

# Theory of Free Education of K. Wentzel as the Development of Pedagogical Theory and Practice of L. N. Tolstoy

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**Abstract**—The article deals with the diverse creative heritage of K. Wentzel: a student of L. Tolstoy, a theorist and practitioner of pedagogy, a philosopher, sociologist, political scientist and theologian.

**Keywords**—K. Wentzel; L. Tolstoy; free education; pedagogy; philosophy of education and upbringing

## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this work is to present the most significant and interesting ideas and social (including pedagogical) technologies of Konstantin Nikolayevich Wentzel (November 24 (December 6), 1857, St. Petersburg - March 10, 1947, Moscow), an outstanding Russian public figure, teacher and thinker, so that the reader can on the one hand begin to apply them in their lives, and on the other – interested in the legacy of K. N. Wentzel studied it more thoroughly.

## II. RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

The relevance of K. Wentzel, best known today as a teacher, theorist and practitioner of "free education" is due, first of all, to the global trend of curtailing human rights and freedoms, the strengthening of totalitarian, dictatorial and conservative trends in the modern world and in Russia in particular. Naturally, all this is fully manifested in the modern system of education and upbringing of children, the activities of the media and other social forces and tools that affect the consciousness and behavior of a person...

Therefore, the ideas of free upbringing and education of a person (not only a child and a young man) are very relevant and in demand today by all people focused on free self-development. Pedagogical ideas and technologies of K. Wentzel can be successfully applied in the life of older people, more free from the social pressure of "pensioners", in the sphere of elite and "home", family education and upbringing. At the same time, these ideas can, in fact, be used by everyone as a methodological basis for their self-

education and self-development, which is not dependent on the existing social conditions, which is their enduring value.

## III. THE PLACE OF K. WENTZEL IN THE HISTORY OF PEDAGOGY

K. Wentzel and his followers can be considered as the most radical (that is, consistent in the implementation of its ideals) direction of the "School of free education", one of the founders of which in Europe were J.-J. Rousseau, and in Russia – L. Tolstoy. The key principles of this school were the rejection of the usual class system, focus on the needs of the student in obtaining knowledge and skills, recognition of the student (child) the main value and education as a free creative individual and personality. As a scientific and practical movement, this direction had its theorists and their printed works (Philosophical and pedagogical schools of the Ancient East (Moism), humanists of the Renaissance, J.-J. Rousseau, L. Tolstoy, K. Wentzel, S. Durylin, M. Montessori, R. Steiner, O. M. Ayvankhov), communities of supporters and like-minded teachers among practitioners, parents and students, their own schools and educational centers (Waldorf schools). Thus, we see here the presence of a sufficiently serious and organized social movement, which can be qualified as a scientific and pedagogical "School of free education". We will not give definitions of the scientific and pedagogical school here, since the way of existence of matter is motion, and therefore any "exact" definition will be one-sided and incorrect.

## IV. PEDAGOGICAL IDEAS OF THE TEACHER WENTZEL L. TOLSTOY

The main "forerunner" of K. Wentzel and his school in Russia was L. Tolstoy. But Tolstoy did not invent the principles of the organization of his Yasnaya Polyana School, but largely took them from the life practice of the peasants themselves, whose children he undertook to teach (which few people mention). The fact is that classroom pedagogy was intended (which is true today) for the preparation of "office officials". The grotesque image of the product of this

system was depicted by N. Gogol in the story "The Overcoat", and with Durylin very vividly described all shortcomings this system in his work "In school prison" [12A: 29-52]. About this same later wrote M. Foucault [16]. However, to prepare for peasant life, this system was completely unsuitable, since the peasant was mainly engaged in agricultural and handicraft work, hunting, gathering, trade, etc. Since the peasant economy was largely self-sufficient, the peasants had to independently maintain the entire household, raise children, be treated, observe nature, celebrate rituals, many of them sang well, danced, played musical instruments, etc. therefore, peasant children were taught and brought up in families, in the process of their natural life and work, which largely echoes the practice of free pedagogy K. Wentzel. There was no sense in suppressing the freedom of spiritual expression, the interests and talents of the child, because the gifted child was useful to the family and the peasant community as a whole. In the case of talent and interest in any non-standard activities, he could become an apprentice blacksmith, healer (herbalist), learn some craft, become a musician, singer, go to University and make a "career" (as, for example, M. Lomonosov or I. G. Fichte).

