Russia’s transition from War Communism to the NEP: the issues of connection between deviant behavior and the type of mentality and forms

of everyday life that arose in conditions of Soviet society are still being considered (PANIN, 2002; UTEKHIN, 2001; ZOTKINA, 2002).

Thus, in contemporary domestic science, an interdisciplinary field of the study of deviant behavior has formed, which has shaped up in deviantology, representing a synthesis of socio-humanitarian knowledge, the subject of this knowledge is deviant behavior. Undoubtedly, historical deviantology plays an important role in the study, which was presented in a brief overview above. The study of the previously considered scientific sources will allow us to understand the main sources and tendencies of social deviance in the period of transition from War Communism to the NEP, through a historical retrospective making it possible to understand better the essence of technological social processes, that people and society were involved in during the period under study (KOPCHENKO, 2005).

It is worth noting the fact that the preconditions for the global social transformations taking place in Russia at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were the consequences of bourgeois reforms and the “catching-up” character of the country’s socioeconomic development, which was expressed on the one hand, in a high rate of industrial development of the country, and, on the other hand, in a high degree of exploitation of workers and peasants. During modernization, the traditional communal relations of the main part of the population of Russia, which was represented by the peasantry, also changed at a high rate. In parallel with the global social transformations caused by the process of modernization, the traditional system of values, which constituted the basis of the traditional way of life of most peasants, workers, and townspeople, was changing. In such conditions of change in mentality, traditional attitudes lost their regulatory, and, consequently, their normative function, thus giving rise to a lack of social norms, which was compensated for by the growth of manifestations of social deviations in behavior of people (KOPCHENKO, 2005).

The period of the Revolution, War Communism, the Civil War led to enormous human losses, manifested, among other things, in a decrease in the value of human life, contributing to the decline in morality. Along with this, the declaration and struggle against religion, and, in the conditions of Russia, in particular, the struggle against Orthodox Christianity, which served as the basis for the moral outlook of the people, also led to the destruction of morality and the growth of destructive behavior. After the Civil War, the sphere of mass and individual consciousness also continued its transformation, since the new ideals of social organization, declared by the Bolsheviks, and consisting in equality and justice, in most cases failed to materialize, and, therefore, could not become the basis of new morals and morality (KOPCHENKO, 2005). On the one hand, the ideals of justice were demolished by the

introduction of prodrazvyorstka (the surplus food appropriation system), and, on the other hand, the ideals of equality did not correspond to the tasks that were proclaimed in connection with the introduction of the NEP, required for the restoration of economic life in the country. All these conditions became the fundamental factors in the growth of deviant behavior, which manifested itself in the most diverse forms.

First of all, it is worth noting that the main form of manifestation of deviant behavior in the 1920s was deviation in the political sphere, which can be defined as political deviant behavior. In the period of the Revolution and the Civil War, the main socio-psychological personality types were formed, exhibiting political forms of deviant behavior, which can be typologized according to their attitude to the authorities and their policy as:

- 1) individuals of a negative orientation;
- 2) individuals of a neutral type;
- 3) individuals of a positive orientation (KOPCHENKO, 2005).

According to information reports of the Cheka - OGPU on the political sentiments of various social groups of the population in the 1920s, more than 50% of the population was hostile to the Soviet government, 30% of the people were neutral, and only 20% of them were positive and supported it (GILINSKY, 2000). In this regard, deviation from the norms supported by the ruling party and the Soviet state was considered as political deviant behavior. Under the conditions of the NEP, in the 1920s, the Soviet state gradually increased its political and ideological pressure on the population, which ended in the 1930s with massive repressions and total “Sovietization” of the country. Therefore, the population, undergoing such a painful transformation, having a negative attitude to what was happening, gradually manifesting political deviant behavior in open active forms, replaced it with political apathy. Therefore, under the strong ideological and political pressure, anti-Soviet behavior as a form of political deviant behavior gradually shifted from the political sphere to the family and household sphere (KOPCHENKO, 2005).

