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**SCIENCE AND EDUCATION IN UKRAINE IN THE
CONTEXT OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR:
CHALLENGES AND TASKS IN THE CONTEXT OF
NATIONAL SECURITY AND POST-WAR
RECONSTRUCTION**

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**НАУКА І ОСВІТА УКРАЇНИ В УМОВАХ РОСІЙСЬКО-
УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ВІЙНИ: ВИКЛИКИ ТА ЗАВДАННЯ В
КОНТЕКСТІ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ БЕЗПЕКИ
ТА ПІСЛЯВОЄННОЇ ВІДБУДОВИ**

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COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF UKRAINE: TRENDS, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF RECOVERY

Melnychenko S. H., Honcharova O. V.

INTRODUCTION

The formation of the modern system of higher education in Ukraine began in 2014 and continues to this day. In 2014, the Law of Ukraine «On Higher Education» was adopted in a new version¹, then, systems of internal and external quality assurance of higher education were created, which are consistent with the standards of the European educational space². However, these positive developments are accompanied by a number of new challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the on-going war in Ukraine, which have caused new problems in higher education related to the creation of a safe educational environment while ensuring the quality of education in online distance learning settings. With the beginning of the full-scale war, the educational process in Ukraine was suspended for a certain time and subsequently resumed in various formats, students of higher education and scientific and pedagogical workers found themselves in different conditions, the educational infrastructure continues to be destroyed. However, given the fact that the war continues, the issue of its impact on the higher education system of Ukraine remains relevant and requires in-depth scientific study and analysis of the possibilities of ensuring a high-quality educational process in the conditions of the conflict and the prospects for the restoration of Ukrainian higher education institutions with an emphasis on sustainable post-war development.

It should be noted that currently the work of a large number of Ukrainian scientists is devoted to the functioning of higher education in Ukraine in wartime conditions. In particular, T. O. Gubanova made a systematic analysis of the transformation of the activities

¹ Закон України «Про вищу освіту». № 37–38. 2014. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18#Text> (дата звернення: 09.02. 2026)

² Міжнародні стандарти та рекомендації. Національне агентство із забезпечення якості вищої освіти. URL: <https://surf.li/btktgr> (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

of higher education institutions in the conditions of war and focused on changing the formats of the organization of the educational process, the relocation of higher education institutions, the problems of ensuring the safety of participants in the educational process and the need for regulatory and legal responses to new challenges. It is substantiated that the war caused an increase in the intensity of digitalization of higher education and called into question the quality and availability of higher education in certain regions. In the study of O.I. Lokshinoi, O.Z. Glushko, A.P. Djurilo, S.M. Kravchenko, O.O. Maksimenko, N.V. Nikolska, O.M. Shparik¹, the recommendations of international organizations regarding the organization of the educational process during the war were analyzed. Attention is focused on such principles as: continuity of education, flexibility of educational trajectories, psychological support of participants in the educational process and ensuring inclusiveness. Of particular value is the generalization of the international experience of responding to crisis situations by educational systems and its adaptation to Ukrainian realities. An analytical assessment of the state of higher education during wartime was provided by I. Shevchuk and A. Shevchuk², who consider educational analytics as an effective tool for making management decisions during a crisis. Scientists note that the synergy of such quantitative indicators as the contingent of applicants, the number of teachers and the financing of higher education in combination with the qualitative characteristics of the educational process make it possible to make a forecast regarding the possible risks of educational losses and develop strategic guidelines for their prevention. The sociological aspect of the consequences of the war for higher education of Ukraine was revealed by K. Batayeva³, which consid-

¹ Локшина О. І., Глушко О. З., Джурило А. П., Кравченко С. М., Максименко О. О., Нікольська Н. В., Шпарик О. М. Організація освіти в умовах війни: рекомендації міжнародних організацій. *Український педагогічний журнал*. 2022. № 2. С. 5–18. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32405/2411-1317-2022-2-5-18>

² Шевчук І., Шевчук А. Освітня аналітика крізь призму війни: виклики та можливості для вищої школи України. *Економіка та суспільство*. 2022. № 39. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/2524-0072/2022-39-80>

³ Батаєва К. Вища освіта у прифронтовому місті під час російсько-української війни: кумулятивні ефекти пролонгованого онлайн-навчання. *Sociology: Theory, Methods, Marketing*. 2025. № 2. DOI: [10.15407/sociology2025.02.116](https://doi.org/10.15407/sociology2025.02.116)

ered the cumulative effects of online learning on the example of front-line territories. She notes that the long-term distance learning format affects not only the quality of knowledge, but also the socialization of higher education students, their motivation and psychological state. Such scientists as O.I. Ivanova, I.P. Prudchenko and S.V. Lapshin¹, the influence of globalization processes on changing the role, structure and content of higher education is analyzed. In their work, it is emphasized that the war only strengthened the trends that were characteristic of the global educational system. In particular, digitalization, internationalization, interdisciplinarity and orientation to the competence approach. The issue of post-war restoration of the higher education system was considered by V.V. Sychenko, O.O. Shevchenko and S.O. Rybkina², which outline the strategic directions of rebuilding the educational infrastructure, returning personnel potential, increasing the autonomy of higher education institutions and increasing the role of state policy in the field of education. In the work of V. Pogrebnyaka and O. Dashkovskaya³ attention is focused on the adaptation mechanisms of higher education institutions to an unstable security environment, changes in management approaches, the role of digital technologies and the need to form new models of educational interaction to ensure the quality of the educational process. In the study of O. Horbatiuk and S. Polishchuk⁴ a comparative description of off-line and on-line distance education forms is provided, where the key ad-

¹ Іванова О., Прудченко І., Лапшин С. Вплив глобалізації на структуру, зміст і роль вищої освіти. *Людинознавчі студії: збірник наукових праць Дрогобицького державного педагогічного університету імені Івана Франка. Серія: Філософія*. 2024. № 48. С. 72–87. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2522-4700.48.5>

² Сиченко В. В., Шевченко О. О., Рибкіна С. О. Проблеми системи вищої освіти в Україні та шляхи їх вирішення в післявоєнний період. *Вчені записки ТНУ імені ВІ Вернадського. Серія: Публічне управління та адміністрування*. 2022. № 33 (72). С. 149–155. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/TNU-2663-6468/2022.6/23>

³ Погребняк В., Дашковська О. Вища школа України в умовах воєнних загроз і викликів: реалії та перспективи. *Нові технології навчання*. 2024. № 98. С. 166–174. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52256/2710-3560.98.2024.98.20>

⁴ Горбатюк О., Поліщук С. Особливості функціонування закладів вищої освіти під час війни: очна та дистанційна форми освіти, їх ключові переваги та недоліки. *Сучасні інформаційні технології та інноваційні методики навчання в підготовці фахівців: методологія, теорія, досвід, проблеми*. 2022. № 66. С. 5–13. DOI: [10.31652/2412-1142-2022-66-5-13](https://doi.org/10.31652/2412-1142-2022-66-5-13)

vantages of distance learning in conditions of security threats are determined, but attention is also focused on its disadvantages associated with a decrease in the level of communication, practical training and academic motivation of higher education applicants.

The economic dimension of the functioning of the system of higher education institutions in the conditions of social and humanitarian transformations is revealed by S.V. Breus and A.V. Chaikoiu¹. The authors consider the economic security of higher education institutions as an important component of their stability, emphasize the problems of financing, the loss of the contingent of education seekers, the reduction of income from the contractual form of education and the need to diversify financial sources.

It should be noted that despite the large number of scientific works devoted to the work of higher education institutions and the educational process in wartime conditions, the synergy and mutual influence of security, financial, personnel and psychosocial factors on the quality and availability of education is not sufficiently comprehensively considered. Further scientific research is also needed by issues of academic motivation, the contingent of higher education applicants and personnel support of the educational process, because in the future they will form the human capital of Ukraine. The possible long-term consequences of mixed and distance learning for the professional training of specialists and the impact of the digitalization process on them are not sufficiently comprehensively considered. In view of the partial scientific justification of the impact of the war on all aspects of the educational process and institutions of higher education, it is also impossible to develop comprehensive strategies to overcome the negative consequences in the perspective of post-war recovery, which would take into account all the priorities of the European educational space, the goals of the sustainable development of the UN and would ensure the level of training of higher education seekers in accordance with the level of the European Union.

¹ Бреус С. В., Чайка А. В. Вплив соціально-гуманітарних трансформацій на економічну безпеку системи закладів вищої освіти України. *Здобутки економіки: перспективи та інновації*. 2025. № 15. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14942435>

1. Problems of the higher education system in conditions of martial law: educational, security, personnel and institutional

The war that began in 2022 led to a radical change in the format of the educational process in higher education institutions of Ukraine from offline to online remote. Along with this, it caused a number of urgent problems that continue throughout the years of the war, in particular¹:

- ✓ constant shelling causes security threats and problems with the psychological well-being of both teachers and students of higher education;

- ✓ loss and destruction of a large number of institutions of higher education and problems with their reconstruction;

- ✓ departure of scientific and pedagogical workers and students of higher education abroad and to other internal regions of Ukraine;

- ✓ reduction of financial state provision for all institutions of higher education in Ukraine;

- ✓ temporary forced transfer of higher education institutions to other, safe regions of the state;

- ✓ is the so-called «educational loss», which is caused by a decrease in the quality of the educational process, its slowdown and long-term adaptation to online learning.

According to statistical information, as of 2024, only 21.6% of higher education institutions study in an offline format. Whereas, in mixed – 55.3 %, and in online remote – 23.1 %. In the context of macro-regions of Ukraine, the situation with training formats in higher education institutions is presented in Figure 1.

¹ Єрмакова С. С., Іванова О. С., Буренко М. С. Парадигма вищої освіти в умовах війни та глобальних викликів XXI століття. *Академічні візії*. 2023. № 16. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7664976>

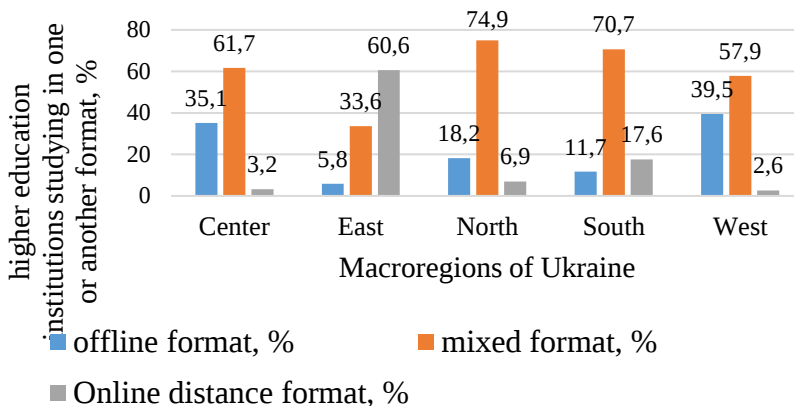


Fig. 1. Study formats in higher education institutions by macroregions of Ukraine as of 2024^{1, 2}

Accordingly, the largest number of higher education institutions, the educational process of which takes place in online format, is located in the East and South of Ukraine, and the smallest – is in the West and Center. Such trends are related to the unevenness of the security factor in the regions of Ukraine³.