At the same time, parochial schools also did not prepare children for peasant life, although they taught literacy. Their task was different-to prepare a competent consumer of goods and services of the Corporation "Orthodox Church" and an obedient subject of the state. It is for these reasons that the theory and practice of free education from Tolstoy to K. Wentzel proved to be necessary and socially demanded in Russia at that time, as it combined the advantages and methods of family education of peasants with official education, which the peasants themselves could not give to their children, which then limited the possibility of their social self-realization.

#### V. DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS OF FREE EDUCATION

In the USSR, after the end of the civil war and the prohibition of multipartyism (1922-1923), authentic free pedagogy (as a school) by K. Wentzel and other authors was banned, but some of its ideas and provisions were integrated into the official educational system (for example, the important place of productive labor in education) and ideology (free man and society in the future, after the construction of communism).

Outside the USSR, where society was more pluralistic, the theory and practice of free education continued to develop, both with direct support for the ideas of K. Wentzel (in the United States), and other authors close to him: M. Montessori (1870-1952), R. Steiner (1861-1925), O. M. Ayvankhov (1900-1986) and their followers. In 1990's theory and practice free nourishing have returned back in Russia, but already mostly under guise "Waldorf" and "Montessori" pedagogy, so as its grains domestic school free nourishing was by the time already profoundly forgotten.

Thus, we see the obvious connection of the school of K. Wentzel both with the tradition of the world scientific and pedagogical theory and practice, and with the public need to

educate a free person as the basis and Creator of a free society. Accordingly, the development or suppression of "free pedagogy" is directly related to the social system and its "order" to build and reproduce a free or non-free society.

#### VI. DISAGREEMENTS AND POLEMICS OF K. WENTZEL WITH L. TOLSTOY

K. Wentzel wrote much less than his teacher and "forerunner" L. Tolstoy and did not gain (unfortunately) his fame and authority, but his views on education, in my opinion, more correct than that of the respected classic of Russian literature.

K. Wentzel worked closely with the outstanding Tolstoy I. Gorbunov-Posadov, publisher and editor of the magazine "Free education". But in 1908 y. Wentzel departs from the ideas of Tolstoy, whose like-minded person he was always considered. He began to deny the "suggestion of good," considering it a subtle violence instead of a rude one.

In his article "To the polemic with L.N. Tolstoy" 1909 y. [9]<sup>125-126</sup>, the author notes that "neither religion nor morality can be the basis of education", because "the purpose of education should follow from the nature of the one whom we educate and educate, and is not put from outside", including morality and religion, as thought L.N. Tolstoy. It is not man, who is the servant of morality and religion, but religion and morality must serve man, and not the abstract, but the concrete, which for this reason must create these forms of culture for himself personally, and not thoughtlessly borrow them from outside. Only man himself, as the Creator of religion and morality, can generate from within their new and adequate forms of time and his person, which will become for him the highest forms of religion and morality. According to the same model, society as a whole is developing: for example, M. Luther in 1517 y. put forward "from within" the ideas of the reformation of the Catholic religion and the Church, which resonated with public moods and needs, caused grandiose social changes in Europe, and then throughout the world. If the ideas of man do not have such a powerful public resonance as that of M. Luther they are, however, quite capable of influencing his personal fate and the fate of those people who will accept them.

According to K. Wentzel, education based on external morality is a kind of subtle spiritual violence. A person should not be trained to perform a certain moral or educational program, but to acquaint with different points of view, so that he himself could freely choose some (or several) of them for himself and (or) form with their help his position on this issue. Also, knowledge should not be "given" to a person, but extracted by him independently, according to his needs and tasks. It is important to give a person not the knowledge itself, but the methodology of their extraction and correct processing (interpretation). L. Tolstoy, according to Wentzel, simply changes some external knowledge (given by official education), to others, which he considers more correct, that is, in fact, acts according to the same scheme, method, as his opponents.

However, K. Wentzel retained respect for L. Tolstoy, as evidenced, for example, by his publication of the works of his teacher.

