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**Natalia Antonets**

Senior Research Associate, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences,  
Senior Research Associate of the Department of History and Philosophy  
of Education  
*Institute of Pedagogy of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences  
of Ukraine,*

**PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIENCE OF THE WORLD LEVEL:  
OLEKSANDRIVSKA SCHOOL-KHUTIR FOR THE DEAF  
(1903–1911)**

**Urgency of the research.** Among the current transformations in education taking place in Ukraine, one of the priority places is the radical reform of education and socialization of children with special needs. Significant changes in this area increase interest in relevant historical experience. In this regard, the activity of Oleksandrivska deaf and dumb school-khutir (college-khutir) and its direct founder F. Movchanovskyi is worth mentioning.

In the educational literature on the history of deaf education, even in Soviet times, when it was considered politically impractical to positively characterize the pre-revolutionary experience in any field, Oleksandrivska school-khutir was mentioned as the world's largest deaf and dumb school, original in its organization, content and training for future employment [2; 16]. Meanwhile, such a unique institution is practically unknown to the general pedagogical community. In our view, this is a negative consequence of the traditional separation of special pedagogy from other pedagogical sciences, which reflects many years of some isolation of people with special needs in society. Today, Ukraine is trying to overcome this common discriminatory stereotype. The in-tegration of people with special needs, including in the education system and the labor market, is slowly but surely taking place. In this respect, the historical experience of raising and educating children with disabilities acquires a different meaning. Its achievements should take their rightful place not only in their own, special, but also in the general historical and pedagogical literature.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** It should be mentioned that modern Ukrainian deaf educators ignore a peculiar children's town

(S. Kulbida, V. Sakun, V. Shevchenko). Thus, in his monograph “Polish nobleman Feliks Movchanovskyi: life and work” (2017) V. Shevchenko examines the history of the establishment, operation and destruction of the school-khutir in the context of the general activities of this extraordinary person as a mayor of Oleksandrivsk (now the city of Zaporizhzhia). Especially valuable in this study is the use of documents of the State Archives of Zaporizhzhia region, which significantly specify the presentation of the material [13]. Also from the point of view of topic visualization, the publication of V. Sakun, dedicated to the fund of the Museum of History of the Ukrainian Society of the Deaf, which stores postcards with images of this educational institution, is very interesting [11].

As the basis of the school’s financial support was charitable donations, the institution has become the subject of attention of historians who study charity in Ukraine. In particular, this applies to K. Petrova’s articles, which analyze a set of publications on the pages of the newspaper “Aleksandrovskie Novosti”, which covers the topic of charity in the city in the early twentieth century [8], and the materials of the State Archives of Zaporizhzhia region trace the financial problems of the institution [9]. To the same group of historiographical base we include K. Nedria’s research of guardianship over the school-khutir by the officials, in particular on the example of the Ekaterinoslav provincial marshal of nobility, Prince M. Urusov [7].

A separate group of publications consists of materials that have a local history character. Their authors respectfully mention the name of the founder of the school-khutir Feliks Movchanovskyi, and also support the current state of the territory where the school was once located (I. Yehorova, V. Moroziuk, V. Perepadia, O. Synelnykova, N. Soloviova).

**Objective statement of the article.** Supporting the tendency to combine information about institutions of different types in the general array of historical and pedagogical knowledge, the purpose of the publication is to promote the integration into the general background of the historical and pedagogical process of information about one of the best educational deaf and dumb institutions – Oleksandrivka School-Khutir.

**Results of the research.** At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries among the state authorities that performed managerial functions in the field of charity in the Russian Empire, one of the leading positions was occupied by the Office of the Institutions of Empress Maria (OIEM). It took care of women’s charities and some special educational institutions under the personal patronage of

empresses and other members of the royal family [1]. Traditionally, the Office was under the patronage of the emperors' wives. Its last curator was Maria Feodorovna, the wife of Alexander III, under whose protection this body functioned in 1881–1917.

