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TRANSFORMATION OF THE SYSTEM OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE TERNOPIL VOIVODESHIP (1930–1939)

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The aim of the article is to provide a comprehensive study of the transformation of the secondary education system in the Ternopil Voivodeship in 1932–1939 within the context of the implementation of the nationwide educational reform of the Second Polish Republic. In particular, it focuses on identifying structural, substantive, organizational, and personnel changes, as well as determining their impact on the development of the regional educational environment. Special attention is paid to the analysis of the introduction of the two-tier model of secondary education, the role of lyceums as a new type of educational institution, and the specific features of the functioning of state and private educational institutions in the multiethnic environment of the voivodeship.

Research methods are based on a combination of general scientific and specialized historical approaches. The principles of historicism, objectivity, and systematicity have been applied, making it possible to consider educational processes within a broad socio-political context. The study employs methods of source analysis, comparative-historical, problem-chronological, and structural-functional approaches. The source base consists primarily of materials from educational periodicals, which made it possible to reconstruct both the regulatory foundations of the reforms and the practice of their implementation at the level of the Ternopil Voivodeship.

The results of the study have shown that the transformation of the secondary education system in 1932–1939 was comprehensive and encompassed all key elements of the educational system. It has been established that the implementation of the Jędrzejewicz reform led to a transition from the eight-year gymnasium to a model consisting of a four-year gymnasium and a two-year lyceum, which ensured differentiation and specialization of education. In the region, there was an active expansion of the network of lyceums in district centers, contributing to broader access to secondary education. The modernization of the curriculum has been analyzed, particularly the introduction of applied subjects and the development of vocational education oriented toward labor market needs. Significant changes in teacher training have been identified, including the liquidation of teacher seminaries and the establishment of pedagogical lyceums. Particular attention is also given to the role of the private education sector and the specifics of national policy, manifested in the implementation of bilingualism (utrakwism) and the functioning of Ukrainian educational institutions under state supervision.

Conclusions. The transformation of the secondary education system in the Ternopil Voivodeship in 1932–1939 was an integral part of the nationwide process of educational modernization and, at the same time, reflected regional socio-economic and national specificities. The reform contributed to the unification of the educational system, the improvement of the quality of student training, and the expansion of the functional capacities of secondary education, although it was accompanied by contradictory tendencies in the sphere of national policy. Overall, the educational transformations of this period laid the foundation for the formation of a new model of secondary education oriented toward combining general cultural training with the practical professionalization of youth.

Keywords: secondary education, Ternopil Voivodeship, interwar period, educational reform, gymnasium, lyceum, educational policy.

ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ СИСТЕМИ СЕРЕДНЬОЇ ОСВІТИ В ТЕРНОПІЛЬСЬКОМУ ВОЄВОДСТВІ (1932-1939)

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Мета статті полягає у комплексному дослідженні трансформації системи середньої освіти в Тернопільському воєводстві у 1932–1939 рр. у контексті реалізації загальнодержавної освітньої реформи Другої Речі Посполитої, зокрема з'ясуванні структурних, змістових, організаційних і кадрових змін, а також визначенні їхнього впливу на розвиток регіонального освітнього середовища. Особлива увага приділяється аналізу впровадження двоступеневої моделі середньої освіти, ролі ліцеїв як нового типу навчальних закладів та специфіці функціонування державних і приватних освітніх інституцій у багатонаціональному середовищі воєводства.

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Методи дослідження ґрунтуються на поєднанні загальнонаукових і спеціально-історичних підходів. Застосовано принципи історизму, об'єктивності та системності, що дозволили розглядати освітні процеси у широкому соціально-політичному контексті. Використано методи джерелознавчого аналізу, порівняльно-історичний, проблемно-хронологічний та структурно-функціональний методи. Основу джерельної бази становлять матеріали освітньої періодики, які дали змогу реконструювати як нормативні засади реформ, так і практику їх реалізації на рівні Тернопільського воєводства.

Результати дослідження засвідчили, що трансформація системи середньої освіти у 1932–1939 рр. мала комплексний характер і охоплювала всі ключові елементи освітньої системи. Встановлено, що впровадження реформи Єнджеєвича спричинило перехід від восьмирічної гімназії до моделі, що складалася з чотирирічної гімназії та дворічного ліцею, що забезпечувало диференціацію та профілізацію навчання. У регіоні відбулося активне розгортання мережі ліцеїв у повітових центрах, що сприяло розширенню доступу до середньої освіти. Проаналізовано модернізацію змісту навчання, зокрема впровадження прикладних дисциплін і розвиток професійної освіти, орієнтованої на потреби ринку праці. Виявлено суттєві зміни у системі підготовки педагогічних кадрів, пов'язані з ліквідацією вчительських семінарій і створенням педагогічних ліцеїв. Окремо розкрито роль приватного сектору освіти та специфіку національної політики, що проявлялася у впровадженні утравізму та функціонуванні українських освітніх закладів в умовах державного контролю.