In the brochure "Leo Tolstoy and war" [4] gives a very interesting collection of anti-war quotes the classics of Russian literature: "war has no reasonable explanation," "military – worse than the executioner, because he only kills criminals, and the military – all in a row", "soil of war – chauvinism, the belief that your nation is the best," "war – the cause of cravings, to forget this nonsense of killing", "war justify the existence of governments, as they have supposedly to appease the Nations," "war, even if it is successful, is always harmful", "patriotism – this renunciation of human dignity, reason and conscience and slavish submission to those who are in power" [4, 15], etc. By means of driving people into a situation of war L. Tolstoy saw 1. Religious deception: God supposedly blesses war, 2. Patriotism, 3. The myth of alien hostility, 4. The myth of the utility of the armed forces and the militarization of society, 5. "The struggle for peace", replacing the refusal to Finance wars and armed forces... Today, all this is as relevant as a hundred years ago. Even if, on a national scale, it is impossible to abandon the armed forces of self-defense of the people, these ideas are quite capable of freeing the individual from chauvinistic illusions and even saving his life. They also help people to be more critical of the militaristic adventures of politicians and governments...

#### VII. MYTHS AND TRUTH ABOUT WENTZEL

"Debunk" some "myths" About K. Wentzel, who is not only "Russian teacher, theorist and propagandist of free education", as we are informed by the most accessible source of information about him – Wikipedia. In fact, K. Wentzel is a typical "unrecognized genius", "forced out" in pedagogy and excluded from the "academic registers" of other spheres of activity, so as not to attract excessive attention of the masses. In fact, K. Wentzel is not only a teacher, but also an outstanding public figure of Russia in the first quarter of the twentieth century, a thinker, publicist, Russian philosopher-cosmist, sociologist, political scientist, psychologist, theologian... These hypostases are obscured by his reputation as a teacher and are not fully studied, since the works of K. Wentzel written by him "in the table" in the period 1923-1947, published only in fragments, so we still can not accurately assess the scale of the personality and contribution to the culture of this remarkable figure. Attempts to publish his works in the 1990s had only partial success [9] [10] and later were not published, remaining only material for scientific research [14], which took place mainly among the "provincial" scientists of Russia.

In particular, K. Wentzel put forward projects to the elimination of prisons, the fight against militarism, wrote an interesting article about Leo Tolstoy, has developed a methodology of establishing and strengthening the connection of man with the cosmos, the development of the "space of intuition" (this can be often outdoors, and engage in poetry and poetry, to study science and experiment in them, to engage in astronomy and observing the sky), until the end of his days remained a philosopher who was

constantly tormented by thoughts about the meaning of life...

In the pamphlet "Destruction of prisons"[1] he noted that as long as there are prisons in the country, there is no freedom and suggested replacing them with palaces of culture and education. Also in the brochure is a selection of classical statements about the dangers of the prison system: "only Evil grows in prison" (O. Wilde) and others. it is Obvious that prison is an example of radical practice of unfree education. The brochure also suggests that the defeat of education and science-a direct road to the criminalization of society.

In the pamphlet "How to fight militarism"[2], the author sees the cause of wars in the substitution of natural relations between peoples relations between States, perverting these relations. As long as the States will remain, and they will determine the life of peoples – wars are inevitable. The cure for militarism can be free education, high personal culture, which is replaced by militaristic public education and education, a vivid example of which is Germany. Both of these pamphlets were not subsequently reprinted.

These examples prove the importance of familiarity with the original texts of K. Wentzel, and not with quotations and retellings of his works in textbooks and monographs. An example of "politically correct" presentation of K. Wentzel's views is the monograph "Education and humanization of society" [11, 100-101; 172-176]. Of course, such works should not be considered "evil", since the reader, at least, can learn from them about "free pedagogy", but it is impossible to get an adequate idea of the work of K. Wentzel from them. The article is about K. Wentzel in the Russian Wikipedia is written adequately, but, of course, is not complete.

