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## Section:

### REVIEWS

#### A SOWER IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION. DEDICATED TO THE 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF VASYL HRYHOROVYCH KREMEN, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES OF UKRAINE

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**Abstract:** The article is dedicated to the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vasyl Hryhorovych Kremen, Doctor of Philosophy, Academician of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, a prominent Ukrainian scholar, statesman and science manager. It highlights his main achievements and his great contribution to the development of Ukrainian education, and the development of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, where he was awarded Honorary Doctor's Degree.

**Keywords:** V. H. Kremen, Ukrainian national school, philosophy of education, President of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Honorary Doctor's Degree of Precarpathian University.

Each epoch has its prominent persons. Vasyl Hryhorovych Kremen, President of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, a world-known scholar, a Ukrainian statesman and educator, has earned an honorary place in the history of independent Ukraine. As Minister of Education and Science, he has made an invaluable contribution to the development of national education, promoting the Ukrainian language, creating a new vision of the history of Ukraine and introducing considerable changes in the activity of the national education establishments. As President of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Vasyl Hryhorovych Kremen has played a decisive role in its creation. Now he remains its tireless leader and worker, establishing new institutions, opening new prospective fields of research. It won't be an overestimation to state that the Pedagogical Academy of today is, to a great extent, Vasyl Hryhorovych's creation; due to his continuous efforts, this leading scientific establishment has become a major force in the development of education in Ukraine.

Vasyl Kremen has made an enormous contribution to the philosophical and pedagogical sciences. As a matter of fact, he has established a new branch of science, the philosophy of education, has formulated its principles, set its goals and directions of development; he is the author of a series of fundamental works on the theory and methodology of the new science, the creator of the national Ukrainian scientific school; now his students and followers spread his ideas.

Vasyl Hryhorovych Kremen's major conception is human-centeredness in education, the humanistic core of the young democratic state. His philosophical creed is child-centeredness; it has set the foundation of the whole education process, presenting a new vision of difficult problems – teaching

children with special needs, physically challenged children, orphans. His systematic publications, speeches on TV and at public meetings, his ideas on raising new generations of patriots, well-educated people with high moral values have earned him a great respect and reputation. Vasyl Hryhorovych does his best to improve the system of university education, to teach and train highly qualified specialists for the national economy and culture.

In the more than twenty-year-long history of Precarpathian University, its Dissertation Advisory Committee awarded the Honorary Doctor's Degree to dozens outstanding Ukrainian and foreign scientists, scholars, authors, politicians, cultural workers and artists. Vasyl Hryhorovych Kremen occupies a special place among these respected persons. The early 21<sup>st</sup> century witnesses a rapid development of the University; at the beginning of the century, Vasyl Hryhorovych held the post of Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine; he most actively supported the University's projects and congratulated it on its achievements. In a relatively short period of time, the University opened dozens new specialities, constructed and equipped new buildings, opened a botanical garden and a sports complex. It was the time of a growing interest in postgraduate research; the doctoral and candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committees, and the University publishing house started working to full capacity. There was laid a solid foundation for scientific schools and institutions, the number of professors with doctoral degrees increased significantly. Precarpathian University became a leading centre of science and education in Western Ukraine, and was granted the status of National University. Now it is thankful to Minister Vasyl Hryhorovych Kremen for his good will, continuous care and support of its endeavours.

I would like to share a memory. Precarpathia – the land of green mountains and forests, rapid rivers and fir cottages – has good tourism prospects. So we decided to open the specialty of tourism. But there were neither material nor technical resources, nor high potential staff, nor library resources, nor teaching premises that would make it possible to implement the project. We approached Vasyl Hryhorovych and frankly told him that we had a great idea of how to enhance the regional economy, but could not launch the project without the Ministry's help. It was interesting to watch his reaction. He approved of our idea; moreover, it fired his enthusiasm; he gave us pieces of advice and introduced us to Ukrainian tourism industry authorities. Most importantly, our leader believed that, having the support of the regional governing bodies and tourism organizations, we would be able to achieve our goal. Today, the University's Department of Tourism is one of the best in Ukraine.

Minister Vasyl Kremen was always welcome at the University; for us, he was a wise leader and an adviser. Unlike many other officials, he did not avoid meetings with the faculty and students; he answered difficult questions, always being open and sincere. I remember our long, frank talks; all of us appreciated his ability to comprehend other people's ideas; he never ignored criticism concerning the Ministry and its officers. At that time, I was a member of the Ministry Certification Board, a permanent member of the Presidium of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, and V.H. Kremen was – and still is – its President; so I had a chance to know this outstanding person better, to watch him working and taking decisions, sometimes difficult ones that require special handling. I often wonder if another person could be as efficient in finding solutions to complex problems as he is.

I have always most carefully read the articles and books of Vasyl Kremen, Minister and educator. I share his humanistic ideas and the philosophy of human-centeredness. One of Vasyl Hryhorovych's merits is putting the child in the focus of attention of the state, school and society, which is the key to the future success of the nation. The idea of introducing the subject–subject principle of relations between the educator and the learner, and rejecting the approach under which a young person is an object of influence is an important step towards the democratization of society.

Another reason why I study the works of Vasyl Hryhorovych is that, being a linguist and a philologist, I admire his manner of writing. Unlike many scholars whose eloquence masks a lack of ideas, Vasyl Hryhorovych can express his thoughts clearly and precisely; his style is evidence of high culture; he is an intellectual, who has read multitudes of scholarly works and acquired the manner of the world-class scholars. He is often cited, for citing a great mind, whose writing style is excellent, is always relevant. I made references to the works of V.H. Kremen more than once.