According to the conducted monitoring studies, the main reasons for choosing distance learning higher education institutions were: inadequate level of security in the regions; the departure of a significant number of participants in the educational process abroad and constant air alerts in connection with the danger of hostilities⁴.

¹ Результати моніторингового дослідження базових аспектів організації освітнього процесу (якості, безпеки та ресурсів) в закладах фахової передвищої та вищої освіти в умовах воєнного стану у 2024 році (I етап). *Державна служба якості освіти України*. URL: https://sqe.gov.ua/wpcontent/uploads/2024/09/Zvit_2024_I_etap_VO_FPO.pdf (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

² Education: Impact of the War in Ukraine. Світовий Банк. Аналітичний звіт. 2022. URL: https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-impact-war-ukrainemay-2022?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwjY64BhCaARIsAIfc7Yax8l1NLEkog7HXC Eo2jRrc0eUmGxW9J4qdiQqohfQjfkmlwQqHLSgsaAgaSEALw_wcB (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

³ Васильченко Л., Шацька Н. Дистанційне (онлайн) навчання у закладах ЗСО: проблеми, виклики, рішення. *Освіта. Інноватика. Практика*. 2022. № 10 (7). С. 19–24. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31110/2616-650X-vol10i7-003>

⁴ Антонюк О., Савчук С., Шостак І. Змістово-технологічні аспекти організації дистанційного навчання в ЗВО в умовах воєнного стану. *Молодь і ринок*. 2024. № 6 (226). С. 37–41. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4634.2024.307817>

It should be noted that currently, according to various estimates of world organizations, participants in the educational process in Ukraine, both teachers and students of higher education, are under great psychological pressure. In particular, according to WHO (World Health Organization) estimates, every fifth participant in the educational process who is in the zone of active hostilities has psychological health problems and assesses his condition as tense¹. A UNICEF assessment claims that about one and a half million children in Ukraine are exposed to anxiety, psychological disorders and depression, who are either already or in a few years will be students of higher education at higher education institutions. In turn, the indicators of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine indicate that as of 2024, about 15 million citizens in Ukraine need psychological help, including participants in the educational process².

The security factor also led to the internal displacement of higher education institutions. In particular, since 2014, 29 institutions of higher education and 64 separate structural subdivisions of higher education institutions have been moved in different regions of Ukraine due to the security factor³.

The war had a negative impact on the number of higher education institutions, the number of scientific and pedagogical workers and the contingent of applicants. It should be noted that from 2014 to today, the number of higher education institutions of state and private forms of ownership in Ukraine gradually decreased (Fig. 2). In the 2024–2025 academic year, their number was 265 units, which is 60% less than in the 2014–2015 academic year.

¹ Новак Т. В., Ярошук М. В. Психологічний супровід учасників освітнього процесу в реаліях війни в Україні. *Науковий вісник Кременецької обласної гуманітарно-педагогічної академії імені Тараса Шевченка. Серія: Педагогічні науки*. 2023. № 17. С. 161–169. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/2410-2075-2023-17.20>

² Спіріна Т. П., Лехолетова М. М., Пінчук Є. О. Психосоціальна підтримка учасників освітнього процесу в кризових умовах. *Social Work and Education*. 2025. № 3 (12). С. 463–476. DOI: 10.25128/2520-6230.25.3.14

³ Батрак О. В., Тарасенко О. С. Особливості формування потенціалу закладів вищої освіти України в умовах війни та післявоєнному періоді. *Економіка та суспільство*. 2023. № 53. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.32782/2524-0072/2023-53-1>

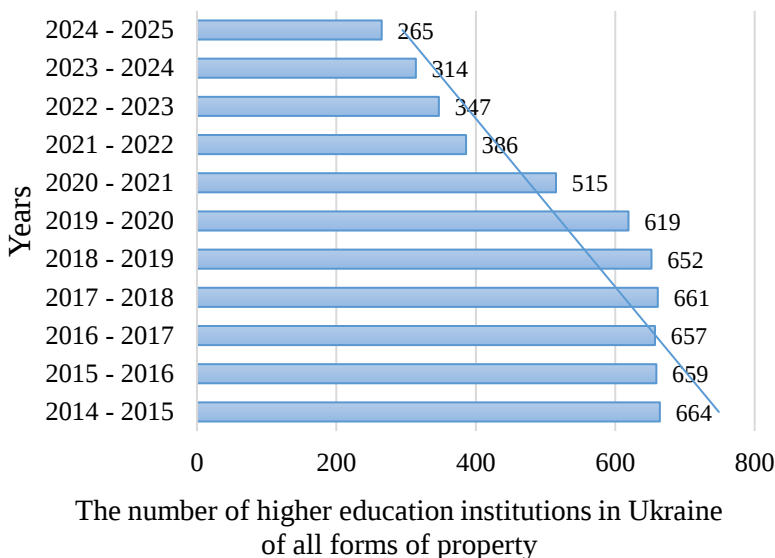


Fig. 2. Dynamics of the amount of higher education institutions in Ukraine¹

It is appropriate to note that a amount of reasons contributed to the decrease in the number of higher education institutions in Ukraine, including: their cessation of activity and unification; the occupation of a significant amount of Ukrainian territory and the decrease in the number of applicants, associated with migrations and a decrease in the birth rate².

During the period from 2014 to 2024, the number of students of higher education in higher education institutions also decreased (Fig. 3). Thus, in 2014–2015, their number was 1689226 people,

¹ Вища освіта України в умовах воєнного стану та широкомасштабної війни, післявоєнного відновлення: виклики та перспективи. МОН України. URL: https://erasmusplus.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/1_vynnyczkyj-sharov-bolonska-konferencziya-2024-11-07.pdf (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

² Холявко Н. І., Самойлович А. Г. Концептуальна модель повоєнного відновлення прикордонних університетів України за концепцією сталого розвитку. *Економіка і організація управління*. 2025. № 3 (59). С. 107–122. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31558/2307-2318.2025.3.10>

and in 2023–2024 academic year 1148658. Accordingly, over the past 10 years, their number has decreased by 32%.

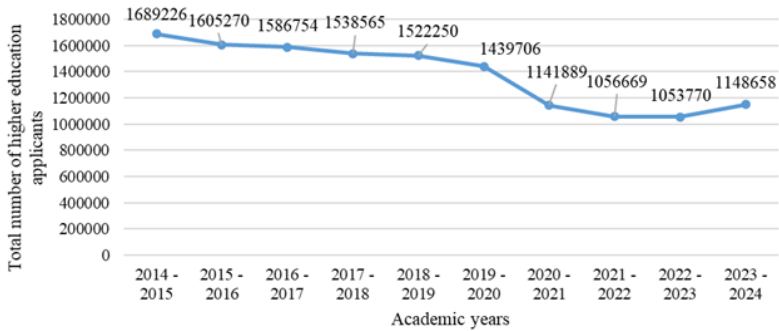


Fig. 3. Dynamics of the number of higher education students in Ukraine ¹.

According to the statistical indicators of the World Bank, as of May 2022, 3,840 scientific and pedagogical workers of Ukraine have left for other countries. Also, at the end of 2022, 25,000 educational students left the borders of Ukraine and about 665,000 students of higher education and students².

In Ukraine, the number of scientific-pedagogical, scientific and pedagogical workers for the period 2019–2024 has significantly decreased (Fig. 4). And this is due not only to the war, but also to the difficulty of obtaining scientific degrees, the decrease in the number of higher education institutions and the number of higher education students, and migrations. From fig. 4. It can be seen that from 2019 to 2024, the number of scientific and pedagogical workers in higher education institutions of Ukraine gradually decreased and during the time period decreased by approximately 26.2%.

¹ Вища освіта України в умовах воєнного стану та широкомасштабної війни, післявоєнного відновлення: виклики та перспективи. МОН України. URL: https://erasmusplus.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/1_vynnyczykj-sharov-bolonska-konferencziya-2024-11-07.pdf (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

² Education: Impact of the War in Ukraine. Світовий Банк. Аналітичний звіт. 2022. URL: https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-impact-war-ukrainemay-2022?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwjY64BhCaARIsAIfc7Yax8l1NLEkog7HXCEo2jRrc0eUmGxW9J4qdiQqohfQjfkmlwQqHLsgsaAgaSEALw_wcB (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

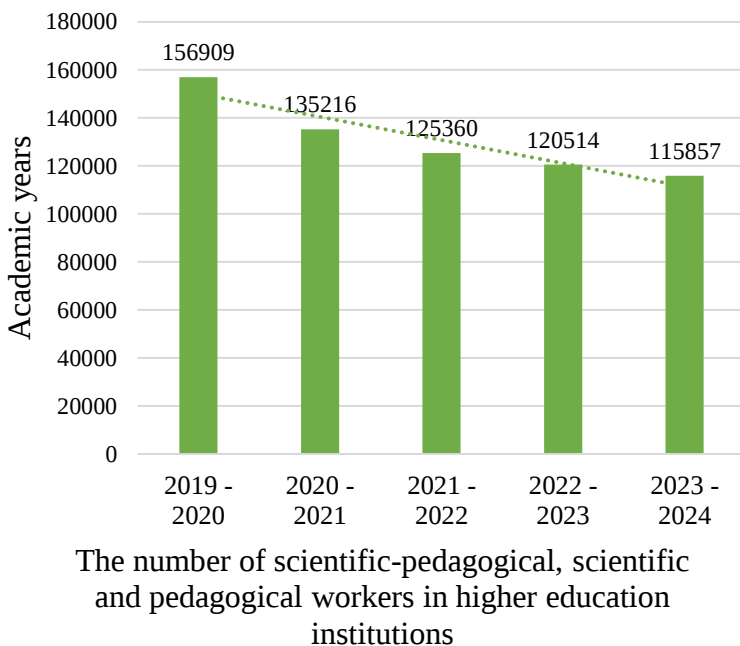
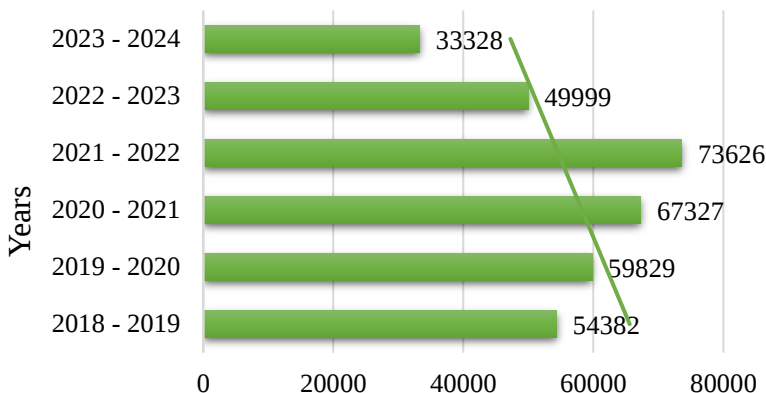


Fig. 4. Dynamics of the number of scientific-pedagogical, scientific and pedagogical workers in higher education institutions of Ukraine¹.