Thanks to the initiative of Maria Feodorovna in 1898 a separate deaf and dumb Guardianship Department of Empress Maria Feodorovna was founded within the OIEM. Among its main tasks were to find sources of charitable funds and its use for the benefit of educational institutions for deaf children. Despite the introduction of various forms of organization of charitable donations, material resources for the implementation of the plans of the Guardianship Department systematically lacked, so in its governing body – the Guardian Council – there was an idea to create the schools-khutirs (school-farm). According to the plan, there the deaf children of peasants, without detaching from their usual environment, had the opportunity to get a general education and master the skills of rational management. Maintenance in such an educational institution was to be carried out partly on charitable funds and partly reimbursed by parents and students. At the same time, the exemplary organization of the farm on the khutir was to serve as an example for the inhabitants of the surrounding villages.

In 1899–1900, the Guardian Council sent letters to the governors of the Russian Empire explaining the importance of the existence of farm schools and calling for initiative to establish them. Thanks to the mayor

F. Movchanovskiy, this appeal had the most significant consequences in the city of Oleksandrivsk, Yekaterinoslav province.

Feliks Frantsovych Movchanovskiy (1852–1921), a Polish nobleman (born in Suwalki, Poland), spent his entire conscious life in modern Ukraine. At first he lived in Kharkiv, and in the mid-1870s he moved to Oleksandrivsk, where in 1875 he founded a steam sawmill and bought a forest hithe, thanks to which he soon became one of the wealthiest people in the region. He was repeatedly elected a member of Oleksandrivsk County Zemstvo and a member of the local Duma, and on December 11, 1901, deputies of Oleksandrivsk Duma entrusted F. Movchanovskiy with the post of mayor [14]. Later, evaluating the ten-year activity of Feliks Frantsovych in this position, grateful residents of the city will write about him such words: “a big, very rich and intelligent merchant, a man of extraordinary size, purely American energy and tireless work... For ten years of his management of the city, he literally created an era in the history of Oleksandrivsk. About the latter we can say that its history is divided into two unequal periods: from the creation of the world to Movchanovskiy and from Movchanovskiy to the present day. From a small deserted town, mired

in all kinds of evil, it has turned into a 40 thousandth city, with bridges, water supply, 4 secondary schools, with 2 lines of railways, with a well-equipped hithe on the Dnipro, with a budget of about 400 thousand rubles. And really there is no useful, good deed in the city, in which Movchanovskyi would not be the initiator or the main figure” [4, pp. 5–6].

One of the priority activities of F. Movchanovskyi was to take care of the establishment and development of local educational institutions. As a deputy and as a mayor, he played a significant role in the opening of the first male secondary school in Oleksandrivsk – a seven-grade mechanical and technical school (from which the modern National University “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic” draws its chronicle) [3], Count Witte seven-grade commercial school, building of women’s gymnasium and many others. [13, p. 107–125].

The new mayor’s former decision to establish a school-khutir did not go unnoticed. As early as 1900, in response to a letter from St. Petersburg, the Duma allocated the necessary land, and in 1901 confirmed its intentions to create such an educational institution, but further steps in this direction were hampered. On May 11, 1903, F. Movchanovskyi, together with a group of local public figures, founded Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department of Empress Maria Feodorovna, which began concrete actions to establish a new educational institution. The founders of the school-khutir immediately set themselves the goal of teaching and educating the wards in such a way as the ordinary healthy people.

The consultant of Oleksandrivsk Department was a well-known deaf educator Mykola Lagovskyi (1862–1933), the inspector of St. Petersburg Deaf and Dumb School and at the same time the inspector of all deaf and dumb schools in Russia. F. Movchanovskyi also personally studied the experience of special institutions of the Russian Empire. Already in August 1903, a new educational institution, which began to develop in the picturesque steppe area two miles from Oleksandrivsk, accepted the first 30 children [4, p. 15].

It is worth noting that the initial capital of Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department was only 311 rubles 40 kop. However, soon thanks to convincing appeals of F. Movchanovskyi, it began to receive various subsidies and charitable donations from the city governments, rural communities and individuals. Felix Frantsovykh himself spent a significant amount of his own money on the school. In this regard, the submission to the Governor of Yekaterinoslav stated that the chairman of Oleksandrivsk city council nobleman F. Movchanovskyi was promoted to the rank of collegiate assessor precisely for his ascetic work and significant material contribution

to the Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department of Empress Maria Feodorovna, joint for Ekaterinoslav and Tavriya provinces [33]. The school was also financially supported by membership fees of Oleksandrivsk branch of the Guardian Council, payments for education and maintenance of pupils, and later it began to receive income from its own economic activities of the farm.