Висновки. Трансформація системи середньої освіти в Тернопільському воєводстві у 1932–1939 рр. була складовою загальнодержавного процесу модернізації шкільництва та водночас відображала регіональні особливості соціально-економічного і національного розвитку. Реформа сприяла уніфікації освітньої системи, підвищенню якості підготовки учнів і розширенню функціональних можливостей середньої школи, однак супроводжувалася суперечливими тенденціями у сфері національної політики. Загалом освітні перетворення цього періоду заклали підґрунтя для формування нової моделі середньої освіти, орієнтованої на поєднання загальнокультурної підготовки з практичною професіоналізацією молоді.

Ключові слова: середня освіта, Тернопільське воєводство, міжвоєнний період, освітня реформа, гімназія, ліцей, освітня політика.

1. Introduction

The relevance of studying the transformation of the secondary education system in the Ternopil Voivodeship in 1932–1939 is the need for a comprehensive understanding of the regional specificities in the implementation of the nationwide educational policy of the Second Polish Republic amid profound socio-political changes of the interwar period. The educational reform of 1932, known as the “Jędrzejewicz reform,” marked a key stage in the modernization of the Polish school system, aimed at its unification, centralization, and the enhancement of the effectiveness of youth preparation for participation in the social and economic life of the state. For the Ternopil Voivodeship, as a component of the Lviv School District, these processes were of particular importance, as they unfolded within a multinational environment shaped by established educational traditions of the Austrian period, while simultaneously being accompanied by the integrative policies of the Polish state.

As a result of the 1932 reform, a fundamental restructuring of the secondary school system took place, involving the transition from the traditional eight-year gymnasium to a two-tier system consisting of a four-year gymnasium and a two-year lyceum. This model was designed to ensure continuity between different levels of education and to create conditions for curricular specialization. In the Ternopil Voivodeship, the implementation of the new system gained particular intensity in the second half of the 1930s, as evidenced by the establishment of various types of lyceums in key county centers, the modernization of curricula, and the strengthening of state control over educational institutions.

An important component of the transformation processes was the reform of the teacher training system, which involved the abolition of teacher

seminaries and the establishment of a new type of pedagogical lyceums. At the same time, the content of education was modernized through the introduction of applied disciplines, the development of vocational secondary education, and the use of modern technical teaching aids. A special role in this process was played by state policy toward the integration of national minorities, which was reflected in the implementation of utrawizm (bilingual education), the regulation of Ukrainian educational institutions, and the functioning of bilingual classes.

In contemporary Ukrainian historiography, the works of M. Halay occupy an important place in the study of the educational policy of the Second Polish Republic, offering a comprehensive analysis of transformation processes in secondary and vocational education during the interwar period (Halay 2011a). In particular, in his study devoted to state policy in the field of secondary technical education in 1919–1939, the author emphasizes the gradual institutionalization of vocational schooling, driven by the needs of industrialization and economic modernization. At the same time, in his work on the reform of the education system in the early 1930s, the researcher reveals the content and consequences of the 1932 reform, highlighting its unifying character aimed at creating a centralized and hierarchically structured educational model. Special attention is paid to structural changes in secondary education, particularly the introduction of the two-tier system “gymnasium – lyceum,” which became a key element of school modernization and an important factor in shaping a new educational paradigm.

No less significant for understanding the transformation of the educational environment are the studies of M. Halay devoted to the system of teacher training and the condition of Ukrainian secondary schooling in 1932–1939 (Halay 2011b). The author

substantiates the thesis of a substantial restructuring of pedagogical education, which consisted in the liquidation of teacher seminaries and the transition to a model of pedagogical lyceums that ensured a higher level of professional training for teachers. At the same time, within the context of national policy, the researcher emphasizes the contradictory nature of educational reforms, which combined modernization trends with assimilationist practices toward the Ukrainian population (Halai 2012). These conclusions are complemented by the work of S. Vasylyshyn (Vasylyshyn, 2026), which, using the example of the Vincent Pol State Gymnasium in Ternopil, traces specific mechanisms of institutional transformation in secondary education, including the standardization of the educational process, кадрову політику, and the implementation of new educational norms. Taken together, these studies form a conceptual foundation for analyzing the regional features of the development of secondary education in the Ternopil Voivodeship in 1932–1939.