It should be emphasized that a significant number of foreign students are also studying in Ukraine, but given the martial law, their number has also decreased (Fig. 5). In particular, these are young people from Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia, China, Turkmenistan, Nigeria, Morocco and India. Given the fact that admission is relatively easy for foreigners in Ukraine, Ukrainian education is of high quality, and Ukrainian diplomas are recognized in them in countries that attracted them in the pre-war period of higher education institutions of Ukraine. At the same time, the security situation radically changed the existing positive situation with foreigners. In

¹ Вища освіта України в умовах воєнного стану та широкомасштабної війни, післявоєнного відновлення: виклики та перспективи. МОН України. URL: https://erasmusplus.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/1_vynnyczykj-sharov-bolonska-konferencziya-2024-11-07.pdf (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

addition to the security situation, there are a number of factors that adversely affected the entry of foreigners, in particular: strengthening the role of intermediaries during admission; complex process of registration of documents for admission; the complexity of the process of integration into the educational process¹.



The number of students of higher education from other countries, foreigners studying at higher education institutions of Ukraine

Fig. 5. Dynamics of the number of students of higher education-foreigners studying at higher education institutions of Ukraine²

The war in Ukraine caused a decrease in funding for all sectors, including education. As of 2022, about 20% of higher education institutions of Ukraine had problems with salary payments, 27% did not fully pay scholarships to higher education students, and 30% of higher education institutions lost income from the contract form of education. During the period from 2018 to 2023, expendi-

¹ Вища освіта України в умовах воєнного стану та широкомасштабної війни, післявоєнного відновлення: виклики та перспективи. МОН України. URL: https://erasmusplus.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/1_vynnyczkyj-sharov-bolonska-konferencziya-2024-11-07.pdf (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

² Вища освіта України в умовах воєнного стану та широкомасштабної війни, післявоєнного відновлення: виклики та перспективи. МОН України. URL: https://erasmusplus.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/1_vynnyczkyj-sharov-bolonska-konferencziya-2024-11-07.pdf (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

tures of the consolidated budget for education also decreased, the trend can be seen in Figure 6.

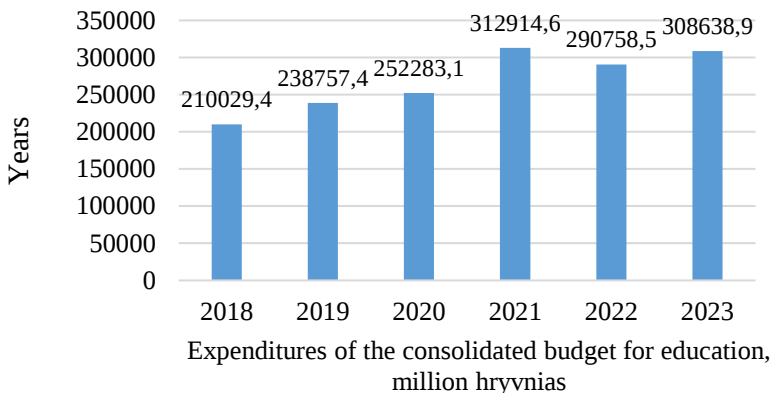


Fig. 6. Dynamics of consolidated budget expenditures for education, million hryvnias^{1, 2}

At the same time, the share of consolidated budget expenditures on education in total expenditures decreased several times – in 2018 it was 17% and in 2023 it was only 7%.

2. Priorities and prospects for the development of higher education in Ukraine in the context of integration into the European space and post-war recovery

In the context of the current state and future post-war recovery, it is important in the system of higher education to solve the consequences of the war, in particular: restoration of educational infrastructure; increasing the contingent of higher education applicants; implementation of favorable conditions for the return of scientific-

¹ Education: Impact of the War in Ukraine. Світовий Банк. Аналітичний звіт. 2022. URL: https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-impact-war-ukrainemay-2022?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwjY64BhCaARIsAIfc7Yax8l1NLEkog7HXCEo2jRrc0eUmGxW9J4qdiQqohfQjfkmgwQqHLSgsaAgaSEALw_wcB (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

² Міністерство фінансів України. URL: <https://index.minfin.com.ua/ua/finance/> (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

pedagogical, scientific and pedagogical personnel in higher education institutions of Ukraine¹.

At the same time, in accordance with the challenges of martial law and in the context of Ukraine's integration into the EU and the European Higher Education Area, important strategic guidelines for the development of higher education are: internationalization; digital integration; improvement of the quality of education; financial efficiency and autonomy; accessibility of education and its inclusiveness.

According to the recommendations of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine «The vision of the future of education and science» in Ukraine should be the following priorities of activity: support of teachers; ensuring inclusiveness in the educational environment; gradual integration into the international educational space; effective management and autonomy; improving the quality of higher education². These orientations are reflected in more detail in Figure 7.

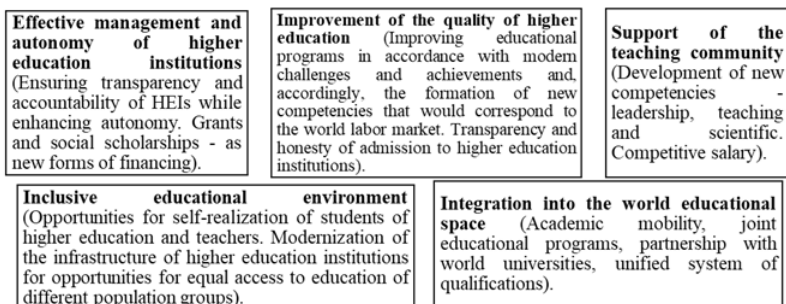


Fig. 7. The main educational orientations of activity in higher education of Ukraine

¹ Артерчук А. О., Мних О. Б., Садова У. Я. Дуальна освіта та повоєнне відновлення України: чинники, моделі, європейський досвід. *Трансформаційна економіка*. 2024. № 3 (08). С. 83–88. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/2786-8141/2024-8-12>

² Візія майбутнього освіти і науки України. *Міністерство освіти і науки України*. URL: <https://mon.gov.ua/viziya-maybutnogo-osviti-i-nauki-ukraini> (дата звернення: 09.02.2026)

The main goal of «Vision of the future of education and science of Ukraine» is to ensure optimal opportunities for the development of scientific innovations, the quality of education and self-realization of every citizen and their maximum approximation to world-class standards.

It should be noted that in the context of Ukraine's integration into the European educational space, compliance with educational guidelines and implementation of sustainable development goals in the educational process are quite important, relevant, and in the context of future post-war development, necessary and timely solutions¹. In today's conditions, according to the available latest Reports of the European Commission on Ukraine's preparation for joining the EU, problematic issues in the field of higher education of Ukraine remain unresolved, in particular:

- ✓ low level of modernisation of educational and scientific infrastructure, which is associated with insufficient financial provision;
- ✓ limited level of integration of science with education;
- ✓ insufficient level of accessibility of higher education for different population groups;
- ✓ low level of Ukraine's involvement in global scientific and educational activities;
- ✓ insufficient level of digitalisation of higher education, which is associated with insufficient level of development of the technological base;
- ✓ departure of a large number of scientific and pedagogical personnel abroad;
- ✓ problems with implementing the optimum number of educational reforms that are linked to martial law issues.

The post-war recovery of educational and scientific activities in Ukraine should be aimed at ensuring stable and effective indicators of its development. The prerequisites for such a recovery are effective international support, an end to the military conflict, reforms and a slow recovery of national economic growth indicators. At the

¹ Бульвінська О., Калінічева Г. І. Роль вищої освіти в розвитку цінностей об'єднаної Європи під час повоєнного відновлення України. *Проблеми освіти*. 2023. № 2. С. 24-43. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52256/2710-3986.2-99.2023.02>

same time, realistic indicators of the recovery of the educational sector in the context of post-war development can be¹:

1. creation of favourable conditions for the return of educational and scientific personnel to Ukraine;

2. creation of conditions for Ukraine's participation in European scientific and educational programs;

3. gradual restoration of scientific and educational facilities of Ukraine, benchmark – at least 50 %;

4. the growth of public spending on science and education and the gradual step-by-step increase in wages in this field;

5. involvement of world donors in recovery processes.

It should be noted that along with the restoration of the educational and scientific infrastructure and financial support of higher education in Ukraine, it is important to implement open science procedures and policies as important priorities of Ukraine's research potential. The leading aspects of the development of educational and scientific potential in institutions of higher education can be the combined positive experience of the European countries of the world, which can be based on the comprehensive implementation of the following components in the educational process^{2, 3}:

- the development of dual education, where the emphasis on cooperation between HEIs and employers, the combination of educational activities with internships and the expansion of professional contacts is important;

- creation of joint production and educational centers on the basis of higher education institutions, which will enable students of

¹ Житар М. Трансформація вищої освіти в період війни та післявоєнного відновлення: ризики, виклики та стратегічні орієнтири. *Європейський науковий журнал Економічних та Фінансових інновацій*. 2025. № 1 (15). С. 450–461. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.32750/2025-0140>

² Аверчев О. В., Гончарова О. В. Ключові аспекти реалізації освітнього процесу та євроінтеграції в аграрних ЗВО півдня України. *Таврійський науковий вісник. Серія: Сільськогосподарські науки*. 2025. № 143. Ч. 1. С. 3–11. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/2226-0099.2025.143.1.1>

³ Honcharova O. V., Burhaz M. I., Melnychenko S. H. Tiligul estuary: an object of a research platform for masters of aquatic bioresources and aquaculture in southern Ukraine. *Водні біоресурси та аквакультура*. 2025. № 2 (18). С. 180–190. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/wba.2025.2.10>

higher education to interact with business and open up promising opportunities for further employment;

- creation of research clusters at higher education institutions that will involve innovative projects and business and ensure cooperation of higher education applicants with scientists;

- implementation of innovative educational environments that will contribute to the development of digital skills and allow remote management of educational processes;

- implementation of double diplomas, which will ensure integration into the European space for stakeholders, international mobility of higher education applicants, internationalization of education and participation in global grant programs.

Under the conditions of a comprehensive approach of each of the sectors, including the representation of the scientific and educational community, there are all prerequisites for ensuring the stability and high quality of higher education, the formation of an effective strategy for its post-war recovery. And internationalization activities will strengthen the Ukrainian system of higher education and science and contribute to the dynamic integration of Ukrainian innovative developments into the European space with equal partnership.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the war in Ukraine became a factor in the transformation of the higher education system. The main changes consist in the transformation of the formats of the educational process, the reduction of the number of institutions of higher education, the reduction of the number of students of higher education, pedagogical and scientific-pedagogical workers, and the deterioration of the financial and security conditions of their educational activities. The conducted research shows that security risks, a high level of psychological burden on the participants of the educational process, relocation of higher education institutions and distance and mixed learning formats have a cumulative effect that negatively affects the quality of specialist training, academic motivation and socialization processes of higher education applicants. Statistical data indicate a significant reduction in the quantitative indicators of the higher education system, which, in combination with personnel losses and

a decrease in state funding, creates systemic problems of reproduction of human capital and scientific potential of Ukraine.