Undoubtedly, it was necessary to have the optimism, energy, entrepreneurship and authority of F. Movchanovskyi to build and ensure the smooth functioning of the whole town on 30 tenths of land without the help of state funds for seven years, the description of which is impressive even today.

One of the features of Olexandrivska school-khutir was the creation of the second, after Kyiv, kindergarten for the deaf. It was located in a separate one-and-a-half-storey building with a large balcony and accommodated 30 children aged 5–6. The premises of the kindergarten were located next to other buildings and were designed for autonomous functioning; in particular, it even provided apartments for employees. The house was surrounded by a garden with paths, flower beds and lawns. The main task of the educators during the special games, thanks to purposeful exercises, was not to allow the vocal cords of the children to be roughened before the beginning of their systematic education, which, given the physical condition of the children, was considered appropriate from 8–9 years. In addition, teachers conducted classes according to the Froebel system and took care of the physical and moral development of students, trying to fill their lives with joy and optimism.

After completing the three-year preparatory period, the children moved to a school where they studied for 9 years. The school building had 14 classrooms that met all the requirements of hygiene, a large bright recreation room, a handicraft class and a room for servants. Pupils lived in two dormitories – men's and women's. There was also an elegant church in the dormitory building for girls and teachers.

Without categorically rejecting the hand language, teachers of Oleksandrivska school-khutir preferred to teach their students oral verbal speech and use it as a means of communication and acquisition of knowledge. This method of deaf children socialization was considered by most deaf educators of that time to be the most perfect. Therefore, the main tasks of the teachers were to teach students, firstly, to read the movements of other people's speech, secondly, to say the words themselves, and thirdly, to have a conversation. Simultaneously with mastering oral speech, children learned to read and write. Of course, such a complex work not only required the teacher to know special methods, but also required a lot of time and

patience. Therefore, no more than 10–11 students were enrolled in one class. Skilled and persistent work of teachers gave positive results. Thus, members of the commission, which in 1910 inspected the work of the school, noted in their report that its students have great success, and if not for the laryngeal voice, the best students could not be distinguished from ordinary children [4, 15].

In addition to literacy, the curriculum of the school-khutir included religion, Russian language, arithmetic, history, geography, nature study, physics, a course of general knowledge. Drawing, technical drawing and calligraphy classes were held in well-equipped special classrooms only with those who were inclined to them. As at that time there were no officially approved compulsory curricula for deaf and dumb schools, the founders of the institution based on the existing options have drawn up their indicative programs with the prospect of finalizing them in the teaching process.

Of course, the children who learned at the school-khutir were very different, including in their development and mental abilities. Anticipating the existence of such a separate school, Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department of Empress Maria Feodorovna, was the only one in the Russian Empire to create conditions for the realization of the idea of separate education for children who for various reasons do not master the program material. For these students, a separate large bright beautiful building on two and a half floors, with three classrooms, bedrooms and various accommodation premises was built. The education of such children under the shortened program also lasted 9 years. The main task of school teachers for the underachievers was to prevent the development of apathy, depression, laziness and, if possible, to help breaking the school failure and catch up the peers from the main school.

Taking into account that the principle of clarity is especially important when teaching deaf children, the Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department provided teachers with a significant number of paintings, collections, albums, tables and other visual aids in all subjects. The department also took care of creating a good library. It was located in a separate building and was divided into adult and children's one. The school staff could find here special pedagogical literature, fiction, periodicals. Most of the books and magazines purchased for students were those addressed to ordinary young and middle-aged children.

In addition to the already mentioned buildings, the khutir also had a 3-storey administrative building, a school museum, a hospital with a pharmacy, a bakery, two houses with apartments for family employees, a bathhouse, a steam laundry, and a biological station where the dirty water and sewage were cleaned with the help of a sewage system. All rooms had water

supply, central heating, were connected to each other and to Oleksandrivsk by telephone. The khutir was decorated with a pond, a spring and a specially equipped streambed. It had its own railway platform, and at night its entire territory was well lit by electricity.