It is with special interest that I watch Vasyl Hryhorovych Kremen conducting the meetings of the Presidium of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. I am impressed with his close attention to every issue – major or minor one – his colleagues discuss. Vasyl Hryhorovych is always eager to listen to other people's opinions; he is endowed with the ability to intuitively get to the root, to see the essence of a problem; his judgment is always clear, convincing, profound. The President always finds ways of implementing innovative educational proposals.

Once, the Presidium discussed the impact of mass media, the Internet in particular, on the consciousness and behaviour of school and university students. Everybody, including Vasyl Hryhorovych, was concerned about the content of some ideologically questionable TV programmes and Internet sites that emphasize violence, encourage negativism, discourage patriotism. The issue was thoroughly discussed. Vasyl Hryhorovych backed the proposition to introduce an education programme aimed at developing young people's critical thinking, the ability to see through mass media propaganda. The Ministry of Education and Science accepted his proposition to give lectures and classes on navigation in information space in order to avoid an adverse effect on the consciousness of young people.

Vasyl Hryhorovych's position concerning the question of the Ukrainian language is well known. Vasyl Kremen comes from the Sumy region, whose dialect is as close to the codified norm of the national language as possible; for him, the Ukrainian language is the most appropriate means of expressing his thoughts. Vasyl Kremen, Minister and President of the Academy, championed the idea of making it the language of education in Ukraine. It did not present a problem in the western regions, while in the eastern and southern parts of the country some older educators, especially in classical and polytechnic universities, found it difficult to read lectures, to write study guides and papers in Ukrainian. They expressed their attitude at the Ministry's Collegium and rectors' meetings, in private conversations.

Being a Ukrainian linguist and philologist, I was interested in solving the problem. In 2000, the University held the All-Ukrainian scientific conference 'The Ukrainian Language in Education', which was attended by scholars, politicians, public leaders and cultural workers from different regions of the country. Vasyl Kremen's article *Ukrainska mova yak derzhavna: sotsiofilosofskiyi i pedahohichnyi aspekty* (*Ukrainian as the State Language: Socio-philosophical and Pedagogical Aspects*) was the first one in the collection of the Conference materials. According to the Minister, 'Language is a special form and way of thinking, of world view. It is a factor in the nationally specific picture of the world; it means that if Ukrainian asserts itself as the state language, it can ensure the consolidation of society on the basis of common perception of the world and attitude to reality'\* [1, p. 4–5]. Vasyl Hryhorovych and I have often discussed the problems of the Ukrainization of society in general and education in particular. His position is firm and consistent: at schools and universities, the Ukrainian language has to be the primary source of knowledge. As Minister and President of the Academy, he believes that the introduction of Ukrainian into education is a process rather than a government's decision; it requires negotiation and general public support. At the same time, it was Vasyl Kremen who urged schools to 'switch' to the Ukrainian language.

As to his personality traits, Vasyl Hryhorovych is open to people, sincere and friendly, democratic and benevolent, which gained him popularity with scholars and teachers, parents and students. Many people, even those working in other fields, are proud to call him a friend [2]. Vasyl Hryhorovych is always ready to support others, even at the risk of personal harm. In 2004, when I occupied the post of Rector of Precarpathian University, he gave me a helping hand in an unpleasant situation involving the then Prime Minister of Ukraine. Though, it would be wrong to consider Vasyl Kremen an 'all-forgiving' person. He can say no and be harsh if he has to. But he is a just person, and people do not take offence.

On my bookshelf, I have Vasyl Kremen's books – *Filosofiiia. Lohos. Sofiia. Rozum* (*Philosophy. Logos. Sophia. Mind*), *Filosofia: istoriia, suspilstvo, osvita* (*Philosophy: History, Society, Education*), *Filosofia natsionalnoi idei: liudyna, osvita, sotsium* (*The Philosophy of National Idea: Person, Education, Society*),

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\* For the purpose of this article, all the citations are translated from the sources listed in References.

*Filosofia liudynotsentryzmu v stratehiakh osvithnoho prostoru (The Philosophy of Human-Centeredness in the Strategies of Educational Space)*. I open one of them and read: 'If the intelligentsia really wants to be the conscience of the nation, not of a crowd, it should not lobby for particular social interests; it should represent the needs of the social whole, being aware of their immense complexity and tragic inconsistency' [2, p. 50]. These are the words of a real Intellectual, whose strenuous scientific and educational efforts are a worthy contribution to building up new Ukraine.

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Кононенко Віталій. Сіяч на освітянській ниві. До 70-ліття Президента Національної академії педагогічних наук України Василя Григоровича Кременя. *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, 6 (2) (2019), 129–132.

У статті, присвяченій 70-літтю видатного українського вченого, державного діяча, організатора науки, доктора філософських наук, академіка НАН України і НАПН України, Президента Національної академії педагогічних наук України Василя Григоровича Кременя, висвітлено основні досягнення ювіляра, його великий внесок у розбудову української школи, показано тісний зв'язок В. Г. Кременя з діяльністю Прикарпатського національного університету імені Василя Стефаника як його почесного доктора.

**Ключові слова:** В. Г. Кремень, українська національна школа, філософія освіти, Президент НАПН України, почесний доктор Прикарпатського університету.