It should be noted that the higher education system of Ukraine shows adaptation potential and can become an important factor influencing post-war recovery and European integration. The implementation of strategic development guidelines related to digitalization, internationalization, increasing the autonomy of higher education institutions, integration of education and science and implementation of the principles of sustainable development is an essential condition for overcoming the consequences of war. A comprehensive approach to the restoration of educational and scientific infrastructure, the return and support of personnel potential, the involvement of international assistance creates prerequisites for the formation of a stable, competitive system of higher education, capable of providing training of specialists at the level of standards of the European educational space and promoting the sustainable socio-economic development of Ukraine.

ABSTRACT

The impact of the war on the state and functioning of the higher education system of Ukraine is comprehensively considered, in particular, emphasis is placed on educational, personnel, financial, psychosocial and security factors. The change in the formats of the educational process is considered, in particular, the transition from off-line to online and mixed forms of education under the conditions of regional influence, differences in the possibilities of providing face-to-face education. Statistical information on various educational aspects was analyzed, in particular, the number of higher education institutions and higher education applicants, the number of scientific and pedagogical workers and foreign applicants, and their dynamics during the war. The problems of psychological well-being of participants in the educational process, relocation of higher education institutions and reduction of the level of financial support of the industry are considered. The consequences of long-term online education for the quality of specialist training, academic motivation and socialization of higher education applicants are analyzed. The relationship between security conditions, personnel losses and the quality of education as long-term risks for the human capital of the state is revealed. The strategic orientations

of the development of higher education in the context of European integration, digital transformation and compliance with the goals of sustainable development are outlined. Emphasis is placed on the priorities of post-war restoration of educational and scientific infrastructure, return of personnel potential and improvement of autonomy of higher education institutions. Emphasis is placed on the need for a comprehensive approach to the formulation of a recovery strategy that will integrate international support, public policies and the institutional capacity of higher education institutions.

АНОТАЦІЯ

Комплексно розглянуто вплив війни на стан та функціонування системи вищої освіти України, зокрема зроблено акцент на освітніх, кадрових, фінансових, психосоціальних та безпекових чинниках. Розглянуто зміну форматів провадження освітнього процесу, зокрема перехід від очного до дистанційного та змішаного навчання та регіональні відмінності у можливостях забезпечення очної освіти. Проаналізовано статистичну інформацію щодо різних освітніх аспектів, зокрема кількості закладів вищої освіти та здобувачів вищої освіти, кількості науково-педагогічних працівників та іноземних здобувачів та їхню динаміку за часи війни. Розглянуто проблеми психологічного благополуччя учасників освітнього процесу, релокації закладів вищої освіти та зниження рівня фінансового забезпечення галузі. Проаналізовано наслідки тривалого онлайнового навчання для якості підготовки фахівців, академічної мотивації та соціалізації здобувачів вищої освіти. Розкрито взаємозв'язок між безпековими умовами, кадровими втратами та якістю освіти як довгостроковими ризиками для людського капіталу держави. Окреслено стратегічні орієнтири розвитку вищої освіти в контексті євроінтеграції, цифрової трансформації та дотримання цілей сталого розвитку. Зроблено акцент на пріоритетах післявоєнного відновлення освітньої та наукової інфраструктури, повернення кадрового потенціалу та підвищення автономії закладів вищої освіти. Наголошено на необхідності комплексного підходу до формування стратегії відновлення, який буде об'єднувати міжнародну підтримку, державну політику та інституційну спроможність закладів вищої освіти.

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SCIENCE AND EDUCATION IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR: THE ROLE OF UKRAINIAN STUDIES IN EXPOSING RUSSIAN FALSIFICATIONS AND MYTHS

Fihurnyi Y. S.

INTRODUCTION

On February 24, 2026, the fourth year of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war ended and the fifth year began its countdown, and if we count from February 2014, then the thirteenth year of war began. But this chronology is somewhat incomplete, since this is not an ordinary military conflict, but an existential confrontation between the Ukrainian democratic tradition and Russian imperialism. Now, the aggressor country has once again decided to test the ability of the Ukrainian state to preserve its own sovereignty, remain an independent subject of international relations, and guarantee its citizens stable political, economic, social, and ethnocultural development under martial law.

The full-scale aggression of rashists has become a huge test for Ukraine and Ukrainians, as the enemy is trying to finally destroy the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian political nation both on the battlefield and in the information and humanitarian space. Therefore, Ukrainian scientists need to update their research aimed at studying the state and prospects for the development of science, education, and culture in Ukraine, as well as preserving historical memory and national identity in order to accelerate victory over the enemy. In the terrible conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the Ukrainian government and civil society use various factors, including military, diplomatic, economic, financial, informational, cultural, humanitarian, etc., to stabilize and strengthen national security.

Despite their specificity, science and education in Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war are gaining significant importance, as they de jure and de facto respond to challenges and perform important tasks in the context of national security and the post-war reconstruction of the Ukrainian state. Among the various humanities, in our opinion, Ukrainian studies has great potential. Ukrainian studies is, first of all, an interdisciplinary integrative

science, a comprehensive educational discipline, and has the potential to become a significant element of the national ideology of the Ukrainian state. Ukrainian studies as an interdisciplinary science and educational discipline, at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, actively forms a Ukraine-centric humanitarian and information space, really contributes to strengthening national security, establishing Ukrainian national identity in Ukraine and beyond, thereby actualizing Ukrainian statehood, nation-building, ethnic formation, and ethnic-culture formation. Ukrainian studies also help refute Russian myths, fakes, and falsifications of Ukrainian history, with the help of which the enemy is trying to divide Ukrainian society, contribute to the consolidation of the Ukrainian political nation, and bring victory over the aggressor closer. Therefore, the active involvement of Ukrainian studies in the scientific and educational space of the Ukrainian state will help to successfully protect national security and significantly strengthen Ukrainian national identity in Ukraine and abroad (especially among Ukrainian refugees and the diaspora), thereby contributing to its functioning and sustainable development in the Third Millennium.

1. The formation and development of modern Ukrainian studies, an interdisciplinary integrative science and educational discipline

Ukrainian studies, according to P. Kononenko (the creator of modern Ukrainian studies and founder of the Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies), is a complex system of scientific integrative knowledge about Ukraine and world Ukrainians as a whole, as a geopolitical reality, developing in the inseparability and interconnection of space and time. This interdisciplinary, integrative science consists of the following main elements (concentrates): Ukraine – ethnos; Ukraine – nature, ecology; Ukraine – language; Ukraine – nation, state; Ukraine – culture, material and spiritual; education, art, literature, philosophy, religion, economics, law, valeology, science, army; Ukraine in international relations; Ukraine – mentality, destiny; Ukraine – historical mission. P. Kononenko emphasized that the main task of Ukrainian studies is not only the comprehensive revival of

historical memory, but also the creation, on the basis of the lessons of the past, of prerequisites for a comprehensive understanding of the pressing problems of the present and the determination of further prospects and ways to achieve the goal of Ukraine and world Ukrainianism in the near and distant future¹.

One of the first to introduce the term «Ukrainian Studies» into scientific circulation was S. Yefremov in the early 1920s, who published the bibliographic index «Ukrainian Studies» in Kyiv in 1920. He described the main task and leading direction of the promising science about Ukraine and Ukrainians as follows: «The time has come for sober work, and for it, first of all, scientific tools and those solid foundations that provide positive knowledge from all areas of what, in a broad sense, constitutes the science about our native land – Ukrainian studies».

The defeat of the Ukrainian Revolution and the national liberation struggles of 1917–1921 had a very negative impact on the institutionalization of Ukrainian studies. This was facilitated by the so-called «Ukrainization» of the 1920s and early 1930s (this is an element of the indigenization process carried out by the Bolsheviks to actualize their own leading party and economic nomenclature in areas of compact settlement of non-Russian peoples). Although it initially provided some impetus for the development of education, science, and culture in Ukrainian lands, however, over time, determined by the party leadership from above, Ukrainization transformed, or rather degenerated, into a wave of Stalinist repressions against Soviet Ukraine and the Ukrainians who lived on its territory. Ukrainian artists are a vivid example of the so-called «executed revival», and it is difficult to write about how many educators and scientists were destroyed, but it is necessary that these tragic pages of our past never be repeated².

During World War II (1939–1945), Ukrainians again waged an armed struggle for the Ukrainian Independent United State. The fighters and officers of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, Ukrainian nationalists, sacrificially defended their ideals in the struggle. Although Stalin's totalitarian system defeated them, it could not over-

¹ Kononenko P. P. *Ukrainian Studies. Textbook for Higher Educational Institutions*. Kyiv: Millennium, 2006. P. 17, 24.

² Fihurnyi Yu. Petro Kononenko – the creator of modern Ukrainian studies. *The founder of modern Ukrainian studies-Ukrainianism*. Kyiv, 2021. P. 38.

come their victorious spirit. At a time when Ukrainian rebels, with weapons in their hands, fought for Freedom and Liberty, Ukrainian scientists, who were forced to emigrate from their native homeland, began their struggle for the Ukrainian cause. Thus, outside Ukraine, patriotic scientists led by Volodymyr Kubyiovych and Zynovy Kuzely began publishing a multi-volume «Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies»¹.

In the editorial, they noted: «The «Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies» is based on those eternal ideals that formed the basis of our worldview and our culture, its approach is based on idealistic-Christian principles and state traditions, and therefore it has a scientific, objectively valuable character, providing the most important information from various areas of Ukrainian studies»².

From the late 1940s to almost the mid-1990s, the «Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies» became an important source of knowledge about Ukraine, Ukrainians, and global Ukrainianism as a holistic geopolitical and geocultural reality of the 20th century. The editors of this important Ukrainian study are extremely right-wing, who emphasized: «The «Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies» is also important from the point of view of promoting the Ukrainian name abroad. Meeting strangers encourages each of us to inform them about our country; to do this, we sometimes need to refresh our knowledge. In addition, the appearance of the «Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies» is to some extent a matter of our national prestige, proof of our value before the cultural world. Finally, the «Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies» should directly inform foreigners about our country»³.

Over time, when the totalitarian regime began to degrade, the conceptual ideas of Ukrainian studies began to be actively promoted and developed by Ukrainian Soviet scholars in the late 80s and early 90s of the 20th century, but were actually implemented only in independent Ukraine.

Since 1991, Ukrainian studies have been actively developing as an interdisciplinary science and educational discipline. Within the

¹ Fihurnyi Y. Petro Kononenko – the creator of modern Ukrainian studies. *Founder of modern Ukrainian studies-Ukrainianism*. Kyiv, 2021. P. 39.

² *Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies*: in 2 vols. / ed. by V. Kubyiovych, Z. Kuzel. Munich; New York., 1949. Vol. 1. P. 5.

³ *Ibid.*

structure of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Ivan Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies was established in Lviv and began active research work.

