

The application of Edmund Bojanowski's pedagogical thought of using the principles of local family culture in modern Belarus

VIKTAR ADZINCHANKA*

F. Skaryna Gomel State University, Belarus

One of the premises for developing a system of preschool education in Belarus today is using foreign experience, which also includes the pedagogical concepts of Edmund Bojanowski. One of the distinctive features of European culture distinguishing it from the rest is its solicitude for the individual, which directly follows from Christian personalism. In this context, it is possible to consider the issue of applying Bojanowski's pedagogical teaching to the situation of contemporary Belarus. In the context of the changes taking place in modern Belarus, we should take into account the specificity of the understanding of modernity, which ultimately leads to the development of specific programs of action. In modern Belarus, the importance of traditional values and their correlation with the tasks currently facing the country, including in the field of pedagogy, has increased dramatically. Natural religiosity, generated by various practical needs, is traditionally widespread in Belarus. The upbringing of children also took place on its basis. This corresponds to folk pedagogy, the main principle of which is upbringing in harmony with nature, of which man was considered an integral part. Today, the folk traditions of child rearing and family culture are being actualized in Belarus. But traditional pedagogy must also be supplemented to meet the conditions of modern life. Belarus now has a compulsory preschool education program, approved by the Ministry of Education. Belarusian legislation allows the religious education of children. However, there is a lack of relevant experience, especially in the field of preschool education. The development of pedagogical processes in modern Belarus and the use of the world's experience in them will be associated with the development of the situation relating to religion in the country.

KEYWORDS: modern Belarus, local family culture, pedagogical thought, religiosity

Aplikacja myśli pedagogicznej E. Bojanowskiego z wykorzystaniem zasad lokalnej kultury rodzinnej w warunkach współczesnej Białorusi

We współczesnej Białorusi jedną z przesłanek do rozwoju systemu edukacji przedszkolnej jest wykorzystanie doświadczeń zagranicznych, w tym koncepcji pedagogicznych E. Bojanowskiego. Jedną z charakterystycznych cech kultury europejskiej, odróżniającą ją od innych, jest troska o jednostkę, bezpośrednio wynikająca z chrześcijańskiego personalizmu. W tym kontekście można rozważyć kwestię zastosowania pedagogiki E. Bojanowskiego w warunkach współczesnej Białorusi. W kontekście przemian zachodzących we współczesnej Białorusi należy wziąć pod uwagę specyfikę białoruskiego rozumienia nowoczesności i będące jego konsekwencją opracowywane programy działania. We współczesnej Białorusi gwałtownie

wzrosło znaczenie tradycyjnych wartości i ich korelacji z zadaniami, przed którymi stoi obecnie kraj, w tym w dziedzinie pedagogiki. Religijność naturalna, generowana przez różne potrzeby praktyczne, jest tradycyjnie rozpowszechniona na Białorusi. Opiera się na niej także wychowanie dzieci. Odpowiada to pedagogice ludowej – jej główną zasadą jest wychowanie w zgodzie z naturą, której integralną częścią był człowiek. Obecnie na Białorusi następuje aktualizacja ludowych tradycji wychowania i kultury rodzinnej. Tradycyjna pedagogika musi zostać uzupełniona, aby odpowiadać warunkom współczesnego życia. W Białorusi funkcjonuje obowiązkowy program edukacji przedszkolnej, zatwierdzony przez białoruskie Ministerstwo Edukacji. Białoruskie ustawodawstwo zezwala na edukację religijną dzieci. Brakuje jednak odpowiedniego doświadczenia, zwłaszcza w zakresie edukacji przedszkolnej. Rozwój procesów pedagogicznych we współczesnej Białorusi będzie związany z rozwojem sytuacji religijnej w kraju.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: współczesna Białoruś, lokalna kultura rodzinna, myśl pedagogiczna, religijność

Introduction

When we speak of applying Bojanowski's pedagogical concepts in modern Belarus, we should take into account their ways and means, as well as the problems associated with them. The latter are generated by the specifics of the situation in which the country finds itself.

