DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES IN FUTURE DOCTORS
(1970s): HISTORICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL LESSONS

The problem of the development of moral values is especially relevant in the conditions of a pandemic, war, and other current challenges, which prompt medical workers to make moral choices frequently and bear moral responsibility.

Despite the importance of this issue, the historical aspects of the process of developing the moral values in future doctors during the tough and tragic period of the totalitarian regime’s rule on Ukrainian territory remain unrevealed. Our study is one of the steps towards the scientific analysis of this legacy of the Soviet higher education and the formulation of relevant historical and pedagogical lessons that should be remembered when creating modern concepts of moral education for students.

The analysis of archival materials of the studied period confirms the development of the system of humanitarian training of future doctors in the Ukrainian SSR based on party affiliation, dialectical materialism, and atheism. The ideological nature of the educational process in Soviet institutions of higher medical education was expressed in an attempt to construct a new concept of personality development, which can be briefly denoted by specific terms: «new person», «Soviet person» (and not just a person as a universally used concept), «Soviet doctor» (if it is an equivalent to an «American doctor», «French doctor», then the characteristic «Soviet» claims to be an artificially created complicative national characteristic), «Marxist-Leninist ethics», «Marxist-Leninist aesthetics» (not ethics/aesthetics), «communist morality», «communist consciousness», «Marxist-Leninist worldview» (not the commonly known scientific terms, i.e. consciousness, worldview), etc.

Therefore, the general goal of higher medical education institutions in the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR was developing in students the Marxist-Leninist worldview, high ideological commitment (in the sense of devotion to the ideas of the Communist Party), collectivism, a class approach to modern phenomena as well as educating a spiritually wealthy person. The last stated goal would sound ideal if this declared «spiritual wealth» was not immediately denoted according to the interests of the party in the USSR by applying the category of morality in their own interpretation. Thus, «highly moral traits»
were explained as communist consciousness, culture, socialist internationalism, Soviet patriotism.

Regarding the concept of a «new Soviet person», we would like to note that in the context of the history of the USSR, it meant the totalitarian regime’s intention to erase from the consciousness of a person and a specific people everything «old»: nationality, mentality, individualism, uniqueness, and organic unity with the spiritual basis of civilization – universal morality…

The Soviet educational doctrine provided for the purposeful development of a materialistic worldview intertwined with the positions of the Marxism-Leninism apologists in future doctors. At least two educational disciplines directly contributed to this: Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism. Actually, future doctors were convinced that a person should be considered as the embodiment of the biological form of the movement of matter, and of course, the spiritual component is out of the question. This had an extremely negative impact on the development of generations of Ukrainian doctors in the Ukrainian SSR, who were not taught to pay attention to the deep spiritual world of a person, a whole microcosm according to H. Skovoroda, the inner essence of a person, which really determines their actions, choices, behavior, and also acts as a powerful factor in patients’ physical ailments.

The results of our research show that some (but definitely not the main) attention was paid to the formation of the ethics of the Soviet person and the ethics of the Soviet doctor in the medical institutes of the Ukrainian SSR in the 1970s. And specifically, the content of moral education then reflected the norms of behavior according to the moral code of the builders of communism, since the task of teachers was to «make sure» that the moral code of the builders of communism (and not universal morality, or Christian morality, or the moral values of the Ukrainian people!) became the rule of life for every student. According to the sources, the content of educational work in institutions of higher medical education of the studied period reflected an atheistic component, separation and opposition of morality and religion, antagonism of moral and religious values. At the same time, communist morality was presented in the best light, and religious morality was presented as something negative, harmful, hostile...
Rejecting all the achievements of Christian culture, the ideologists of Soviet education promoted the idea that atheism can ensure social progress, while religion seems to hold it back. The educational and methodological documentation used the concept of scientific and atheistic education, and there was also a special educational discipline Scientific Atheism, with the help of which they sought to develop anti-religious views in future doctors. In order to purposefully discredit Christianity as a historical religion from the time of Kyivan Rus-Ukraine, which is a source of universal highest moral values, concentrated in the law of love (for God and people), atheistic propaganda in the field of Soviet higher medical education used various falsifications, slanders, and didn’t adhere to the principles of science and objectivity. At the same time, future doctors were obliged to participate in the work of medical atheist teams, write articles on scientific and atheist issues, and speak on the radio on relevant topics.

We have several important historical and pedagogical lessons in the investigated problem. Firstly, ideological engagement of the educational process in institutions of higher medical education is unacceptable, since such an approach isn’t objective, scientific, and pedagogically justified. Secondly, the development of the student’s personality should be carried out on the ideological basis of progressive conceptual approaches, which interpret a person as a biological, social, and spiritual being. Thirdly, in the context of the development of an independent Ukrainian state, a systematic purposeful formation of universal, Christian, Ukrainian national moral values should be ensured to educate worthy medical specialists – spiritually wealthy people who will value every person, their dignity, health, and life.