In early 1992, the Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the Taras Shevchenko Kyiv State University was founded in Kyiv, which in 2000 was reformatted into the Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and in 2024, after the fourth reorganization, it returned to the Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University. Departments of Ukrainian studies were opened in many universities and institutes of Ukraine, and in secondary educational institutions Ukrainian studies were taught as an invariant and variable educational discipline. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, Ukrainian studies as an educational discipline and a complex integrative science began to rapidly lose its position in the educational and humanitarian space of Ukraine. All this resulted in the fact that pro-Russian and anti-Ukrainian narratives began to prevail in many spheres of state, social, civic, and cultural activity. They caused extremely great harm to the educational, linguistic, cultural and general human legitimate needs of citizens of the Ukrainian state, significantly weakened the national security of Ukraine and the national identity of Ukrainians¹.

Ukrainian national identity is a combination of worldviews, views, concepts, and ideas regarding the basic interests of the Ukrainian nation and the search for effective means and ways to ensure them. Ukrainian national identity is a long-term process of the Ukrainian people's awareness of their belonging to European civilization and the Ukrainian political nation through nationalization, deprivation of the colonial inferiority complex (Little Russianism), and the final destruction of the vestiges of the totalitarian era. The essence of Ukrainian national identity lies in a complex combination of innate and acquired traits, mythologized ideas and real images, and its main component is the conscious, rational choice of a Ukrainian citizen, which is based on national

¹ Fihurnyi Yu., Shakurova O. The Role of Ukrainian Studies in Ukraine's National Security and Exposing Russian Fakes. *SKHID (EAST)*. 2025. Vol.7. Issue 3. P. 12.

consciousness, political will, political culture, citizenship and national-patriotic position¹.

Therefore, the actualization of Ukrainian studies will contribute to the intensification of the national-patriotic education of Ukrainian citizens, which in turn will significantly strengthen national security and Ukrainian national identity in Ukraine and beyond.

2. Regularities and features of informational and ideological confrontation with the aggressor

With the restoration of its independence in 1991 and for a fairly long period, Ukraine and Ukrainians remained in the post-Soviet informational, humanitarian, political, economic, spiritual, financial, military, historical, educational, and cultural space that the Russian authorities tried to control. The Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the RF) sought to stop Ukraine's movement towards a European democratic community and direct its vector towards Eurasian political, economic, and humanitarian projects. The slowdown of Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic integration course has led to the stifling of reforms. Russian ideologues have tried to spiritually enslave Ukrainians, systematically using information and propaganda narratives to do so.

V. Putin personally initiated the process of developing and forming a new ideology that would help restore the newest modernized Russian superpower. It was the «Russian world» that was to become such an ideological doctrine or its important component².

In 2006, a discussion was held in the RF on the problems of its strategic development. Many politicians and experts participated in it. Russian Presidential Aide V. Surkov noted regarding the basic ideological principles of the modernization of the RF: «If Russia does not create its own discourse, its own public philosophy, its

¹ Fihurnyi Yu. Ukrainian national identity. In the book: Fihurnyi Yu. S. *Cossack armed uprisings of the 20s–30s of the 17th century as an effective factor in Ukrainian ethno-state formation in the Ukrainian dimension*. Monograph and selected Ukrainian studies. Kyiv: NRIUSWH. 2012. P. 143.

² Fihurnyi Y. “Russian world” – an important factor in the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and Ukrainians. *Ukrainian Studies*. 2016. No. 3 (60). P. 45.

own ideology acceptable at least to the majority, and preferably to all our citizens (we are not talking about state ideology, but about national, although the term «national idea» is somewhat worn out and devalued), then they will not talk to us ... If we do not talk, they will not take us into account»¹.

Also, V. Surkov emphasized that the urgent task of Russian culture is to create its own system of images and meanings, this will make it possible to maintain the integrity of the nation, since it cannot hold on by administrative means alone, because only that people can live and develop organically who has a holistic idea of themselves, their essence, who they are, where they are going, for what and with what purpose².

Scientists from the National Institute for Strategic Studies note that the term «Russian world» was introduced into the broad public and political discourse of the RF by Russian President V. Putin, who, in particular, in late 2006 and early 2007, in his public speeches, addressed in detail issues related to compatriots living abroad in terms of their linguistic, cultural and civilizational unity³.

On October 24, 2006, in his welcoming speech to the participants of the World Congress of Compatriots, V. Putin stated: «This day, of course, unites not only the multinational people of Russia, but also millions of our compatriots abroad, unites the entire so-called «Russian world». We are truly one, and no borders and obstacles will hinder this unity. We have only one common goal – to make this unity even stronger»⁴.

In June 2007, in accordance with the decree of V. Putin, a non-governmental center for the support and popularization of the Russian language and culture, «Russian world», was established. The co-founders of the Foundation were the Ministry of Foreign

¹ Surkov V. Yu. Main trends and development prospects of modern Russia. Moscow: Saratov State University Publishing House, 2007. P. 40.

² Surkov V. Yu. Main trends and development prospects of modern Russia. Moscow: Saratov State University Publishing House, 2007. P. 40.

³ Ukraine and the project of the "Russian world": analytical supplement / S. I. Zdioruk, V. M. Yablonsky, V. V. Tokman [et al.]; edited by V. M. Yablonsky and S. I. Zdioruk. Kyiv: NISS, 2014. P. 12.

⁴ World Congress of Compatriots Living Abroad: Opening Remarks by Russian President Vladimir Putin at the World Congress of Compatriots Living Abroad. St. Petersburg, October 24, 2006. URL: <http://vkrsr.com/publications/vstupitelnoe-slovo-prezidenta-rossii-v-v/>

Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Science of the RF. Its main tasks were written specifically and ambitiously: ««Russian world» is not only Russians, not only our compatriots in countries of near and far abroad, emigrants, people from Russia and their descendants. These are also foreign citizens who speak Russian, who study or teach it, all those who are sincerely interested in Russia and who are concerned about its future. All layers of the Russian world – multi-ethnic, multi-confessional, socially and ideologically heterogeneous, multicultural, geographically segmented – are united through the awareness of belonging to Russia. By forming the «Russian world» as a global project, Russia finds a new identity, new opportunities for effective cooperation with the rest of the world, and additional impulses for its own development»¹.

According to these important documents, the spheres of influence of the geopolitical ideological doctrine of the «Russian world», according to the plans of its creators and providers, were to extend not only to the territories of the RF and the post-Soviet space, but also to the entire world, where ethnic Russians and so-called «Russian speakers» live. Under the cover of this quasi-cultural project, the RF began actively spreading its geopolitical, political, economic, spiritual, and cultural expansion².

With the election of Kirill (Gundyaev) as Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church (hereinafter referred to as the ROC) on February 1, 2009, the ideas of the «Russian world» acquired a so-called «sacred» sound. Thus, in the program speech of the head of the ROC at the III Assembly of the «Russian world» on November 3, 2009, it was emphasized, in particular: «The core of the Russian world today is Russia, Ukraine, Belarus. And the holy Monk Lavrenty of Chernigov expressed this idea with a famous phrase: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus - this is holy Rus'. It is this understanding of the «Russian world» that is embedded in the modern self-name of our Church. The Church is called Russian not on the basis of ethnicity. This name indicates that the Russian Orthodox Church carries out a pastoral mission among the peoples who accept the

¹ About the Foundation. Goals and objectives. Ideology. 2007. URL: <http://www.russkiymir.ru/russkiymir/ru/fund/about>

² Fihurnyi Y. The Doctrine of the “Russian World” as a Political Ideology of Russia’s Aggression against Ukraine. *Ukrainian Studies*. 2021. № 4 (81). P. 77.

Russian spiritual and cultural tradition as the basis of their national identity or at least as its essential part»¹.

In his speech, the Patriarch of the ROC outlined not only the priorities of the «Russian world», but also its basic elements of «support» – Orthodoxy, the Russian language and culture, and a common historical memory and common views on social development. In particular, he emphasized: «Finally, the third pillar of the «Russian world» is a common historical memory and common views on social development. As a result of the joint creativity of the peoples of Rus' and those who formed a single whole with them over the centuries, a way of communal living emerged that is associated with the Russian tradition throughout the world. Our peoples have a strong awareness of the continuity and succession of the Russian state and social tradition, starting from the times of Kievan Rus' and ending with present-day Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and other countries of the historical space of Rus'. Our ancestors together built and developed Rus', defended it from foreign invaders. This was the case throughout the existence of our single Fatherland, regardless of the prevailing political system»².

Using Orthodoxy, the Russian language and culture, and a common historical past (the main elements of the «Russian world»), Kremlin ideologists planned to gradually absorb Ukraine. However, the Ukrainian national revolution of the early 21st century thwarted all of V. Putin's plans, so he was forced to use, in addition to the «soft power» of the «Russian world», also «hard power» – by seizing Crimea and unleashing war in Eastern Ukraine. Thus, in February 2014, an undeclared hybrid Russian-Ukrainian war began, which is still ongoing. Despite the predominance of military, diplomatic, geopolitical, and economic factors in this conflict, the Russian leadership continues to actively use the «Russian world», believing that only the comprehensive use

¹ Address by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill at the opening ceremony of the III Assembly of the Russian world. November 3, 2009. URL: <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/928446.html>

² Address by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill at the opening ceremony of the III Assembly of the Russian world. November 3, 2009. URL: <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/928446.html>

of all means will allow them to completely defeat Ukraine and the Ukrainians¹.

So, the «Russian world» is not an ordinary cultural pseudo-liberal project that parasitizes on universal human patterns. «De jure» declares a humanitarian, geopolitical, religious, cultural and civilizational orientation to unite the entire Russian-speaking population on planet Earth for the preservation and development of the Russian language, culture, literature, science, education, traditions, etc., both in the RF itself and in the countries of the so-called «near abroad» (former Soviet republics) and «far abroad» (around the World) among the so-called Russian-speaking population, and «de facto» Putin's geopolitical doctrine is aimed at the theoretical substantiation and practical restoration of the «Great Historical Russia» within the borders of the Russian Empire in 1914. It was the «Russian world» that became a significant element of the neo-imperial political ideology – «rashism», a tool for the Russian autocratic power of «putinism» and the ideological narrative of first the hybrid Russian-Ukrainian war, and later the full-scale aggression of Russia against Ukraine.

3. The Russian-Ukrainian War: Essence, Main Stages and Challenges

The modern Russian-Ukrainian war is, first and foremost, a civilizational and existential confrontation between autocracy and democracy, between the Eurasian Russian neo-empire and the European Ukrainian state. This war is characterized by the following specific features: First, complexity – combining geopolitical, geostrategic, geoeconomic, socio-political, socio-cultural, ethno-cultural, ideological, religious, national, ethnic, territorial, economic, cultural and other factors. Secondly, by its extensiveness and intensity – for the first time since the end of World War II, hostilities of this scale are taking place on the European continent, with the use of almost all types of modern weapons (except nuclear), the length of the fronts (battle lines) is measured in thousands and tens of thousands of kilometers, the involvement of more than a million mobilized citizens in the

¹ Fihurnyi Y. The Doctrine of the “Russian World” as a Political Ideology of Russia’s Aggression against Ukraine. *Ukrainian Studies*. 2021. № 4 (81). P. 78.

fighting armies, the injection of huge financial resources into the economy, etc. Thirdly, by aggressiveness – in order to achieve their strategic goal, namely, the liquidation of the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian political nation, the rashists are pursuing a genocidal policy in Ukraine, ruthlessly destroying civilians regardless of their age, gender, religious beliefs, etc., destroying critical infrastructure, the economy, cities, villages, kidnapping children, and generally doing everything possible to force Ukrainians to capitulate.