1. Transformation in modern Belarus

In today's world, there is increased interaction between various regions that are dissimilar in terms of culturally determined forms of behavior. Since the end of the last century, Belarus has been an independent state, forming international relations. In addition to political and economic cooperation, pedagogical concepts are also being exchanged, primarily those developed in European countries. But now in Belarus the task of understanding its own pedagogical tradition is also relevant.

Poland is a close neighbor to modern Belarus, the foundation for principles of interaction with it is extremely important. For a long time, our countries were part of one state. There is not only a linguistic, but also a mental proximity, the Belarusians and Poles understand each other. In addition, in the period of globalization and the spread of various patterns of behavior, it is necessary to point out the common basis of culture that unites European countries. In our opinion, it is most productive to proceed from the fact that this basis is Christianity. One of the characteristic features of European culture, which distinguishes it from the rest, is its solicitude towards the individual, which directly follows from Christian personalism. In this context, the problem of applying Bojanowski's pedagogical doctrine in the situation of modern Belarus can be considered.

We should also proceed from the fact that in the modern world, the importance of taking into account the local cultural specificity in the implementation of various development projects is increasing. As the world experience has proved, when this does not happen, negative consequences arise. The most striking example is that successful economic growth has been achieved in those countries where it was based on traditional forms of behavior. Modern Belarus is now facing the task of cultural self-determination. It is necessary to identify the ideological foundation, forming the basis on which one can move forward.

Understanding the nature of the situation in which modern Belarus finds itself is relevant primarily for the Belarusians themselves. We should take into account that the country is undergoing transformation. It is mainly described as a transition from a Soviet society to an

independent Belarusian state. The ongoing changes, first, have touched all spheres of life and, second, affect the fundamental social structures, ideas and patterns of behavior. Modern Belarus is at a turning point in its historical development.

The emphasis is mainly on the social aspects of change. They proceed from the fact that a society with a planned economy, a single ruling party and totalitarian ideology will be replaced by a society in which market laws, democracy and ideological pluralism operate.

It should be noted that this task arose in all the former Soviet republics in the early 1990s. However, as further experience showed, different paths were taken in their development. The most illustrative example of such differences is the experience of the independent development of the Baltic countries and Central Asia. This difference is primarily due to the accepted traditional types of behavior formed within a particular culture.

Thus, the role of national culture in the formation of an independent state becomes increasingly obvious. In our opinion, as Belarus develops, its cultural specificity will also increase.

We should take into account the fact that the concept of "modernity" for Belarus has a specific content. Modern Belarus originates from the adoption of the Declaration on State Sovereignty by the Supreme Council of the BSSR on July 27, 1990. Processes began, which form the specificity of our situation. It is primarily determined by the formation of an independent state with its own economy, politics, culture, etc.

In the context of the transformation taking place in modern Belarus, we should take into account the specificity of understanding modernity, which ultimately leads to the development of specific programs of action. There is a widespread point of view that the concept of modernity "denotes a problematic situation in which societies find themselves as a result of the undermining and collapse of that system of higher values that previously legitimized their orders, ensured the meaningfulness of the general "picture of the world" among the members of these societies and were perceived by them as the highest and objective 'ontological' reality" (Капустин, 2010, p. 587).

The Soviet project, which was also implemented on the territory of Belarus, had a modernization character, and one of its elements was a break with tradition, including in the field of pedagogy. The Soviet Union had a unified system of education aimed at shaping the Soviet person.

However, in modern Belarus, the importance of traditional values and their correlation with the tasks that the country now faces, including in the field of pedagogy, has sharply increased. Popular is the position that "today there is an acute question about the use of centuries-old achievements of folk pedagogy in organizing the education of younger generations" (Болбас, 2013, p. 80).

One of the principles of the education system developed by Edmund Bojanowski is "the use of the important role of cultural heritage as a means of education. Turning to Polish traditions and culture fits into certain circumstances and leads to education in a religious, cultural and national community, corresponding to the spirit of the times in which man lives" (Программа дошкольного образования, 2021, с. 24). In this regard, the tasks of developing the following types of education are set: physical, mental, cognitive, socio-moral, cultural, religious ones.