2. Presentation of the main research material

The transformation of secondary education in the Ternopil Voivodeship in the 1930s was an integral part of the nationwide reform known as the “Jędrzejewicz reform,” based on the law of March 11, 1932. The main goal of the new system was to create a unified and coherent structure that would eliminate the gap between primary and secondary education. The new arrangement envisaged the division of the former eight-year gymnasium into two stages: a four-year general gymnasium and a two-year lyceum aimed at specialization and preparation for higher education.

The process of structural reorganization in the district entered an active phase in 1937, when the mass opening of first classes of general-type lyceums at existing state gymnasiums began. In the Ternopil Voivodeship, this process encompassed all key county centers, including Brody, Berezhany, Buchach, Chortkiv, Kamianka-Strumylova, Ternopil, Terebovlia, Zbarazh, and Zolochiv (Z terenu Podola, 1937). This indicated the authorities’ intention to ensure relatively even access to full secondary education throughout the region, despite economic difficulties.

A distinctive feature of the new lyceums was their specialization, which allowed students to choose a field of study in accordance with their abilities. According to the curricula, institutions within the voivodeship operated humanities, natural sciences, mathematics and physics, and classical tracks. For example, in Ternopil, a classical track functioned at the First State Gymnasium, a humanities track at the Second Gymnasium, and a mathematics and physics track at the Third Gymnasium named after M. Copernicus. Such a distribution contributed to the rationalization of the city’s educational network.

The transformation also affected the system of teacher training. According to the reform, former teacher seminaries were gradually abolished or transformed into pedagogical lyceums. In Ternopil, a state pedagogical lyceum was established on the basis of the male seminary, intended to supply primary schools with qualified teaching staff (“Ognisko pracy społecznej na wsi”, 1937). The new model of pedagogical education required applicants to complete a four-year gymnasium and undertake a three-year course of study, which included substantial psychotechnical training (Panstw. licea pedagog. i pedagogium w okr. szkol. Lwowskim, 1937).

Male seminaries in Chortkiv and Zalishchyky were scheduled for liquidation by the end of the 1935/36 academic year. Instead, it was planned to establish pedagogical lyceums or independent four-year gymnasiums on the basis of the dissolved institutions, as occurred in Zalishchyky, where a State Gymnasium was opened (Likwidacja seminarjów nauczycielskich, 1936).

A special place in the reform of the secondary level was occupied by the modernization of vocational education. According to the decree of June 3, 1935, the liquidation of old types of vocational schools began, alongside the establishment of vocational gymnasiums – mechanical, commercial, tailoring, and others. In the Ternopil Voivodeship, this process was reflected in the activities of the Ternopil State School of Locksmithing and Mechanics, as well as commercial schools in Brody, Zolochiv, and Ternopil, which were gradually integrated into the general system of specialized secondary education (Termin i sposób reorganizacji niektórych państwowych szkół zawodowych, 1935). A vivid example is the transformation of the State School of Machine Locksmithing in Ternopil into a State Mechanical Gymnasium, in accordance with the Ministry’s decree of July 3, 1936 (Reorganizacja niektórych państwowych szkół zawodowych w 1936 roku, 1936). Sources also record the establishment of a state mechanical lyceum and gymnasium in Ternopil, as well as commercial (merchant) gymnasiums in Zolochiv and Brody (Organizacja roku szkolnego 1937/38 w szkolnictwie zawodowym, 1937). These changes involved not only an elevation in institutional status but also an expansion of the theoretical foundations for training personnel for the region’s industry.

The development of private secondary education, particularly under the auspices of the Society of Public Schools (Towarzystwo Szkoły Ludowej, T. S. L.), became an important complement to the state network (Kronika, 1934). In Ternopil, the Co-educational Commercial Gymnasium of T. S. L. and the private women’s gymnasium of T. S. L. operated actively, training specialists for the economic life of the region. The construction of new, modern facilities

for these institutions – for example, on Kachala Street in Ternopil – testified to the high dynamics of the development of vocational secondary education (Z terenu Podola, 1937).

An important aspect of language policy in secondary education in the Ternopil region was the opening, in the 1937/38 academic year, of parallel classes with Ukrainian as the language of instruction at the State Third Gymnasium in Ternopil. This step responded to the educational needs of the Ukrainian population of the voivodeship within the framework of the state secondary school system (*Dla młodzieży Ukrainkiej w Tarnopolu*, 1937). In addition to Ternopil, similar bilingual or national sections were planned in Berezhany (humanities and classical classes).

The content of secondary education was modernized through the introduction of applied disciplines intended to enhance graduates' competitiveness in the labor market. From the 1937/38 academic year, secondary schools in the voivodeship introduced compulsory courses in accounting and stenography. The authorities viewed these subjects as essential tools for young people who did not plan to continue their studies at universities but sought qualified employment in administration or trade (*Kronika*, 1937).