As F. Movchanovskyi, as the trustee of the school-khutir, was concerned that the children admitted to the school, often suffered from anemia, scrofula and other diseases, the treatment of which required particularly favorable climatic conditions. Therefore, Feliks Frantsovych asked the Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department in the Yevpatoria City Council for a gift of possession of four tenths of land on the Black Sea coast. Soon green lawns, flower beds, vegetable beds, young trees and berry bushes appeared on the bare, sandy coastal land. And among them grew a very beautiful two-story building that resembled a palace. It was a school-sanatorium for 50 children with five classrooms, a house church, a recreation hall, and a library. A hospital, a bathhouse, a laundry, a workshop and other outbuildings were built near the school. Five junior classes of the school-khutir went here in turn for a year with their teachers. Without interrupting the regular classes, children had the opportunity to swim in the sea and lagoon, sunbathe, and breathe healing air. All this, of course, had a good effect on their health. Olena Safonova, the teacher of the school-sanatorium wrote about this institution as follows: "Being a teacher in this sanatorium for the second year already, I had to observe the following: children, especially little ones, are brought in weak, anaemic, skinny, with weakly developed chest, their bodies are often covered with lichens, plagues and scabies, between them most with obvious signs of tuberculosis. All these children look pale, apathetic and sluggish, but after a year they are not recognized, all on average added more than 15 pounds, made stronger, with a lively cheerful look and tanned fresh faces. There's never been an infectious disease in five years of the sanatorium's existence... With the restoration of physical strength children manifested the strong desire to engage in, get acquainted with everything around, which I could observe with the children in my class" [10, p. 312–313].

The founders of the school-khutir knew that more than 90% of their pupils belong to the underprivileged sections of the population. After studying, most graduates will return to their homes, and therefore they must be adapted to the realities in which they will have to live in the future. Not wanting to harm the psyche of students, first separating them for a long time from their native environment with all its shortcomings, and then returning there again, the founders of the school organized a life for children that best suited their home environment. Pupils slept on straw mattresses, wore simple clothes

made of canvas, and walked barefoot in summer. They cleaned the premises themselves, nutritious but simple meals were prepared in the canteens. Students were taught order, neatness, discipline; they not only tried to form intellectual needs, but also to cultivate a love of manual labor.

From the beginning of the school-khutor, the pedagogical team aimed to give students the opportunity to simultaneously with general knowledge to master such crafts that will help them support themselves in adulthood. In the first years of the school's existence, the boys, under the guidance of masters, immediately began working in carpentry, binding and shoemaking workshops, but this did not give the desired results. Therefore, in autumn of 1909, a separate class was opened, in which the youngest boys wove twine bags, made baskets out of strings, sawed and did other simple work. The middle-class boys went to a handicraft class, where under the guidance of experienced teachers, according to a specially designed program, they got acquainted with the use of various tools and mastered the skills of working with them. These classes were a preparatory stage before learning specific crafts in special workshops, which is why special attention was paid during the last three years of the student's stay in school.

Girls at this time were engaged in needlework, and here the goal was to form skills, mastering which in the future you can have some income. The students learned to sew, embroider, mend clothes, knit, and crochet. Particular attention was paid to the ability to cut out. At first, the patterns were made of life-size paper, and then the girls drew them in a reduced size in their special notebooks. Thus, each student created her own album, which could be guided in the future. Girls from intelligent families were taught to make women's hats. Some of the children's products (bags, hats, etc.) were sold, in addition, the sewing class provided clothes for the pupils of the school-khutor.

Since 80% of the school's students were children of peasants from two agricultural provinces (Katerynoslav and Tavriia), its founders considered it their duty to ensure that students acquire as much as possible the latest agricultural knowledge during their studies, and become accustomed to the rational organization of rural labor. The khutor additionally leased land from the cities, arranging an exemplary farm with a six-field crop rotation. The farm bred pigs for sale (only Yorkshire), kept poultry, a milk farm (milk of 18 cows was used in the farm canteens) and a training apiary. In 1909 there were 2,000 trees in the school orchard; part of the land between them was planted with strawberries. Five tenths of land was occupied by a garden. The farm conducted experiments on growing roses for the expensive rose oil production. Attempts were successful, and in 1909 there were already



10 thousand bushes in a rosary. At the same time experiments on a silkworm breeding began. (On the remains of a once large farm park, orchard and rose plantation the Zaporizhzhia regional station of young naturalists was established in Soviet times).