It should be said that the task of systemic education was also inherent in the Soviet system of pedagogy. It was assumed that its implementation would lead to the formation of a person who combines spiritual wealth, moral purity and physical perfection. However, of course, religious education was outside the official Soviet pedagogical system. Priests were allowed only cult activities, they could not teach religion to children.

In this regard, a sharp turning point has occurred in modern Belarus. Since the end of the 1980s, religious life has improved in the country. Its most obvious indicator is the increase in

the number of registered religious communities. From 1988 to 2022 their number quadrupled (from 765 to 3409). Article 9 of the Law “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations” states that “religious organizations registered in accordance with the procedure established by this Law have the right, in accordance with their charters, to create study groups and Sunday religious schools for the religious education of children and adults, using the premises belonging to them and (or) provided for their use, except for premises belonging to state educational institutions” (О свободе совести и религиозных организациях, 2017).

However, when we speak about the process of education, it is important to consider not the number of religious organizations but the way they influence people’s attitudes and behavior.

2. Religiosity in modern Belarus

Research on the religiosity of the population is regularly conducted in modern Belarus. As a rule, the results cite very large figures. For example, it is stated that “the absolute majority of the population (95%) considers themselves to be of various faiths: Orthodox (84%), Catholic (8.5%), other (2.5%)” (Республика Беларусь в зеркале социологии, 2017, с. 104).

Thus, based on the above data, we can conclude that Belarus is one of the most religious countries in the world. But it should be borne in mind that these results were obtained on the basis of the religious self-identification of the respondents.

If, however, when analyzing religiosity, one proceeds from objective criteria, such as cult behavior, knowledge of sacred texts of one’s religion, knowledge of the basic moral precepts and, most importantly, orientation to them in everyday behavior, then the above conclusion requires correction. As a rule, people willingly declare their religious affiliation, but this does not manifest itself in any way in their lives.

Thus, according to the results of the research, it was concluded that “the analysis of the data obtained indicates the predominance of nominal religious consciousness among the majority of respondents who identified themselves with some religion. Among this group, only 8% of the respondents are actively religious, including 5% who consistently take part in religious services, and 3% of whom participate in all rituals and sacraments” (Республика Беларусь в зеркале социологии, 2017, р. 105). We believe that it is the latter figure, 3%, that can be used as an indicator of the religiosity of the Belarusian population.

Thus, as sociological studies show, the religiosity of the majority of the population of Belarus is declarative in nature and not expressed in their actual behaviors. In the religious sphere, indefinite spirituality now rules, it is believed that one must believe in something. The majority of Belarusians identify themselves with Orthodoxy, but in this case, we mean not religious, but cultural and national identification – a person declares that they belong to a certain tradition, because they proceed from the idea that Orthodoxy is the national religion of the eastern Slavs.

We believe that this situation is the result of the transitional nature of our society. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a need for new ways of identification, no longer through social definitions (a worker – a collective farmer – an employee), but through national and cultural characteristics. Religion is perceived as a “spiritual” element of a certain culture and is used as a means of identification.

In addition, during the years of Soviet power, the main part of the population lost their very understanding of what religion is. Very often it comes down to purely external features of behavior: going to church, lighting a candle, having food blessed, etc.

The nature of the religiosity of the population of modern Belarus is largely determined by the existing cultural tradition. Most modern Belarusians have rural roots. Only in 1976 did the urban population exceed the rural population. There was a very large gap in the Soviet Union in the level of economic and cultural development between cities and villages. Therefore, people sought to move to the city, as it was an indicator of success in life.

But the new urban residents did not abandon their folk customs. Most of these customs are pagan in nature.

This is also due to the anti-religious policy in the Soviet Union. Religion was seen as a type of anti-communist ideology, and a fierce struggle was waged against it. Paganism was perceived not as a religion, but as folk traditions. For example, it was dangerous to celebrate Easter in a Christian way. It was impossible to go to church. But if it was seen as part of a folk tradition, then a celebration was possible. Almost everyone baked rolls and dyed eggs. It was part of the family culture. Although no one explained the Christian meaning of Easter to children, they said that it was just a folk tradition.

