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## THE BEGINNING OF THE SYSTEM OF ASSISTANCE TO CHILDREN WITH VISUAL DISABILITIES: HISTORICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ASPECT

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*The scientific article reveals some of the historical facts of the beginning of helping children with visual impairments. The main chronological events of caring for children with the noted category of disorders are noted, which later became the basis for the development of special education, in particular, typhlopedagogy.*

*The article describes the emergence of hospitals, shelters for orphans, sick and crippled people throughout Rus, which testifies to the attention of society to their lives. The facts of the search for ways of treatment and the development of methods, principles and means of teaching people with impaired psychophysical development are outlined. Based on the study of historical sources, the times of Kyivan Rus are characterized, when in some monasteries and churches premises were allocated for the residence of orphans and crippled children. There is information about the first institution in Ukraine, which was guarded by the problem of blind people, although it did not provide for special education and training for this category of persons.*

*An important point of the article is the definition of the role of the state in the care of visually impaired persons. It is noted that in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century in Ukraine, social work began to take care of orphans and people with disabilities. From the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, orphans and children of "mutilations" began to be in the care of shelters and hospitals, which was stipulated by a number of state decrees. In the 30s of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a new form of guardianship over the disabled was introduced, patronage, which still exists in a modernized form. For a deeper retrospective of the state's assistance to children with visual impairments, it is necessary to investigate the facts of historical sources from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present*

**Keywords:** children with visual impairments, assistance, special education, correctional assistance, history, teaching

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### 1. Introduction

Changes in the ideological, moral-value and socio-economic structure of society taking place in Ukraine have also affected the educational process. This has led to the modernization of special education as it is subordinated to and developed within the framework of the national education system.

Solving the problems of special education is associated with a detailed understanding of the past, an objective assessment of historical realities, the study of the historical roots of pedagogical ideas, facts, theories, concepts, and the experience of teachers of past years with the aim of introducing the best achievements and achievements into pedagogical practice for the development of the future [1, 2].

Further development and improvement of special education is possible only on the basis of a thorough study of the historical experience of teaching and upbringing of persons with impaired psychophysical development, identifying the possibilities of its use and modernization in modern conditions.

The implementation of the historical and pedagogical analysis of rendering assistance to children with visual impairments, the prerequisites for the emergence of training for persons of this category, implements the principle of unity and continuity of the historical and pedagogical process. Consideration and systematization of this material will make it possible not only to evaluate and appropriately interpret the material, but also to out-

line further ways for the development of research in special pedagogy.

### 2. Literature review

The works of leading Ukrainian scientists have become the methodological basis of modern work in correctional pedagogy, revealing the historical facts of the formation and development of branches of special education in Ukraine. Thus, the theory and history of oligophrenopedagogy, the prospects for the development of the system of special education were studied in detail in [1]. In [3], a systematic historical and pedagogical analysis of the process of functioning and development of correctional education for children with intellectual disabilities is carried out. She studied the history of typhlopedagogy, the historical experience of teaching and educating persons with visual impairments [4]. Scientists classified the historical and pedagogical knowledge on the development of education of the blind in Ukraine. A holistic structural and meaningful analysis of the development of the components of the training system for defectologists at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and regional features was carried out in [5]. The authors [6, 7] define the formation and autonomy of each of the branches of special pedagogy, study the development of helping children with psychophysical developmental disorders.

The issue of historical aspects of typhlopedagogy was investigated by Ukrainian scientists, namely: the peculiarities of the development and upbringing of the

personality with profound visual impairments and the formation of interpersonal relations in collectives of the blind [8]; the achievements of the figure, which historically influenced the assistance to children with visual impairments and the development of typhoid pedagogy in general, have been studied [9]; the history of the formation of musical education for the blind are indicated [10]; a holistic structural and meaningful analysis of the prerequisites for the emergence, formation, features of the genesis of domestic typhlopedagogy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Ukraine [4].

### 3. The aim and objectives of research

The aim of research is to study the issues of rendering assistance to children with visual impairments in the period of the 10<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the implementation of historical and pedagogical analysis and determination of the possibility of introducing historical facts into the practice of the modern system of special education in the aspect of the problem.

To achieve the aim, the following objectives were set:

1. To investigate archival sources and scientific works of scientists who have studied the issues of education and training of children with visual impairments.
2. To identify and analyze the attitude of society towards persons with visual impairments in the period of the 10<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries.
3. To determine the possibilities of introducing historical facts into practice of the modern system of special education in the aspect of the problem.

### 4. Materials and methods

Research methods that were used in the article: theoretical analysis, synthesis and generalization of information and facts from scientific, methodological and archival sources; search and bibliographic method, systemic and structural; the chronological and method of actualizing historical experience contributed to the study of a scientific problem from the standpoint of historical description, theory and practice.