In summer only students of three junior classes and ill students who could not work physically were allowed to go home. All others were divided into groups for work. The oldest boys worked in the fields, middle school students cultivated the garden and the kitchen garden. The girls cooked, washed, worked on the farm etc. According to teachers, this combination of study and work not only really prepared for independence, but also diversified the lives of children, did not let them get bored, tired of monotony.

The school had an experimental agricultural meteorological station. It was one of those stations arranged by the General Directorate of Agriculture and State Property in various parts of the Russian Empire to monitor the impact of weather conditions on the agricultural plants development. Senior students were assigned to help the station head. Their observation reports were sent monthly to the meteorological bureau and to the Mykolaiv Main Physical Observatory, and were also published in the annual reports of the Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department.

As already mentioned, Oleksandrivsk school-khutir was not financed by the state, but functioned mainly thanks to the donations of good people who sympathized with the deaf people. However, both subsidies from public organizations and charitable private contributions were, of course, unsystematic, it was simply impossible to keep such a large economy on them. Looking for ways to stabilize the school financial condition its founders sought its self-sufficiency. The creation of a printing house and a factory of agricultural machines and tools on the farm was the step on the way to the realization of the desired material independence. The designers of these production facilities took into account the maximum of technical improvements known at that time, and withstood all hygienic requirements. The latest equipment was purchased; all machines were powered by electricity. After mastering certain skills in handicraft lessons, high school students were allowed to work in the factory and in the printing house in their free time. So they got a profession and after graduating from school could work here, receiving a fairly decent salary (the plant, for example, employed 500 people).

Interestingly, the initiators of the plant saw it not only as a reliable means of solving the economic problems of the school-khutir, but also tried to give this industrial enterprise national significance. According to the plan, a graduate of any educational deaf and dumb institution in Russia could

work at the plant in rather favorable conditions (those who did not attend the educational institution were not accepted). As noted by the organizers, thanks to the plant deaf workers have the opportunity to provide for themselves and thank society for its care, and feel the satisfaction of realizing that the income from their work helps to educate younger deaf and dumb fellows in misery [5, p. 298]. And since the plant was located in the center of the steppe agricultural region, its products – reapers, seeders, threshers, etc., were in demand, and this provided stable profits and good prospects.

The printing house also turned out to be quite profitable. Thanks to the care of F. Movchanovskiy, it was fully provided with orders from public organizations, commercial and industrial enterprises, all kinds of illustrated publications and more. And these orders came from quite remote places, such as Kharkiv, Moscow, even from St. Petersburg. Thus, both the factory of agricultural machines and tools and the printing house were not only a source of stable financial support for the school-khutor, but also places where students of this educational institution acquired professions and graduates had the opportunity to get a job.

In 1910, the principal of the school-khutor became M. Lagovskyi, a well-known teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, who, as already noted, from the beginning of the institution establishment took care of its activities. Leading the pedagogical team Mykola Mykhailovych invited his student, the future famous Ukrainian defectologist Ivan Sokolianskyi (1889–1960), to work with deaf and dumb students. [12].

In December 1910, together with teachers from Kharkiv, Kyiv, Odesa, and Malyn (Kyiv Province), a group of teachers from the Oleksandrivsk school-khutor took part in the All-Russian Congress of Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing held in Moscow. Thus, the delegates listened to and discussed the reports of teachers of this educational institution, namely Arkadii Maltsev “Participation of institutions of Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department in the exhibition and the need to promote the idea of teaching deaf and dumb in society”, Pavlo Hladush “Why the deaf and dumb are alien to physical labor after school”, Mariia Popova “On the issue of the financial situation of the deaf-dumb students’ teacher”.