The ninth day after Orthodox Easter is also the holiday of Radovnitza. It has always been widely celebrated. This is happening now. People go to cemeteries, eat and drink there. And part of the food (bun, eggs, sweets, vodka) is left on the graves. This is a folk tradition. But this custom has a religious meaning, which has a pagan character. In essence, this is the holiday of the grandfathers. Grandfathers are the name for ancestors who died, regardless of gender and age. They thought they needed to eat. And when food is left on the graves, they feed the grandfathers. Usually children are taken to Radovnitza. They are told about their dead ancestors. This also forms family culture.

As a rule, children in Belarus are baptized. But they consider it rather a folk custom. When they are asked why a child should be baptized, then, as a rule, the reasons given are that so that the child does not get sick, that it has a guardian angel, that there is protection from evil forces, etc.

Natural religiosity, generated by various practical needs, is traditionally widespread in Belarus. The upbringing of children also occurred on its basis. This corresponds to folk pedagogy, the main principle of which is "education in accordance with nature, of which man was considered an integral part" (Беларусы, 2001, p. 123).

Traditionally, education among Belarusians happened mainly in the family and was part of everyday practice. "The folk pedagogy of the Belarusians was the pedagogy of life. Educational practice for many centuries, starting from the cradle, was closely connected with the life, the way of life, the economic activity of the people, based on its life principles" (Беларусы, 2001, p. 121).

3. Preschool education in modern Belarus

Today in Belarus, the folk traditions of education and family culture are being actualized. It is even argued that "one of the reasons for the serious failures of pedagogical efforts in our society is the violation of continuity in the process of educating younger generations, ignoring the principle of conformity to culture and separation from national roots" (Болбас, 2013, p. 4).

But traditional pedagogy must also be supplemented to meet the conditions of modern life. Belarus has a compulsory program of preschool education, which is approved by the Ministry of Education. The program is complex, and its content is set out taking into account the main directions of the development of the pupil: "physical, social, moral and personal, cognitive, speech, aesthetic ones" (Вучэбная праграма, 2019, p. 247).

The objectives of curriculum implementation are: “the formation of a culture of health, the physical culture of a child’s personality; the formation of pupils on the basis of a variety of educational content of a humane attitude towards themselves and the world around them, emotional responsiveness, the ability to empathize; ensuring the versatile development of a child’s personality, as well as creating conditions for their early socialization; the development of cognitive activity, curiosity, the desire for independent knowledge and reflection, the development of mental abilities and speech of a child; familiarization of pupils with universal human values; the formation of citizenship and national identity, patriotic feelings, moral, aesthetic and environmental culture; ensuring continuity between preschool education and the 1st stage of general secondary education” [Вучэбная праграма, 2019, с. 246].

Modern Belarus also has a Standard of preschool education. It states that the components of educational work are: “education of the culture of a healthy lifestyle, civic and patriotic education, spiritual and moral education, multicultural education, education of psychological culture, family and gender education, labor education, environmental education, economic education” [Образовательный стандарт, 2019, pp. 7–8].

Special attention should be paid to the interaction of the modern Belarusian state with religious organizations in the field of education.

Article 9 of the Law “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations” states that “The national education system in the Republic of Belarus is secular in nature and does not pursue the goal of forming one or another attitude towards religion” (О свободе совести, 2017). At the same time, this does not exclude the possibility of cooperation. Article 2 of the Education Code, which is called “Fundamentals of State Policy in the Sphere of Education”, states: “Educational institutions in matters of education, on the basis of written applications from students, legal representatives of minor students during extracurricular time, can interact with registered religious organizations, taking into account their influence on the formation of the spiritual, cultural and state traditions of Belarusian people” (Кодекс Республики Беларусь об образовании, 2011).

As a rule, the state focuses primarily on the Orthodox Church. On June 12, 2003, an agreement of cooperation was signed between the Orthodox Church and the Republic of Belarus. The positions of the parties in this document are indicated as follows: “The state recognizes that the Church is one of the most important social institutions, whose historical experience, spiritual potential and centuries-old cultural heritage have had a significant impact on the formation of the spiritual, cultural and national traditions of Belarusian people in the past and in the present.... The Church recognizes that the state is the guarantor of the preservation of the spiritual and cultural traditions of Belarusian people, including those historically formed under the influence of the Church” (Соглашение о сотрудничестве, 2003). On the basis of this agreement, additional agreements were concluded with ministries and departments. At present, Orthodox priests are invited to schools, universities, attend oath taking ceremonies, consecrate buildings and institutions, etc.