In addition to the philosophers of "Russian cosmism", K. Wentzel can be attributed to the direction of "philosophy of life" (F. Nietzsche, O. Spengler, A. Bergson, etc.). He, like F. Nietzsche, is also an outstanding critic of "herd morality" and behavior, but unlike such a famous "philosopher of freedom" as N. Berdyaev did not just write treatises and articles about freedom, but also implemented his ideas in practice, organizing the "house of free education", "parent university", working in the bodies of the people's Commissariat of the RSFSR, creating the "Declaration of the rights of the child", which became a prototype of similar UN documents adopted in the 1960s-1990s years. Complementing and correcting F. Nietzsche, K. Wentzel noted that the natural movement from the "will to power" is the movement to the «will to liberation. "If the Foundation of the "will to power" is the "will to self-liberation", then the natural development and the highest stage of the "will to power" is the will to liberate society, other people, because only in this case it will not be necessary to spend energy on enslaving people and, on the contrary, you can count on their voluntary support. "True politics and aims to create a free society, the liberation of society from all forms of oppression and violence "[10, 55], - said the thinker. And this, apparently, was understood by such politicians as S. Bolivar or Mahatma Gandhi, unlike some "nietzschean conservatives" who did not mature and did not grow to the

highest levels of understanding of power. From this small example it is clear that the main thing is not to write a lot of thick books, but to put forward and justify the right ideas.

#### VIII. WENTZEL AND ESOTERICISM

The given examples of K. Wentzel's polemics with the recognized authorities of the then and modern culture show that he is the author of an elitist, typical esoteric, who was the first in the world (and not K. Tsiolkovsky and V. Vernadsky, as the scientific "mass culture" thinks) to introduce the concepts of "space education" and "space pedagogy". Therefore, all esotericists, spiritual seekers are strongly recommended to read the works of K. Wentzel necessary for the formation and development of an "esoteric personality". Unfortunately, he is almost unknown in the modern esoteric subculture, although he is close in attitude to the founder of Waldorf pedagogy and anthroposophy R. Steiner and quite fits into "the cosmic worldview" of H. Arguelles and other supporters of the Mayan calendar and culture. First, not all spiritual teachers paid such attention to pedagogy, and secondly, many of them, unlike Wentzel, did not set the task of harmonious integration of the individual into society and nature, while maintaining its creative sovereignty. In particular, Wentzel believed that children should be accustomed to various types of productive work, the results of which can be sold or exchanged in the market or used by children themselves for life, and not stand on the shelves of museums and exhibitions of children's art, as is customary today. Some such pragmatism leads to bewilderment, why, they say, deprive children of the joys of carefree childhood? However, they do not understand that without the ability to create socially and individually useful and demanded products, a person can not be free, because he will fall into inevitable dependence on its producers, owners of money (the system of redistribution of this product) and other people in General. The more professions, skills and crafts a person owns, the more he is independent, both from society and nature as a whole, and from the fluctuations of social and market conditions, periodically squeezing certain professional skills and groups in the zone of crisis and "black band". The ability to produce "naive" works for exhibitions of children's creativity and competitions does not create such self-sufficiency. Even if the "spiritual seeker" has found a suitable "guru" like Castaneda Don Juan, how and on what will he live until he becomes a master? Incidentally and masters far not all "perfume" "bring on a silver platter" and the problem self-sufficiency for them is worth enough acutely. Count on rapid learning to turn "stones in bread", and lead in gold most not account for. That is why pedagogical ideas and technologies of free education are so necessary for any esoteric, spiritual seeker and just an independent, freedom-loving creative person.

The theory and practice of free education brings together with esoteric reliance on the internal forces and needs of the pupil, as one of the definitions of esoteric-is internal, spiritual knowledge and experience. An esoteric is one who relies on this inner knowledge and feeling. The result of the free education of a person is a fundamentally different type of education, which can be called "internal". Relying on his

needs, interests, will and intuition (and not on the detached from life "intelligence", to which Wentzel was critical), a person actually creates himself, building his cultural personality in form and content. Naturally, not only the methodology, but also the results of such self-creation will be different for a person than if he received the usual "external" education based on copying other people's programs of behavior and reproduction of other people's experience. Wentzel rightly believed that true human morality and education can not be based on imitation, suggestion, hypnosis, blind copying of familiar ideas and stereotypes. However, what is today understood as education is an external, copying education, the presence of which a person reports in various resumes and questionnaires. The task of creating something fundamentally new is set in the official system of education and science only for the authors of doctoral dissertations (which, however, does not prevent many dissertants to bypass it even in the case of successful defense). But even a Professor in his teaching must, for the most part, state other people's points of view on a particular subject. Presentation of one's position is not encouraged. The student is evaluated on the success of copying and reproducing books read, lectures by the teacher or answers to computer tests that test the knowledge of the facts of the existing culture by the student, and from the point of view of their developers. If the student's "version of reality" or assessment of something disagrees with the test author's opinion, his answer will be considered incorrect, even if the current culture allows different points of view on the issue or alternative ways of solving the problem. Discussion and pluralism of opinions in contact with a machine operating on a clear algorithm are impossible (this is the value of technology for a non-free society). A person in such a system of testing knowledge is in the role of a robot or a trained animal. Free education, on the other hand, was directed against the earlier and less inhumane manifestations of the same paradigm of "external education", which in its advanced forms, as is well seen today, and transforms man into a robot and a trained animal.