Before the congress starts, I. Sokolyanskyi and his colleagues sent the report “About the native language learning by the Ukrainian deaf-dumb children” to its organizing committee. Since, in accordance with the Tsar Russification policy in the Russian Empire, not only in all ordinary, but also in all special educational institutions, teaching was carried out only in Russian, the choice of such a topic was a rather audacious gesture. Actually,

Ivan Panasovych did not even count on the support of Russian delegates and predicted that many of them would say “There is no such country as Ukraine! Who invented it? ... What national Ukrainian life, school, etc. can be there and what is their attitude to the deaf and dumb. We have so many unresolved issues, and here they offer to teach some Ukrainian language ...” [10, p. 303]. However, this did not stop the young teacher. In his speech, he was convincing and sharp enough to prove that thousands of deaf and dumb people need the attention not of philanthropists with their charities, but of people of science with a methodically sound educational school. And for such a school to really benefit students, it must be inextricably linked with the life of the nation whose children are in it, and this primarily applies to teaching in the native language of students.

However, during the congress such an important issue for Ukrainian teachers was not discussed, as the Principal of St. Petersburg Deaf and Dumb School P. Yenko strongly insisted on removing I. Sokolyanskyi’s report from the agenda as one that contradicts the state national policy. As a result, Ivan Panasovych did not speak, but his report was published in the Proceedings of the Congress (this collection, among the reports that were not heard by delegates, also contains the already quoted article by O. Safonova, the teacher of Oleksandrivsk school-khutir “About the school-sanatorium in Yevpatoria”).

In general, the teachers of the school-khutir tried their best to represent their institution to the general public. In particular, the school has repeatedly participated in various exhibitions, where it always attracted the attention of visitors (for example, it got a big gold medal at the Katerynoslav Exhibition in 1910 for staging educational work). Stories about the institution and its exhibits prompted many visitors to the exhibitions to provide the khutir with all possible financial support.

Wanting to tell the world about themselves, to inspire others by their example, the teachers of the school-khutir also covered their own experience in some publications. Thus, in 1910 in the printing house of khutir such brochures of its principal M. Lagovskyi were published “Institutions of Oleksandrivsk Deaf and Dumb Guardianship Department” and “Lecture given in August 1910 at the agricultural exhibition in Yekaterinoslav”, teacher A. Maltsev “Oleksandrivsk deaf and dumb school-khutir, Yekaterinoslav province, 1903–1910”, agronomist A. Agafonenko “Descriptive report on the khutir economy of the deaf and dumb school in 1910”.

The printing house of the school-khutir made a series of postcards with images that covered the life of this institution. The postcards were made at a high polygraphic level, and, flying around the world, they demonstrated the

territory of the town, the architecture of educational and ancillary buildings, reproduced the educational process, acquainted with industrial and commercial facilities, and so on. Thus, thanks to the mail, the general achievements of surdopedagogy were promoted and the specific practical experience of the educational institution was shown. (Currently, about 70 such unique postcards are stored in the funds of the Museum of the History of the Ukrainian Deaf Society [11]).

The work of the school-khutir was periodically checked by commissions, which in their reports characterized it as a “highly cultured wonderful corner”, where children are mobile, cheerful, polite, kind, quite disciplined, have a healthy appearance. There were also frequent guests of various ranks, including governors, bishops, senators, professors. Their emotional positive impressions were reflected in the visit journal. The author of one of the records made in it, for example, argued that if there were more such institutions, Russia would be the happiest country [4, p. 25].

As the Oleksandrivsk school-khutir was recognized not only as one of the best educational institutions for the deaf in Russia, but also as one of the best in the world, the fame of it reached government circles. Thanks to Prime Minister P. Stolypin, the information about the unique institution interested the royal family. Thus F. Movchanovskyi – the main person, as they said at the time, “a miracle that occurred in the steppes of Katerynoslav province” – was received in audience by Nicholas II, the Russian monarch. During this meeting on February 9, 1911, the Emperor himself, his wife, Empress Oleksandra Feodorovna, and his mother, the founder of the Deaf and Dumb Guardianship, Empress-Widow Feodorovna, were present. For almost an hour, F. Movchanovskyi spoke about the achievements and problems of the school-khutir and received full approval its activities.