Based on the methodological and theoretical foundations of the research:

– the study of archival documents, special and scientific-pedagogical literature was carried out, the processing of which was carried out by means of theoretical analysis and generalization of information and facts about rendering assistance to children with visual impairments in the period of the 10<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries;

– information was collected on the attitude of society towards children with visual impairments in the specified period, this was facilitated by the search and bibliographic method,

– the analysis of archival and scientific and pedagogical sources gave grounds on the basis of the use of general scientific methods (analysis, synthesis, comparison, systematization, generalization), to highlight the main facts of rendering assistance to children with visual impairments in the period of the 10<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries;

– chronological and systemic-structural methods made it possible to consider and structure the collected information in time sequence;

– to determine the value of the collected facts for the theory and practice of modern special education was allowed by the method of actualizing historical experience.

### 5. Research results and their discussion

Analysis of archival and scientific-pedagogical sources allows to identify the prerequisites for the upbringing and education of children with visual impairments. The main factors that influenced the attitude towards children with various disorders of psychophysical development, in particular with visual impairments, were the political, moral and religious outlook of society. The chronology makes it possible to trace the historical facts of the conditions for the development of assistance to children with this category.

One of the first facts that begins to describe the attitude of society and the state towards persons with visual impairments dates back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century. During this period, the period of the birth of the school began in Russia. Officially, the chronicle dates the beginning of school education in Kyivan Rus in 988. As the "Tale of Bygone Years" testifies, Prince Vladimir Sviatoslavych began to build churches and with them "schools of book teaching" [4, 11]. In these schools, mainly children of the princely-boyar environment were brought up. In terms of education, these schools were close to the educational institutions of the Byzantine Empire. According to the Byzantine laws, a pilot's book was created in Kyivan Rus, in which, in addition to the general rights and obligations of Rusychi, the rights of cripples related to the protection of their property, position in the family, etc. were recorded. [11].

In 996, Vladimir Sviatoslavych issued the Charter, in which he officially obliged the church to look after the "needy and the poor" [12], for which he allocated tithes from the prince's income. He introduced the construction of hospitals, almshouses, shelters for orphans, sick and crippled people throughout Kyivan Rus [4]. This indicates that society is paying attention to the life of persons with impaired psychophysical development and vision in particular.

Ancient Kyivan Rus has long been famous for its "eye masters". They treated people and often got good results. The first written mentions of eye treatment and vision restoration are found in the "Paterikon" of the Kyiv-Pechersk Monastery. So, according to the chronicle, it is known that Prince Vladimir had pain in his eyes, and his folk healers cured him [4]. The same archival source indicates that funds were allocated from the income of the Kyiv-Pechersk Monastery for the maintenance of the sick, blind, beggars and in the almshouse organized by the Church of St. Stephen.

In many literary sources of the 11<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries there are references to the "blind", dumb, deaf, "immortal", etc. Facts are described, folk medicine was in search of ways to eliminate them, and folk pedagogy worked on the development of methods, principles and means of educating persons with impaired psychophysical development. Rational methods of treatment in the period of the 11<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries were intertwined with fortune-telling. The indicated time can be considered the birth of speech therapy practice, when tongue twisters were

formed by individuals specifically to correct speech deficiencies.

During the times of Kyivan Rus, in some monasteries and churches, premises were allocated for the residence of orphans and crippled children. These disadvantaged children were looked after by beggars. From time to time they put the children in carts and drove them around the city, begging for alms for their maintenance. For a long time, the words "blind" and "beggar" were synonymous. Some sympathetic people took cripples and orphans to their homes and looked after them. Such a humane attitude towards cripples, including the blind, was also reflected in the decrees of the secular authorities of Kyivan Rus [4].

Despite the care for children with visual impairments, which began to develop in Kyivan Rus, there was no specially organized training for the blind, like other people with physical or intellectual disabilities. The position of these people depended and was determined by the policy of the state.

As noted in [4], during the times of Kyivan Rus, it was the Christian church that became the first institution in Ukraine that dealt with the problems of blind people, although it did not envisage special education and training for this category of persons, but only promoted Christian dogmas. Blindness in these times was viewed as a terrible punishment, and therefore to interfere in the fate of a blind person meant going against God. The fate of the absolute majority of the blind in those days was - begging, hunger, cold, systematic deprivation during the collection of alms and serving God [11]. Thus, the fate of blind people in the Middle Ages remained uncertain for a long time.

The changes that took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in society, science were reflected in the views of a person with visual impairments. Public figures of this period are beginning to express the idea that the blind are not only meant to receive alms. They believe that these are people who can work, earn money on their own.

According to [4], one of the impetus to the beginning of the organized education of the blind was the generalist published by Bohdan Khmelnytsky in 1652 about the organization of schools for the training of kobzars and lyre players at the kobzar workshops. These were, in fact, the first music schools in Ukraine. Cossack-kobzars worked as teachers in them, who, by their age, could already have a good command of weapons. In schools, young men were taught to play musical instruments and sing, who must lead the Cossacks into battle with their songs. It is known from literary sources that sometimes blind people (for example, Cossacks who were blinded during campaigns) got to these educational institutions, who learned to compose and sing songs about the exploits of the Cossacks and distribute them on a trip throughout Ukraine.