At the same time, these agreements resolutely emphasize, first, the secular nature of education, and second, the equality of all faiths. Thus, the Program of Cooperation between the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus and the Belarusian Orthodox Church for 2020-2025 states: “This Program of Cooperation in the field of education of children and youth is implemented in accordance with the principles of: mutual respect and non-interference in matters within the competence of the Parties; the secular nature of education; tolerance, meaning in this context that the cooperation of educational bodies and institutions with the Belarusian Orthodox Church does not aim at infringing on the rights of other faiths or citizens

and does not prevent them from developing cooperation with the education system within the framework of the current legislation; respect for the rights of students to form their own position regarding religion and the rights of parents or people replacing them to raise children in accordance with their own attitude towards religion” (Программа сотрудничества, 2020).

4. Conclusions

Modern Belarus has requirements for developing the system of preschool education using foreign experience, including the concepts of Edmund Bojanowski on pedagogy.

Belarusian legislation allows the religious education of children. However, there is no relevant experience, especially in the field of preschool education.

The problem is the spread of declarative religiosity in modern Belarus. Therefore, only a small number of families can provide initial religious education. At present, this is rather the task of religious organizations. They will also need to explain the basics of faith to pupils' parents.

Orthodoxy serves as a model of religion for the majority of the inhabitants and authorities of modern Belarus. It is different from Catholicism. The Orthodox Church does not have as rich an experience with social activity as the Catholics have. In addition, the Orthodox Church is tradition-oriented. Now the task is for them to adapt to the conditions of modern society.

The development of pedagogical processes in modern Belarus and the use of the world experiences in this will be associated with the development of the religious situation in the country.

Bibliography

- Бандарчык, В.К. і інш. (рэд.). (2001). *Беларусы. Т. 5. Сям'я*. Беларуская навука.
- Болбас, В.С. (2013) *Этнічная педагогіка беларусаў*. МДПУ імя І.П. Шамякіна.
- Вучэбная праграма дашкольнай адукацыі для ўстаноў дашкольна адукацыі з беларускай мовай навучання і выхавання // Нацыянальны прававой Інтэрнет-партал Рэспублікі Беларусь, 28.09.2019, 8/34601. – С. 245–479.
- Капустин, Б. Г. (2010) Современность. В: В. С. Степин и др. (ред.). *Новая философская энциклопедия* (т. III, с. 587–588). Мысль.
- Мир права (2011). *Кодекс Республики Беларусь об образовании*. http://world_of_law.pravo.by/text.asp?rn=hk1100243
- Образовательный стандарт. Дошкольное образование* //Нацыянальны прававой Інтэрнет-партал Рэспублікі Беларусь, 25.09.2019, 8/34600. – С. 1–24.
- Профессиональные правовые системы, Нац. центр правовой информ. Респ. Беларусь (2017). *О свободе совести и религиозных организациях*. Закон Респ. Беларусь, 17 декабря 1992 г., № 2054-XII : в ред. Закона Респ. Беларусь от 22.12.2011 г. Минск: Бизнес-Инфо.
- Опеля, М. и др. (2021). Программа дошкольного образования согласно педагогической концепции блаж. Эдмунда Бояновского. Werset.
- Министерство образования Республики Беларусь (2020). Программа сотрудничества между Министерством образования Республики Беларусь и Белорусской Православной Церковью на 2020–2025 годы. Взято из <https://edu.gov.by/sistema-obrazovaniya/glavnoe-upravlenie-vospitatelnoy-raboty-i-molodezhnoy-politiki / upravlenie-raboty/gosudarstvennye-programmy/>
- Дербин А.П. (ред.) (2017). Республика Беларусь в зеркале социологии : сб. материалов социол. исслед. за 2016 г. Белорус. Дом печати.
- Официальный портал Белорусской Православной Церкви (2003). *Соглашение о сотрудничестве между Республикой Беларусь и Белорусской православной Церковью*. <http://exarchate.by/resource/Dir0009/Dir0015>