To ensure the unity of the educational process, the practice of interschool conferences was introduced, aiming to foster closer cooperation between teachers of primary and secondary schools. In Brody, such conferences, led by gymnasium director V. Soltysik, became a platform for discussing methodological shortcomings that hindered students' transition from one level of education to another. Educators sought to overcome the social barrier whereby gymnasium students were perceived as an "elite caste," while primary school pupils were regarded as a "lower stratum" (*Dla młodzieży Ukrainkiej w Tarnopolu*, 1934).

The introduction of coeducation (joint education of boys and girls) constituted another aspect of the system's modernization. The authorities encouraged the gradual merging of gender-segregated institutions in centers where only one general secondary lyceum was planned (*Organizacja roku szkolnego w szkolnictwie ogólnokształcącym*, 1936). This approach allowed for a more rational use of human and material resources, although it required the adaptation of school facilities and special training of the teaching staff.

Admission rules to the new type of secondary schools became more stringent and regulated. Candidates for lyceums were required to present a certificate of completion of a four-year gymnasium and to pass entrance examinations, which included both written and oral tests in specialized subjects (*Regulamin przyjmowania uczniów do państwowego liceum ogólnokształcącego*, 1937; *Regulamin*

przyjmowania uczniów do państwowych liceów zawodowych w roku szkolnym 1937/38, 1937; *Regulamin przyjmowania uczniów do państwowych gimnazjów zawodowych*, 1939). Admission to vocational lyceums (for example, administrative or technical) required knowledge of mathematics, the Polish language, and physics, and in some cases also passing a medical examination to confirm physical suitability for the profession (*Badanie lekarskie kandydatów do państwowego gimnazjum i liceum ogólnokształcącego*, 1937).

Social policy in the field of education was aimed at expanding access to secondary schooling for rural youth. The Ministry initiated the establishment of scholarships at the level of rural gminas to enable the most capable children of peasants to continue their education in gymnasiums and lyceums of the voivodeship. In addition, gymnasiums were obliged to support underprivileged students through a system of boarding houses (bursas) and exemption from administrative fees, provided they demonstrated satisfactory academic performance (*Pomoc w kształceniu wybitnie zdolnych uczniów – dzieci rolników*, 1936). In Berezhany, the Gymnasium Ruthenian Bursa named after T. Shevchenko and the Peasants' Bursa operated, providing accommodation and pedagogical supervision for students from rural areas (*Berezhanska zemlia*, 1970). These institutions became centers for the formation of national identity, where senior student-instructors assisted younger pupils not only in their studies but also in the development of self-awareness.

3. Conclusions

The conducted analysis makes it possible to conclude that the transformation of the secondary education system in the Ternopil Voivodeship in 1932–1939 was complex and multidimensional, encompassing structural, curricular, personnel, and organizational-administrative aspects of the functioning of the educational system. The implementation of the Jędrzejewicz reform became the determining factor in these changes, aimed at the unification of schooling and the integration of the region into the all-Polish educational space.

It has been established that the key outcome of the reform was the formation of a new model of secondary education based on the division into a four-year gymnasium and a two-year lyceum, which ensured both a basic general education and the possibility of curricular specialization. In the Ternopil Voivodeship, this model was implemented through the development of a network of lyceums of various types in county centers, which contributed to expanding public access to full secondary education.

An important direction of transformation was the modernization of the content of education, which involved combining classical humanities-based training with practically oriented disciplines such as

accounting, stenography, and technical subjects. This corresponded to the needs of the region's economic development and contributed to increasing the competitiveness of graduates in the labor market. At the same time, a system of vocational secondary education was taking shape, including mechanical, commercial, and agricultural institutions.

The reorganization of the teacher training system, in particular the liquidation of teacher seminaries and the establishment of pedagogical lyceums, contributed to raising the professional level of teachers and the unification of qualification requirements. The strengthening of administrative control through a system of inspections, the introduction of new mechanisms for evaluating teachers' performance, and the standardization of curricula ensured the effective implementation of reform measures.

At the same time, the transformation of secondary education took place under complex national

circumstances, which determined the contradictory nature of educational policy. The introduction of *utrakwizm* (bilingual education), restrictions on the development of Ukrainian state schooling, and the increasing role of the private education sector indicate a combination of integrative and assimilationist tendencies in the activities of the Polish authorities.

Thus, the transformation of the secondary education system in the Ternopil Voivodeship in 1932–1939 was a complex and contradictory process reflecting the general trends of modernization of schooling in the Second Polish Republic. It contributed to the formation of a new educational infrastructure, the improvement of the level of professional training, and the expansion of the functional capacities of secondary education, while simultaneously remaining an important instrument of state policy in the socio-cultural and national spheres.

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