The main prerequisite for the current Russian-Ukrainian war, in our opinion, was the consistent policy of the RF aimed at the complete destruction of Ukrainian statehood and Ukrainian national identity. Starting in 1991, the Russian authorities strongly supported the so-called pro-Russian «fifth column» and purposefully destroyed the unity of pro-Ukrainian forces. It seemed that under the presidency of V. Yanukovych, Ukraine would finally lose its own subjectivity, stop moving towards the European Union (hereinafter referred to as the EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (hereinafter referred to as NATO), and join the RF as an autonomous state. However, the Ukrainian National Revolution of the early 21st century became a turning point for the state-building, nation-building and ethno-cultural development of Ukraine. The passionate part of the Ukrainian people managed to repel the offensive of the revanchist pro-Russian forces in Ukraine. The Eurasian integration processes, to which the Russian authorities actively tried to involve the Ukrainian state during 2010–2014, were stopped, and the Euro-Atlantic vector of the development of Ukrainian society again became dominant. For the Russian neo-imperial establishment, these revolutionary events became an existential challenge to which it had to respond. However, if at the turn of 2004–2005, Russian revanchists limited themselves exclusively to moral and financial assistance to their puppets in Ukraine, then the fateful events of the Ukrainian winter of 2013–2014 were met by the rashists and their proxies prepared, and on February 20, 2014, an undeclared Russian-Ukrainian hybrid war began, which continues to this day. Its course can be conditionally divided into the following main stages: 1) the annexation of Crimea (February – March 2014); 2) the «Novorossiia» project (April – July 2014); 3) covert military aggression of the RF against Ukraine (July 2014 – February 2015); 4) stabilization of the front line in eastern Ukraine,

permanent combat clashes in the most important areas of the confrontation and continuous disguised military and open information aggression of the RF (February 2015 – February 2022); 5) full-scale invasion of the Armed Forces of the RF (hereinafter referred to as the AF RF) from the north, east and south into the territory of Ukraine (24.02.2022 – to date).

First, the rashists occupied Crimea, launched anti-Ukrainian activities in the East and South of Ukraine (the so-called «Russian Spring»), created terrorist quasi-state entities in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the so-called «Donetsk People's Republic» (hereinafter – «DPR») and «Luhansk People's Republic» (hereinafter – «LPR»), and introduced Russian occupation military units into Ukrainian territory.

In turn, pro-Ukrainian forces managed to unite and, thanks to a powerful voluntary and volunteer movement, stopped the Russian invaders and their proxy terrorists. Although, tactically, the Russian revanchist forces achieved some successes in Ukraine (the seizure of Crimea, the creation of the terrorist enclaves of the «DPR» and «LPR», etc.), strategically the Russians lost, since the Ukrainian state survived, and the Ukrainian political nation became a fait accompli.

If in 2014, at a critical time for the state, it was the Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the AFU) with the help of the National Guard of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the NGU) and volunteer military formations, the so-called «dobrobats», that stopped the offensive of the Russians and their proxies, then already in late February and early March 2022, the Territorial Defense Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine supported the soldiers of the AFU and NGU and thwarted the aggressor's plans to capture Kyiv in 3 days and finally buried the dreams of the rashists regarding the lightning-fast liquidation of the Ukrainian state and the extermination of the Ukrainian political nation.

Overall, the military campaign of the Defense Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the DFU) in 2022 was generally successful. Initially, the so-called «Putin's blitzkrieg» was stopped. Despite some successes of the AF RF in the first half of 2022, the DFU managed to stabilize the line of combat contact, accumulate military potential and in the second half of 2022, launch a successful counteroffensive. The DFU successfully conducted two counterof-

fensives – the September Kharkiv and the summer-autumn Kherson. As a result, almost the entire Mykolaiv, Kharkiv and right-bank part of the Kherson regions with Kherson were liberated.

The enemy managed to stop the Ukrainian counteroffensive only by mobilizing over 500,000 of its citizens into the AF RF and straining its own military resources.

2023 was supposed to be the year of Ukraine's final victory, the liberation of temporarily occupied territories, including Crimea, and the entry of the DFU to the borders of Ukraine in 1991. The reality turned out to be different. Why did this happen: 1) Mistakes were made when planning the military campaign; instead of one main offensive, three were planned (on the cities of Tokmak, Berdyansk, and Bakhmut). Such a dispersion of forces helped the AF RF prepare powerful lines of defense and stop the summer counteroffensive of the DFU. 2) Ukraine's economy was not rebuilt on «military rails». 3) Ukraine's partner states did not want the RF to lose completely; they feared the Kremlin's possible use of nuclear weapons and the possible collapse of the RF, so they supplied high-quality weapons slowly and in insufficient quantities, and the issue of strengthening Ukrainian aviation with modern F-16 aircraft was postponed to 2024. 4) the Russian authorities have worked quite successfully on their mistakes, the military-industrial complex has operated at full capacity, and due to the huge financial revenues from the sale of energy resources, the economy, banking sector, and society have not felt the full burden of Western sanctions and have continued to develop more or less stably. 5) Ukrainian civil society, after the shocking events of 2022, in 2023 was lulled by politicians' speeches about the victorious counteroffensive of the DFU, which would finally destroy the occupiers, and was unable to solve the problems of mobilization.

Despite all these problems, in 2023, the DFU stopped the offensives of the AF RF on the cities of Vugledar, Chasiv Yar, Kupiansk, Lyman, Avdiivka, successfully advanced in the Zaporizhia direction, created a number of bridgeheads on the left bank of the Kherson region, and ousted the Russian fleet from the Western Black Sea theater of operations. In order for 2024 to become a turning point, it was necessary to: 1) wage war not symmetrically, but asymmetrically; 2) transfer the economy exclusively to servicing the DFU, significantly increase the

production of Ukrainian weapons, both high-precision and conventional, in order to destroy the enemy and its military potential on an industrial scale; 3) create a clear strategy for victory, protect human potential in every way and actively apply modern innovative means of warfare; 4) adopt the enemy's know-how, build powerful lines of fortifications, and if necessary, be able to switch to defense to destroy the military resource of the AF RF; 5) consolidate the Ukrainian political nation and significantly strengthen the national-patriotic education of citizens of the Ukrainian state, using for this purpose Ukraine-centric humanitarian policy in general and Ukrainian studies in particular.

Unfortunately, not all of these tasks were implemented by the authorities and society. The military campaign of the DFU in 2024 was strategically successful, despite the fact that the enemy had tactical advances in some areas of the front. The main result of 2024 is that Ukraine survived and systematically prepared for the de-occupation of the territories temporarily captured by the aggressor.

On October 10, 2023, the AF RF launched their counteroffensive near Avdiivka, which later developed into a frontal offensive along most of the front line. During this time, the enemy captured the Avdiivka and Vugledar fortified areas, launched a surprise offensive on May 10, 2024, and attempted to create a bridgehead (the so-called «buffer zone») in the north of the Kharkiv region, and conducted active offensive operations in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, with the aim of inflicting heavy losses and ultimately destroying the DFU.

Temporary failures of the DFU are directly and indirectly related to the following factors: 1) external and international, as a result of inter-party struggle in the United States of America (hereinafter referred to as the USA), for almost six months (from the end of 2023 to mid-2024), American military assistance to Ukraine was provided in meager quantities, and other partner countries were unable or unwilling to increase it. 2) intra-Ukrainian, only from May 18, 2024, the Law of Ukraine «On Mobilization Training and Mobilization», which is very important for the DFU, came into effect, which, although it significantly improved mobilization issues, could not fully contribute to replenishing the ranks of the DFU with motivated and trained soldiers, while at the front the

problem of replenishment and rotation of personnel of units remains very relevant.

The Kursk offensive operation of the DFU, which began on August 6, 2024 and ended in the spring of 2025, once again demonstrated the high level of planning of the military leadership and high-quality professional training of Ukrainian soldiers. In conducting modern maneuver warfare, the Ukrainian army has no equal, everything rests only on resources – human and material.

On October 16, 2024, during a speech in parliament, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky unveiled the Victory Plan. It consists of five points (geopolitical, two military, economic and security, and three secret annexes): 1) inviting Ukraine to NATO, which could become the foundation for peace and evidence for the Russian dictator-autocrat that his geopolitics towards the Ukrainian state has suffered a crushing defeat; 2) defense of Ukraine, continuation of DFU operations on enemy territory; 3) deterrence of the AF RF, Ukraine proposes to deploy a comprehensive non-nuclear strategic deterrence package on its territory, which will be sufficient to protect the country from the enemy; 4) using Ukraine's powerful economic potential for the needs of strategic partners; 5) security, involving in the post-war period Ukrainian units of the DFU, which have gained real experience of modern warfare, in ensuring peace in Europe and beyond¹.

The military campaign of the DFU in 2025 was strategically successful, despite the fact that the aggressor had an advance on some sections of the front line. The most important result of 2025 is that the Ukrainian state has survived, the DFU has preserved its combat capability, is accumulating material and human resources, and is consistently preparing for the de-occupation of the territories temporarily captured by the enemy. The aggressor country's accumulation of vast resources allowed the Russians to attack the DFU positions along most of the front line. In the first half of 2025, the AF RF, with the help of an expeditionary military contingent from totalitarian North Korea, gradually pushed the DFU out of the Kursk region of the RF. Somewhat later, the AF RF launched an

¹ The victory plan consists of five points and three secret annexes. October 16, 2024. Official website of the President of Ukraine. <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/plan-peremogi-skladayetsya-z-pyati-punktiv-i-troh-tayemnih-d-93857>

offensive and tried to create not only a bridgehead in the north of the Sumy region, but also planned to capture even the city of Sumy, but thanks to the heroic resistance of the DFU, the enemy suffered heavy losses and was stopped. The AF RF also conducted active offensive operations in the East of Ukraine with the aim of inflicting heavy losses and finally destroying the DFU.

Temporary failures of the DFU are directly and indirectly related to the following factors: 1) external, international, as a result of the presidential elections in the fall of 2024, the Republican Party led by Donald Trump came to power in the USA. Unfortunately, the US President blocked free American military aid to Ukraine (the DFU received weapons and military equipment in small quantities, allocated by the previous Joe Biden administration) and only in the second half of 2025 began to provide it with money from partner countries, mainly from the EU. 2) internal, Ukrainian, the Ukrainian authorities have failed to solve the mobilization problem during the year, namely, to fully contribute to replenishing the ranks of the DFU with motivated and trained soldiers, while at the front the problem of replenishing and rotating the personnel of the units remains very relevant. The Ukrainian authorities are also not systematically fighting corruption in Ukraine. Currently, corruption scandals are demotivating the DFU, Ukrainian society, and the leadership of partner countries, and are intensifying anti-Ukrainian rhetoric and rashist propaganda.

The main task of the DFU in 2026 is to stop the advance of the AF RF on most sections of the front line, complete the corps reform (transforming the corps into powerful military formations capable of performing operational-tactical tasks), and fill the corps with motivated and trained personnel, which will allow all vacancies in military units to be fully filled, strengthen their combat capability, stop the offensive of the AF RF, and help the DFU launch a powerful counteroffensive.