#### IX. WENTZEL THEOLOGY

Consider the theological, theological ideas of K. Wentzel. They are presented mainly in Wentzel's unpublished works of the 1920s-30s years: "Religion of creative life" (1925), "Three revolutions (political, social, spiritual)", "Philosophy of creative will" (1937), etc., excerpts from which can be found in the collection [10].

Developing and justifying his ideas of free education, the thinker puts forward the idea of religion, the cult of creative life, the religion of the living creative developing God, which denies any dogmatism and Church organization. This religion should be based on the cult of one integral Universe and one creative humanity. Of course, these completely revolutionary ideas are in direct contrast to our usual religions, based on a set of immutable commandments given thousands of years ago, the principle of slavish submission to God and the afterlife judgment for violating the divine rules of behavior. It is obvious that such a God-policeman is the antipode of the teacher in the system of free education, and

such a religion is a typical manifestation of the fear-based "external education". It also opposes atheism, based on the self-deification of man, who denies any minds and forces that are superior to him in terms of development and are beyond his sensory experience. For the triumph of the "religion of creative life" Wentzel proposed to get rid of the yoke of the intellect, "characterized by a natural misunderstanding of life" (A. Bergson), his concepts and ideas, introduced into us from childhood through language, to return the rights of the whole, single consciousness. It was proposed to give priority to the development of will, feelings, emotions, as it is the will that is the basis of goal-setting, mental activity, creativity and intellectual activity. Free creative (not automated) work was to become the basis of free creative religion and morality, purified from dogmatism, automatism and dependence on other subjects. The subject and creator of the new religion were to be the "immortal creative self", free from the conventions of space and time, limits and boundaries, striving to merge with the Living Evolving God... Of course, this is a very exciting prospect, especially in comparison with the afterlife courts and harem entertainment in Paradise. We see that creatively developing ideas of humanism of Renaissance, K. Wentzel gives in the works the developed program of removal from the person of negative social restrictions. Important, in our opinion, is the idea of the secondary intelligence. Rejecting the priority of intelligence, Wentzel gives scope to the development of a genuine human essence associated with the soul and spirit (denied by atheists), intelligence, in our opinion, is the basis of the management of a biorobot, not a person.

#### X. WENTZEL PEDAGOGY

Having demonstrated the diversity of talents and breadth of Outlook of K. Wentzel, we naturally come to the question: why did he focus on pedagogy, and not on politics, religion or anything else? Here, it seems, Wentzel acted very wisely. Apparently he understood that, lacking the skills of a free man, revolutionaries who rebelled against their oppressors and slaveholders, soon after revolutions and reforms will return to the usual social order for them and for all. Thus, the revolution will once again naturally "devour its children" and everything will return, in fact, to its "circles"; only the external entourage (symbols and flags), and the personal composition of the leaders of society will change. It is these processes that we observe in Russia, from the 1930s to the present day: from the still "red Emperor Stalin" to "St. Nicholas", the demolition of monuments to Lenin and the restoration of the social order of pre-Soviet Russia. Rejecting the pedagogy of K. Wentzel, the Soviet regime dug its own grave. It is significant that as soon as the tops of power in the USSR broke generation M. Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin (and younger), brought up and educated within the framework of Soviet culture, began the self-forgetful scrapping of Soviet power, the destruction of the USSR and the construction of bourgeois society. It does not seem that all these, and the current leaders of Russia received a truly socialist and Communist education and upbringing. Judging by their real behavior, their upbringing and education was typically capitalist, in fact bourgeois, which confirms the ideas of the Frankfurt school of social philosophy and Yu.

Evola about the essential identity of the Soviet and Western social system in the framework of a common paradigm for them of industrial society.