It would seem that after the personal monarchical approval of the school-khutir a long and happy life is guaranteed. However, it happened quite differently. The only structure that from the very beginning for some reason did not show a desire to effectively help the Oleksandrivsk Department was the central body of the Deaf and Dumb Guardianship – the Board of Trustees. Immediately after the royal audience it changed its attitude to its peripheral department - 7 years of ignoring its problems was transformed into a specific interest. In February 1911, a special commission began an audit of the school-khutir, and in May the head of the the Deaf and Dumb Guardianship decided to initiate a criminal case against F. Movchanovskyi, accusing him of exceeding his authorities and inactivity at the same time, as well as embezzlement, forgery, in incorrect account management etc. A total of 420 (!) criminal acts

were found. F. Movchanovskiy was first arrested and then admitted to bail with significant legal violations (without explanations from the accused himself, without a resolution from the Chief Executive of the Office of Empress Maria). The investigation lasted exactly two years. In June 1913, the prosecutor's office of Kharkiv Judicial Chamber decided that the case was dismissed owing to lack of evidence.

These two years were terrible not only for F. Movchanovskiy, but also for his project. During this time, the unique phenomenon of pedagogical practice, which arose solely due to charity and enthusiasm, compassion and professionalism, disappeared. As a result of the reforming activities of the Deaf and Dumb Guardianship, another stereotyped, miserable school for the deaf appeared instead. In accordance with the directive of the Board of Trustees to eliminate all unnecessary, the kindergarten and school for the underachieved were closed. The school-sanatorium was recognized as "fruitless sentimentality", and its territory together with the magnificent house-palace became the property of the Department of Institutions of the Empress Mariia. The number of pupils in the primary school was reduced to 77 (at the end of 1910 there were 227 children in the school, 128 of whom were primary school students), and the 9-year course was replaced by a 6-year course. Eleven teachers were fired, and the salaries of the remaining staff were more than halved. Food costs were cut to unrealistically low levels, leading to starvation of children. Exemplary agriculture was completely destroyed, and the printing house began to decline. The factory, the premises of kindergarten, the school for the underachievers, the school museum, as well as a part of the ancient park and the rosary were sold for nothing.

Despite all the trials of fate, F. Movchanovskiy tried to revive the school. In October 1916, he was re-elected mayor and created a special commission to restore the khutir. On March 1, 1917, F. Movchanovskiy wrote to the Chairman of the State Duma M. Rodzianko and members of the Duma P. Miliukov, V. Maklakov, M. Chkheidze, O. Kerenskiy, V. Shulgin, V. Lvov, S. Shidlovskiy, M. Nekrasov for help. Similar petitions were sent to members of the State Council A. Koni, O. Guchkov and Professor P. Kamenskii. Unfortunately, revolutionary and military events in the country prevented the implementation of his plans to revive the Oleksandrivsk school-khutir.

However, the experience gained in the teaching staff has given new shoots. It was here in 1919 that the first Ukrainian primer for the deaf was published, in 1921–1922 the first training courses for 20 teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing in the Soviet Union were held, for the first time in Ukraine school curricula for the deaf were developed etc. For many years, Zaporizhzhia

School for the Deaf was the base of the special schools department of the People's Commissariat of Education of the Ukrainian SSR. In the late 1970s, the school moved to a newly built building, now it is the Zaporizhzhia special boarding school "Dzherelo".

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** In conclusion, we can say that in our opinion the history of the creation and features of the Oleksandrivska deaf and dumb school-khutir clearly confirms – at the origins of an interesting, original phenomenon (including in pedagogy) stands the extraordinary personality. And if this person is able to awaken in the hearts of the public the noblest feelings, the results of joint activities can significantly exceed what is done in accordance with government decrees, orders and regulations.

Another conclusion from the history of the Oleksandrivska deaf and dumb school-khutir may be the thesis that the phenomenon of this educational institution should not be narrowed down only to the issue of special education. The educational institution, which was considered and is considered one of the best in the world pedagogical practice, has the right to take its place in the general course on the history of Ukrainian pedagogy. In particular, in our opinion, we should talk about the school-khutir as a harbinger of the many children's towns that emerged in the country after 1917. The development of this logical line can serve as a direction for further work of interested researchers.

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