In turn, the Ukrainian authorities, with the support of civil society, should intensify anti-corruption policy, strengthen the Ukrainization of the humanitarian space of Ukraine, and use the achievements of Ukrainian studies as an integrative science and educational discipline to counter the «Russian world» and Russian falsifications and fakes.

So, the soldiers of the DFU first stopped the hybrid, and then the full-scale invasion of the AF RF, stabilized the military situation, and now they are courageously restraining the offensive of the rashists. We hope that the balanced policy of the Ukrainian authorities, powerful military and financial assistance from partner countries, consolidation of the Ukrainian political nation, coordination of cooperation between scientists and educators will significantly strengthen national-patriotic education, which will actualize the mobilization resource of the DFU. All these systemic actions will help unite the citizens of the Ukrainian state for victory over the AF RF. Thanks to the heroes of the DFU, the Ukrainian state will restore unity and sovereignty, while Putin's Russia will suffer a shameful defeat and this post-Soviet empire will collapse into several dozen state entities.

4. Exposing the main Russian myths and falsifications of Ukrainian history

Russian military aggression, initially hybrid (from February 20, 2014), and from February 24, 2022 a full-scale war, was aimed at finally resolving the so-called «Ukrainian question», that is, to destroy Ukraine as a state, eliminate the Ukrainian political nation and obtain a powerful political, economic, financial, military, cultural and human resource for the restoration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics 2.0 in the format of the modern Russian superpower (neo-empire) of «Greater Historical Russia» under Putin's leadership. Currently, the total destruction of Ukraine and Ukrainians is taking place both on the battlefield and in the humanitarian sphere, therefore, in order to strengthen national security and strengthen the national identity of Ukraine, Ukrainian scholars must make considerable efforts to debunk Russian falsifications and myths that are aimed at discrediting Ukrainian statehood and significantly weakening national security. This ideological direction is important in the civilizational confrontation with the autocratic Eurasian neo-empire and will contribute to Ukraine's victory¹.

¹ Fihurnyi Yu., Shakurova O. The Role of Ukrainian Studies in Ukraine's National Security and Exposing Russian Fakes. *Skhid (East)*. 2025. Vol.7. Issue 3. P. 11.

It is important to emphasize once again that the full-scale war of the RF against Ukraine is being waged not only by traditional armed means, but also with the involvement of modern innovative technologies, including the imperial doctrine of the «Russian world» and various information and propaganda tools aimed at weakening national security, destroying the national identity and national consciousness of Ukrainians. All these measures should lead first to the weakening of the Ukrainian state, and later to its complete liquidation.

One of the significant destructive tools of the RF is a powerful information and propaganda campaign to discredit Ukraine and Ukrainians, in particular, the spread both in Russia and beyond its borders, where the main focus group is citizens of the Ukrainian state, of various Russian myths, fakes, and falsifications of Ukrainian history. Among many of them, we can single out the following myths about: «a single Orthodox fraternal Russian and Ukrainian people»; «the Ukrainian language is a dialect of Russian»; «the non-involvement of Ukraine in Kyivan Rus and the promotion of its belonging only to Russian history»; «the Pereyaslav Treaty of 1654 is an «age-old voluntary act» of reunification of Ukraine with Russia»; «Ivan Mazepa is a traitor»; «the imperial project «Novorossiia» is the primordial Russian lands»; «Ukrainians are anti-Semites, and S. Petliura personally organized Jewish pogroms»; «V. Lenin is the creator of Ukrainian statehood»; «the Famine of 1932–1933 became a tragedy for the entire Soviet people, and not exclusively a genocide for Ukrainians and was not planned by J. Stalin, it was a consequence of temporary food difficulties caused by weather anomalies and mistakes of local authorities»; «victory in World War II is the merit of only the Russian people»; «soldiers of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army are traitors, collaborators and mercenaries of the fascists»; «Ukraine is an integral part of the «Russian world»»; «The Orthodox Church of Ukraine is non-canonical and fake»; «Crimea has always been and will be Russian»; «The Ukrainian national revolution of the early 21st century was planned and implemented by the leadership of NATO and the EU»; «Russia is not at war with Ukraine, but with NATO»; «in Ukraine, the authorities and Ukrainian Nazis are repressing Russian-speaking citizens», etc.

In his speeches, interviews, publications, etc., V. Putin systematically calls Russians and Ukrainians a single Orthodox fraternal people. Thus, on July 12, 2021, the official website of the President of the Russian Federation published his programmatic article «On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians» in Russian and Ukrainian, in which V. Putin once again emphasized that Russians and Ukrainians are one people, a single whole, and Russia and Ukraine are parts, in essence, of one historical and spiritual space. V. Putin is convinced that modern Ukraine is entirely the brainchild of the Soviet era, the first Ukrainian state – the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic – was created by V. Lenin exclusively at the expense of the territories of the so-called «Great Historical Russia» and founded the Ukrainian Soviet nation, thereby dividing the great Russian people. V. Putin emphasizes: «It was the Soviet national policy – instead of the great Russian nation, a triune people consisting of Great Russians, Little Russians and Belarusians – that established at the state level the position of three separate Slavic peoples: Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian»¹.

Ideologists of rashism and providers of the «Russian world» repeat V. Putin's information and propaganda quasi-historical narratives and try to convince both the so-called «deep Russian people» and ordinary Ukrainians that we are the only Orthodox brotherly people.

In turn, scientists and educators must refute falsifications of Ukrainian history and convince citizens of the Ukrainian state with arguments and facts. In particular, that the military-political union of the Cossack hetman B. Khmelnytsky with the Moscow Tsar O. Romanov was a fatal mistake that led to centuries-long domination of the Muscovites over the Ukrainians. Also, that as a result of the many wars of aggression waged by the Russian Empire and its successor, the Soviet Union, the Ukrainians lost millions killed and wounded, and the terror of famine by the totalitarian regime in 1921–1923, 1932–1933, and 1946–1947 could have completely destroyed the Ukrainian people as a unique ethnic community.

¹ Putin V. On the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians. 2021. URL: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66182>

The comprehensive and systematic distortion of Ukrainian national history, falsification and fakery have become a powerful weapon of rashist propaganda and an integral part of Putin's criminal regime. That is why a comprehensive analysis of historical events and their critical rethinking is an extremely important task for Ukrainian scholars. Refuting Russian quasi-historical myths, on which Russia's imperial claims to Ukraine are based, that Ukraine as a state and the Ukrainian people do not exist, and that Ukrainians are part of the great Russian people, which was artificially divided by V. Lenin and created the first Ukrainian state, is becoming a *modus operandi* for Ukrainian scholars. A comprehensive refutation of Russian historical myths will contribute to the strengthening of state and national liberation narratives in Ukrainian history, strengthening national security, and will become one of the key factors in defeating the enemy.

Because the RF full-scale war against Ukraine is not only a struggle for territory, but also planned information attacks against the civilian population and the capture of the mass consciousness of Ukrainians to weaken national security and ultimately eliminate the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian political nation. In the modern post-truth information world, myths, fakes, and various falsifications are gaining importance and are one of the most effective tools of informational influence on both the mass consciousness of ordinary citizens and the beliefs of the political, spiritual, business, military, intellectual, and artistic elite.

In turn, Russian myths are used as a powerful tool of hybrid warfare to falsify historical events and create false ideas about political, socio-cultural and ethno-cultural reality. Manipulation of falsified history allows myths and fakes to form a false and distorted reality in the objects of information influence, namely, in the citizens of the Ukrainian state. As a result of these complex and systemic actions of the enemy, the national security of the Ukrainian state and Ukrainian national identity are under threat of significant weakening, therefore, scientists and educators must intensify and coordinate their actions to refute Russian information and propaganda myths, falsifications, and fakes of the history of Ukraine.

The main task of de-occupation and demythologizing the mass consciousness of citizens of the Ukrainian state is to free themselves from the main myth of the rashists about the «single

Orthodox fraternal Russian and Ukrainian people» and to eradicate from the collective consciousness falsified ideas about the ethnic, national, political, historical, cultural and religious unity of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples. An important mechanism for destroying Russian myths and fakes about Ukrainian history is the formation of new ideas about the place of Ukraine, Ukrainians, and Ukrainian civil society in the world civilization of the present and the future.

Therefore, Ukrainian studies as an interdisciplinary science and educational discipline has great potential and real opportunities to actualize the humanitarian achievements of the intellectual elite of Ukraine to strengthen national security and enhance the development of national science and education, and refute the propaganda myths, falsifications, and fakes of rashists. Ukrainian studies should become an important element of the national Ukrainian-centric ideology, the foundation of Ukraine's national security, a strong ideological narrative of the Ukrainian state, the Ukrainian political nation, and the Ukrainian national identity.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, having analyzed the development of science and education in Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, namely, having characterized the role of Ukrainian studies in exposing Russian falsifications and myths, we came to the following conclusions.

Firstly, Ukrainian studies is an interdisciplinary integrative science, a comprehensive educational discipline, which at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century actively forms a Ukraine-centric humanitarian and information space, really contributes to strengthening national security, establishing Ukrainian national identity in Ukraine and beyond, thereby actualizing Ukrainian statehood, nation-building, ethnic formation, and ethnic-culture formation.

Secondly, the «Russian world» is Putin's geopolitical doctrine aimed at the theoretical substantiation and practical restoration of «Great Historical Russia» within the borders of the Russian Empire in 1914. It was the «Russian world» that became a significant element of the neo-imperial political ideology – «rashism», a tool for the Russian autocratic power of «putinism» and the ideological

narrative of first the hybrid Russian-Ukrainian war, and later the full-scale aggression of Russia against Ukraine.

Thirdly, the modern full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war is a civilizational and existential confrontation between autocracy and democracy, between the Eurasian Russian neo-empire and the European Ukrainian state. It is characterized by the following features: complexity, extensiveness; intensity and aggressiveness. In order to achieve their strategic goal, namely, the liquidation of the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian political nation, the rashists are pursuing a genocidal policy in Ukraine.

Fourth, Russian information and propaganda pseudo-historical myths, narratives and fakes are a powerful tool of hybrid warfare aimed at falsifying historical events and creating false ideas about socio-political reality and forming a false social reality of objects of information influence. As a result of these systemic actions, Ukraine's national security and national identity suffer losses.

Fifth, Ukrainian studies has great potential and real opportunities to actualize the intellectual achievements of Ukraine's humanitarian elite to strengthen national security and national identity, and refute propaganda myths and fakes of rashists.