In the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries in Ukraine, social work began to take care of orphans and people with disabilities. The role of the state in the guardianship of these persons has also increased. In 1670, a special "Order for the construction of almshouses" was created, which began to open in Kyiv, Uman, Cherkassy, Berdychiv and many other cities. In these almshouses there were both

crippled old people and children, among whom there were also blind people. Under some of them, separate special departments were created, in which orphans and crippled children (blind, deaf, and others) were raised at the same time [1, 2].

From the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, orphans and "disabled" children began to be under the care of orphanages and hospitals, which was provided for by a number of state decrees. In the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, significant changes took place in the socio-economic, socio-political and cultural life of Rus, associated with the development of crafts, domestic and foreign trade, this gave rise to the need to organize secular education, the creation of a state comprehensive school. Since then, training has been recognized as a state necessity, and professional requirements for the education of citizens have been formulated accordingly.

It can be noted that from the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, scientists began to form an interconnection of science from religion, the emergence of new pedagogical ideas, which influenced the system of education and training, including those with impaired psychophysical development [13].

By 1775, all public custody of orphans and disabled children was either in the spiritual and public department. In that year, Catherine II issued a decree on the creation of a centralized body of the "Order of Public Charity", according to which all orphanages were subordinate to the above body. Thus, with the issuance of this decree, guardianship over the disabled and orphans passed into the hands of the state. In addition, citizens and individuals were strongly encouraged to donate to charitable causes. During the reign of Catherine II, for the first time, it was legally allowed to create charitable societies [4].

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and century, according to the decrees of Peter I, in Russia and, accordingly, in Ukraine [1, 4], several types of public charity institutions were established for children, among which were a hospital for sick and "disabled" children (including those with visual impairments).

In the 30s of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a new form of custody of the disabled was introduced - patronage, which, of course, exists in a modernized form to this day.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, scientists began to actively create methodological and pedagogical literature for the upbringing and education of children with visual impairments. So, in 1749, the book "Letters on the Blind for the Edification of the Sighted" by D. Diderot was published, in which observations were generalized and conclusions were drawn about the possibility and necessity of teaching the blind [4]. This work became the theoretical basis for the training of the first future typhlopedagogues. The philosopher made a psychological analysis of the inner world of a person, who was blind from birth, expressed an opinion about the correctional and compensatory value of using the surviving sense organs by the blind to obtain educational information.

In [4], it is described the observation of the French teacher V. Hauy, who investigated that under specially created conditions, a special technique, slips children can achieve significant success in teaching read-

ing, writing and music. This confirmed the possibility of education for this category of persons, the experiment was not taken seriously by society. V. Haüy in 1783 created the concept of teaching the blind [4], which marked the beginning of the formation of the science of typhlopädagogy.

Prior to this discovery, Louis IX created a shelter for blind people called Hospice. The hospice provided the blind with a place to live, material assistance, a pension, support for family members of the blind, and the like. Thanks to this asylum, a sympathetic attitude towards the blind was formed in French society, but education was considered impossible [4].

In 1784, at the expense of the charitable organization "philanthropic society" V. Haüy opened the Paris Institute for the training of 12 blind children [4]. Students were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, music and manual labor. The teaching methods for the blind at the institute were predominantly verbal. The only visual aids were geographical maps made according to the method of V. Haüy. A year later, despite the success of the students, this educational institution became state-owned. The number of children increased all the time and reached 120 people.

The first attempt to determine the goals, objectives, content and methods of teaching the blind was the publication in 1786 of the book by V. Haüy "An Essay on Teaching the Blind" [4]. In the book "The origin, development and current state of education of the blind," the scientist summarized the experience of his typhlopädagogical work and views on the methods of teaching the blind. The merit of V. Haüy also lies in the invention of his own font for reading, writing and writing notes for the blind, he began printing for the blind.

Based on certain chronological facts, it can be concluded that in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the attitude towards persons with visual impairments in society was different and chaotic. From non-recognition, complete without the action and assistance of the state, to the creation of the first educational institutions.

Almost until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, children with impaired psychophysical development, in particular vision, begged and did not receive government assistance. The first attempts at care and support came from the church and the personal desire of the community. And only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, after conducting research and proving the existence of persons with visual impairments, which became the beginning of today's field of special education – typhlopädagogy, the state began to deal with them.

## 6. Conclusions

1. The study of archival sources and scientific developments of scientists who studied the issues of education and training of children with visual impairments, allowed in the article to carry out a historical and pedagogical analysis of support, guardianship and training of the specified category of persons during the 10<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

2. The article traces the dynamics of society's attitude towards children with visual impairments. The dependence of education and upbringing of children with psychophysical disabilities on the state educational policy, social and pedagogical movement, religious influence is shown, and is also a problem of our time.

3. Thanks to the introduction into the practice of the modern system of special education of the facts of the historical and bibliographic review of the beginning of helping children with visual impairments, today we have an extensive network of institutions of special education.

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