## **Result and Discussions**

It is possible to assume that the processes of social apathy and anomie in the political sphere became one of the important factors in the growth of drunkenness in Russia in the 1920s. Alcoholism has become one of the main forms of social deviance, even in conditions of lack of food, expressed in mass moonshine making. In such conditions, the position of the Soviet state in relation to drunkenness was at least contradictory. Conversely, according to the Soviet

ideology, drunkenness should die out in the conditions of a communist society, and, in this regard, drunkenness was viewed as antisocial and counterrevolutionary, laying a social norm for combating this phenomenon. One inconsistency in the policy of the Soviet state was that in 1924-25 a monopoly on vodka was introduced, and the industry of production of vodka products began to be considered as one of the main financial sources of socialist construction. The expansion of the production of alcoholic beverages for the purpose of getting financial sources to accelerate the construction of a new society, which was supported at the state level, began to prevail over ideological considerations and moral norms, in the form of the so-called “policy of the lesser evil”. In this regard, in an effort to organize an effective struggle against drunkenness, the state, at the suggestion of Stalin, began to view the vodka monopoly as a stable source of funding for the state apparatus. Therefore, in its unclear form, all this contributed to the growth of social deviant behavior, which manifested itself in the form of drunkenness. As a result, in the 1920s, a wave of deviant behavior associated with drunkenness swept through the country, covering all segments of the population, from the party leadership to the ordinary worker, acquiring the character of a social element as a result. Thus, according to the data of the Department of Moral Statistics of the Central Statistical Administration of the USSR in 1925, the share of crimes committed while intoxicated in the total number of crimes was 13.8% on average, which is considered as a very high value (KOPCHENKO, 2005; TUGAN-BARANOVSKY, 2014).

After the victory of the Bolsheviks and the establishment of Soviet power in the sphere of combating crime, as well as in other spheres of society, a new ideology began to be cultivated, which determined the legal norms based in the period of the 1920s on the principles of a class approach. In this aspect, the legal system and law enforcement practice were under strict party control, which determined the nature and degree of social danger of the crime and the measures of its punishment (KOPCHENKO, 2005). Thus, the highest measures of “social justice” were applied to the “class enemies”, while in relation to the proletariat as the “hegemon” of Soviet society, measures of an educational nature were mainly applied, since it was believed that reeducation in new social conditions is in line with the principles of communist construction. Thus, in the legal sphere, the replacement of legal norms by the legal ideology of a class approach has become the basis for the manifestation of social deviance, significantly weakening the fight against crime, and especially with serious crime. Thus, the Soviet jurisprudence of the 1920s qualified social deviations according to those types, according to which the most numerous crimes were defined as crimes against the administrative order, which amounted to 51.5% of the total of its quantity, although among them 29%



represented hooliganism. In addition to this, the Soviet state steadily stepped-up repressive measures, as a result of which, for example, only in 1927 alone, 1.3% of the entire adult population of the RSFSR was convicted (LEBINA, 1994). In this regard, the crime during the NEP, as a form of deviant behavior, was not only the outcome of a systemic crisis of public administration, but also the result of a contradictory political ideology, which had a significant impact on the legal sphere (KOPCHENKO, 2005).

Dramatic social transformations that took place after the October Revolution, during the period of War Communism, and during the NEP, as a way to overcome the systemic crisis, which Russia faced, also affected family and marital relationships. The rejection of the traditional system of value orientations, one of the most significant values was the family, and the proclamation of the construction of a new system of values for the builders of communism, full of contradictions, became one of the decisive factors in the growth of deviant behavior in the marriage and family sphere. Socialist construction during the 1920s was based on the idea that, as the country moved towards communism, traditional family and marriage relations would be replaced by a new type of free relationship between men and women (KOPCHENKO, 2005). At the beginning of the 1920s, the traditional family and everyday life were constantly criticized for the “isolation” of family and marital relationships in the traditional family, and the need to be replaced by a new type of socialization of the individual, in which the interests of the family and an individual should be subordinated to the interests of society and communism construction. The outcome of the construction of a “new” family was significant changes in the socio-demographic situation in Russia, and, moreover, led to a change in the demographic behavior of the population (UTEKHIN, 2001). All this was expressed in a decrease in the number of registered marriages, in general, and in the loss of stability in marital relations, in the growth of single men and women of marriageable age (KOPCHENKO, 2005). As a result, such a contradictory policy of the Soviet state and the Bolshevik party led to an increase in the level of deviant behavior in this area, which was manifested in sexual promiscuity, the growth of prostitution, which especially affected the youth milieu.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, the conducted study of the life of Russian society in a historical retrospective during the Revolutions, Civil War and the NEP, as a historical model of global social transformations, allows us to outline some aspects of the social perspective. First of all, it should be stated that these historical events serve us as a lesson to the fact that when the existing

system of value orientations is fundamentally broken, and during the search for a new system of values, a state of anomie of society will surely come, accompanied by the growth of deviant behavior. And whatever the search for a new system of values, no matter what good intentions it could be justified, all the same society will come to the system of value orientations, which is designated as universal and eternal. In this sense, it is hardly possible to speak of the traditional system of values as old and obsolete, but quite the contrary, as a permanent and eternal one. The social system, apparently, is an organism, harmonized in the process of evolution, and any radical changes in it are fraught with its severe trauma, and sometimes even vitality.

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