K. Wentzel looked at things more deeply. Therefore, in his activities, he focused on the education and education of a free man today, here and now, instead of utopian dreams and projects about the "bright Communist future" and the coming Paradise on Earth. Consciousness of mankind from time immemorial was hammered with various utopian illusions from "the thousand-year Christian Kingdom", to the thousand-year Reich, from communism, to "revival of Orthodoxy in Russia", "the world Caliphate", "the Golden billion", "information society", "transhumanistic robotocracy from which all allegedly will grow salary", etc. But also natural disappointment from unfulfilled hopes was and always will be bitter. The desired future needs to be created today and one of its main foundations is the correct upbringing and education of children and adults.

To create a free society, we must first create, through free education and education of people who are ready to live in this society, build it and maintain it. It is impossible, being by nature and habits a slave, to build a free society, just as it is impossible to build communism, not being by nature and habits a Communist. Therefore, the creation of a new social order begins not with revolutions and good laws, but with a system of education and upbringing corresponding to it. But what is true for society is also true for the individual: one cannot become a free man without having received the appropriate education and upbringing (or at least self-education and upbringing). Even after receiving "human rights" or "free" from the master, the slave who does not know how to live freely will vegetate or return to the service of the former or new slave owner. Revolutions, democratic elections and "progressive reforms" will also fail. Going to the democratic elections, the slave will choose his own next master. He will find the same master in religion, art, family. Having Read N. Berdyaev and other "philosophers of freedom", a slave who dreams of freedom, without the skills of a free life, will not be able to realize his dreams in practice. There are plenty of examples of such "dreamers" worshipping another spiritual or political "guru" who promises him a "bright future".

That is why the theory and practice of free education is so important. Let the reader try to master it according to the works of K. Wentzel himself and modify it independently for himself (his children, students, friends), without relying blindly on the impressions of the author of the article. We will state here only the basic principles of free education.

- Diversity of systems of education: how many children, so many systems of education.
- Not the formation of the child according to the ideal, but the process of releasing the creative forces in the child.
- The highest goal is the development of creative individuality of the pupil.

- Individuality is not in conflict with society and culture, but on the contrary, true society and true culture help the development of individuality.
- Reliance on the independence of the child, its active nature.
- The contact of work with nature.
- Priority development mental activity and will, not intelligence.
- Development of the ability to set conscious goals and strive to achieve them.
- The basis of education is freedom, creativity, productive work.
- Assisting the child in developing personal morality and personal religion, instead of teaching a particular code of religion and morality.

#### XI. SCIENTIFIC AND PEDAGOGICAL SCHOOL OF K. WENTZEL

For a better understanding and practical application of the ideas and techniques of K. Wentzel, it should be considered in the context of the history of the development of scientific and pedagogical theory and practice.

We see the obvious connection of the school of K. Wentzel both with the tradition of world scientific and pedagogical theory and practice, and with the public need to educate a free person as the basis and Creator of a free society. Accordingly, the development or suppression of "free pedagogy" is directly related to the social system and its "order" to build and reproduce a free or non-free society.

What else is characteristic of the scientific and pedagogical "School of free education K. Wentzel", allowing to classify it as an independent school?

The reasons for its occurrence are due to the need of scientists, teachers, parents and children to cooperate their efforts to develop a common problem of free education and the program of its practical implementation, which was done by K. Wentzel and his associates in the "Moscow house of free education", their published journals, "Free parent university", during the work of K. Wentzel in the structures of the People's commissariat of education and higher school of Voronezh.

K. Wentzel – figure, of course, the charismatic, multifaceted man is gifted, wise and even successful that it has already been shown in the article. In his journal such luminaries of Soviet pedagogy as A. Lunacharsky and N. Krupskaya were published, on whom K. Wentzel, undoubtedly, somehow influenced. Therefore, he himself is quite suitable for the role of leader and founder of a new scientific and pedagogical school.

His school had deep roots in Russian folk pedagogy, the theory and practice of art schools of the Renaissance, the activities of L. Tolstoy, and almost 30 years of relatively free development in Russia of the late XIX – first quarter of the

XX century, its continuation beyond its borders (mainly in the United States) and return back to Russia, as the basis of various directions of modern "Humane pedagogy" [10] [13].

In Russia of the beginning of the XX century "free education" of K. Wentzel developed in the conditions of growth of wide national liberation movement of its people from fetters of feudal Imperial bureaucracy, and expressed informal, natural social need of association of the best traditions of country community and family education with the theory (science) and practice (productive work) of the growing industrial society. The formation of the anti-peasant dictatorship of industrial society in the USSR led to the suppression of this trend. The standardized, conveyor-type production and way of life did not require EN masse free creators, so free pedagogy was unnecessary for him. Accordingly, the collapse of industrial society in Russia in the 1990s and the emergence of elements of "post-industrial society" created the conditions for the return of the theory and practice of free education in Russia.

The main idea and problem of "free pedagogy" was the question of cultivation and formation of a free, creatively oriented person, as the primary basis for a similar society. What pedagogical and social conditions should be created for the emergence and development of such a person, what should be the teacher, methods of education and education of the new school? What are the philosophical, cosmic, religious prerequisites and conditions for the formation of such a person? How to eliminate obstacles to its development, to eliminate the factors hindering its formation? The answers to all these questions can be found in the writings of K. Wentzel. K. Wentzel preferred to think in triads: the ideals of free man, free society, and free education as their first principles-these are the "three whales," the three first principles of the "School of free education."

We see the cooperation of scientists, the association of researchers of different ages, the task of training new leaders, and the Association of like-minded people around one program among the like-minded people Of K. Wentzel. There was a competition of this direction, both with alternative schools of pedagogical thought, and within the direction of free pedagogy itself (K. N. Wentzel's polemic with L. Tolstoy reflected in the literature [9], S. Durylin's polemic (K. Wentzel's pupil) with him [13], the polemic of representatives of the Soviet official pedagogy with Wentzel [10], etc. That is, the theoretical and practical boundaries of the scientific and pedagogical school of K. Wentzel are quite obvious.

K. Wentzel is not an amazing anomaly, an eccentric genius-a loner, but a leader and representative of a serious scientific and pedagogical movement that has both national and world significance. His adherents and followers John Dewey (1859-1952), Maria Montessori (1870-1952) and Anton Makarenko (1888-1939) are according to UNESCO among the 4 teachers who defined the leading way of pedagogical thinking in the XX century. It is obvious that, for example, A. Makarenko was a younger contemporary of K. N. Wentzel and realized the ideas of labor education, which Wentzel put forward before him and which he could

not know. In the West, the ideas of free education were also developed by E. Kay, L. Gurlitt, G. Sharrelman, A. Nile, in Russia – I.I. Gorbunov-Posadov (1864-1940) and N.V. Chekhov (1865-1947) – a famous Soviet teacher and scientist.

## XII. SHORTCOMINGS OF WENTZEL'S THEORY AND PRACTICE

Of course, there are no perfect authors. The weak point of the philosophy of K. Wentzel, in our opinion, is the lack of spirit and Platonic "world of ideas" in it. Soul, Space in it there is, and here is spirit, alas, there is no. However, everything is known in comparison. Plato, being the ideologist of slavery, could not create a free pedagogy. Having the inner intuition of the spirit and the "world of ideas" it is easy to recreate them on their own, based on the principles of free education. Here, at least, no one will prevent you from doing it, forcibly imposing your ideals.

## XIII. CONCLUSION

The difficult fate of the theory and practice of free education in Russia in General and K. Wentzel in particular is not accidental. In the country, at least since the era of the "baptism of Russia", the idol (ideal) of the "enlightened" tyrant was established, forcibly imposing by force or cunning "wild and evil" people another ideology and system of life alien to him (Christianity, oprichnina, imposture, nikonianism, Western way of life, capitalism, Marxism, liberalism, modernization, Europeanization, bolonization, digitalization, transhumanization, etc.). Perhaps the most striking, archetypal figure of such an "enlightened" tyrant is Peter I, proudly emblazoned on a banknote of the Bank of Russia in the neighborhood of the Solovetsky monastery-prison. It is obvious that the education of the people by this type of ruler is diametrically opposed to the principles of free education, to talk about free from politics pedagogy, at least naive and ridiculous. Therefore, K. Wentzel naturally advocated the separation of schools from the state and the minimization of state regulation in General. But even in a non-state school, it is not easy to avoid the pressure of centuries-old political traditions and cash politics. Therefore, we will have to master Wentzel's ideas at our "own risk". Nevertheless, being the antipode of the dominant tradition, the ideas Of K. Wentzel balance it, and therefore are able to harmonize our society and culture...

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