ANNOTATION

The development of science and education in Ukraine in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war is analyzed, namely, the role of Ukrainian studies in exposing Russian falsifications and myths is revealed. It was found that Ukrainian studies is an interdisciplinary integrative science, a complex educational discipline, which at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century actively forms a Ukrainian-centric humanitarian and information space, and really contributes to strengthening national security and establishing Ukrainian national identity in Ukraine and beyond. It has been found that the «Russian world» is Putin's geopolitical doctrine aimed at the theoretical substantiation and practical restoration of «Great Historical Russia» within the borders of the Russian Empire in 1914. It is revealed that the «Russian world» is a significant element of the neo-imperial political ideology – «rashism», a tool for the Russian autocratic power of «putinism» and an ideological narrative of first the hybrid Russian-Ukrainian war, and later the full-scale aggression of Russia against Ukraine. It is shown that the modern full-scale Russian-

Ukrainian war is a civilizational and existential confrontation between autocracy and democracy, between the Eurasian Russian neo-empire and the European Ukrainian state, it is characterized by the following features: complexity, extensiveness; intensity and aggressiveness. It has been traced that Russian information and propaganda pseudo-historical myths, narratives and fakes are a powerful factor in hybrid warfare with the aim of falsifying historical events and creating false ideas about socio-political reality and forming a false humanitarian paradigm in the objects of information influence. It is noted that Ukrainian studies as an integrative science and educational discipline has great potential and real opportunities to actualize the intellectual achievements of the humanitarian elite of Ukraine to strengthen national security and strengthen national identity and refute propaganda myths and fakes of rashists.

АНОТАЦІЯ

Проаналізовано розвиток науки і освіти України в умовах російсько-української війни, а саме, розкрито роль українознавства у викритті російських фальсифікацій і міфів. Виявлено, що українознавство – міждисциплінарна інтегративна наука, комплексна навчальна дисципліна, яка у кінці XX століття та на початку XXI століття, активно формує україноцентричний гуманітарний й інформаційний простір, реально сприяє посиленню національної безпеки, утвердженню в Україні та за її межами української національної ідентичності. З'ясовано, що «русский мир» – путінська геополітична доктрина спрямована на теоретичне обґрунтування та практичне відновлення «Великої історичної Росії» у кордонах Російської імперії на 1914 р. Розкрито, що «русский мир» є вагомим елементом неоімперської політичної ідеології – «рашизму», інструментом для російської авторитарної влади «путінізму» й ідеологічним наративом спочатку гібридної російсько-української війни, а згодом і повномасштабної агресії Росії проти України. Показано, що сучасна повномасштабна російсько-українська війна є цивілізаційним й екзистенційним протистоянням між авторитарією та демократією, між євразійською російською неоімперією та європейською Українською державою, вона характеризується такими особливостями: комплексністю, екстенсивністю; інтенсивністю та агресивністю. Простежено,

що російські інформаційно-пропагандистські псевдоісторичні міфи, наративи і фейки є потужним фактором гібридної війни з метою фальсифікації історичних подій і створення помилкових уявлень про соціально-політичну реальність та формування хибної гуманітарної парадигми в об'єктів інформаційного впливу. Відзначено, що українознавство як інтегративна наука й освітня дисципліна має великий потенціал і реальні можливості актуалізувати інтелектуальні напрацювання гуманітарної еліти України для зміцнення національної безпеки та посилення національної ідентичності й спростування пропагандистських міфів і фейків рашистів.

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EDUCATION AS A FACTOR IN OVERCOMING DEFORMATIONS OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF UKRAINIANS IN THE DONETSK REGION IN THE CONTEXT OF WAR AND POST-WAR REINTEGRATION

Sytnyk Yu.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of national identity in the Donetsk region has long occupied a central place in Ukrainian socio-political discourse, representing a unique intersection of historical trauma, industrial specificity, and geopolitical pressure. For many residents, self-identification was shaped for decades by a perceived «otherness», fueled by both internal regionalization and external Russian influence. These factors led to significant «deformations» – distortions in the understanding of historical roots, linguistic belonging, and cultural heritage. In an academic sense, these deformations are not merely personal crises but structural misalignments between the local population and the national state-building project.

In the contemporary context, marked by the full-scale invasion of 2022, this issue has shifted from theoretical sociological observation to a matter of national security. The war has forced a radical re-evaluation of identity, stripping away the «hybrid» or «delayed» forms of self-identification that previously dominated the Donbas. However, the vacuum left by the collapse of old Soviet-industrial myths must be filled with a coherent, attractive, and historically grounded Ukrainian identity.

This chapter posits that education is the most effective strategic instrument for this transformation. Education, in this sense, encompasses more than just the formal schooling system; it is a holistic process of civic socialization and cultural transmission. Through education, the state can address the «spatial fragmentation» of the Ukrainian identity space and foster a resilient population capable of resisting future external manipulations. The following sections will detail the historical roots of these identity deformations, the transformative impact of the war, and the specific educational strategies required for the successful post-war reintegration of the Donetsk region.

1. Historical and Spatial Deformations of Identity in the Donetsk Region

The socio-cultural landscape of the Donetsk region is characterized by what researchers describe as a «spatial fragmentation» of the Ukrainian identity space. This phenomenon is rooted in the specific historical trajectory of the Donbas as a frontier industrial zone¹. As noted by Ya. Vermenych, the region's identity was historically shaped by intense industrialization and subsequent «Sovietization», which prioritized class and professional affiliation over national or ethnic belonging². This created a regionalized version of identity that was often detached from the central Ukrainian historical narrative.

The result of this process was the emergence of «hybrid» and «blurred» forms of self-identification. For much of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, residents of the Donetsk region often exhibited a «delayed» identity, where the connection to the Ukrainian national project was secondary to local industrial pride or a nostalgic attachment to Soviet concepts³. This lack of a solid national foundation made the region particularly vulnerable to external manipulations.

Furthermore, the evolution of national-linguistic identity in the region from 1923 to 2014 demonstrates a systematic erosion of the Ukrainian language's status. Research by Yu. Sytnyk indicates that the linguistic space was a primary arena for these deformations, where Russification was not just a side effect of urbanization but a targeted tool for weakening national ties⁴. By 2014, these cumulative historical and spatial factors had created a «deformed»

¹ Ситник О., Ситник Ю. Мовна політика як важливий аспект стратегії реінтеграції окупованої території Донбасу. Мовна політика держава: історико-правова ретроспектива і сучасність. Матеріали 13-тої Всеукраїнської наукової конференції (м. Львів, 3 грудня 2021 р.). / Наукові конференції історико-правової проблематики. Вип. 13 / Терлюк І.Я. (укладач) / ІІПО НУ «Львівська політехніка». Львів: Л-Прес, 2021. С. 63–64.

² Верменич Я. В. Україна: історичний простір ідентичності / Відп. ред. В. А. Смолій. Київ: Інститут історії України НАН України, 2025. С. 52.

³ Там само. С. 401.

⁴ Ситник Ю. В. Еволюція національно-мовної ідентичності українців Донецьчини (квітень 1923 р. – квітень 2014 р.). Дис. ... канд. іст. наук: 07.00.01 – Запоріжжя: Запорізький національний університет, 2021. С. 88.

identity landscape that served as a catalyst for the initial stages of the conflict¹.

2. War as a Catalyst for Identity Transformation

The onset of the full-scale invasion in 2022 fundamentally altered the trajectory of identity development in the Donetsk region. While the conflict beginning in 2014 introduced the region to the reality of hybrid warfare, the post-2022 period has been defined as a «war of identities»². In this struggle, the aggressor targets not only physical infrastructure but the very cultural and historical foundations of «Ukrainianness». Paradoxically, this existential threat has accelerated a transition from «blurred» to «achieved» Ukrainian identity.

According to G. Bohdanovych, the war has acted as a powerful consolidator, shifting the basis of identity from ethnic or linguistic markers toward shared democratic values and a collective commitment to independence³. For many residents of the Donetsk region, the choice to remain loyal to Ukraine in the face of aggression has transformed their identity from a passive attribute into an active, conscious stance. This «attained» identity is forged in the crucible of resistance, making it more resilient than the previous, more fragile regional models.

However, this transformation is not without its risks. The war has simultaneously exacerbated certain vulnerabilities, such as the physical destruction of cultural heritage and the displacement of millions of people. There remains a constant threat of «fragmentation» along linguistic or regional lines, especially in territories that have been under prolonged occupation⁴. In this context, the war serves as both a catalyst for national unity and a warning of the catastrophic consequences that occur when the cultural «identity space» is left undefended.

¹ Sytnyk J., Sytnyk O. Ukrainian National Identity in Donetsk Region: Problems and Development Trends from the End of the XIX – to the Beginning of the XXI Century. *Culture and History*. Vol. 1. No. 2. 2021. С. 35–36.

² Яремчук С., Дияк В., Тушко К. Проблеми формування української культурної ідентичності в умовах війни. *Грані*. 2023. С. 106.

³ Богданович Г. Трансформація української ідентичності як чинник формування нової політичної нації. *Українознавство*. 2024. № 3(92). С. 48.

⁴ Там само. С. 51.

3. Education as a Strategic Instrument for Overcoming Deformations and Reintegration: State Policy and Regional Practices

In the context of martial law and future post-war recovery, education emerges as the primary mechanism for overcoming the historical and spatial deformations of national identity. It serves as the chief tool for the transmission of a common «axiological scale» – a set of values that bind the individual to the nation and the state. As S. Yaremchuk, V. Dyyak and K. Tushko argue, education must function as an arena of active counter-action, preventing the cultural assimilation of residents in frontline and de-occupied territories by providing a robust alternative to «Russian World» narratives. Strategic orientation in this field involves a shift toward systemic civic education, which aims not only to transmit knowledge but to restore «geohistorical unity» in the minds of citizens¹.

3.1. National Strategy for the Affirmation of Identity until 2030

The normative bedrock for these activities is Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 1322 (December 15, 2023), which approved the Strategy for the Affirmation of Ukrainian National and Civic Identity for the period up to 2030². This document explicitly positions education as one of the three main pillars of state policy, alongside national-patriotic and military-patriotic upbringing.

The Strategy identifies identity deformations – caused by Russification, regional polarization, and the influence of the aggressor state – as direct threats to national security. The educational block of the Strategy includes:

¹ Яремчук С., Дияк В., Тушко К. Проблеми... С. 106.

² Про схвалення Стратегії утвердження української національної та громадянської ідентичності на період до 2030 року та затвердження операційного плану заходів з її реалізації у 2023-2025 роках. Постанова Кабінету міністрів України від 15 грудня 2023 р. № 1322 URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1322-2023-%D0%BF#Text>

- **Identity Integration into All Forms of Education.** From formal schooling to informal learning, encompassing all age groups.
- **Updating State Standards.** Mandatory inclusion of Ukrainian history, the Constitution, and «Defense of Ukraine» as core components.
- **Digital Reintegration.** Engaging citizens from temporarily occupied territories (TOT) through online educational platforms.
- **Veteran Involvement.** Utilizing war veterans as direct conveyors of lived national resilience within the educational process.

3.2. State Targeted Social Program until 2028: Tools and Indicators

The practical concretization of state policy was furthered by Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 864 (July 30, 2024). The State Program until 2028 translates strategic goals into quantifiable indicators and budgetary allocations (over 612 million UAH)¹. A key aspect is the emphasis on media literacy and overcoming the «information vacuum» in the TOT.

The Program sets ambitious macro-indicators: increasing the share of citizens who take pride in their citizenship to 75% and daily usage of the Ukrainian language to 80%. In the educational dimension, this is implemented through the training of reintegration specialists (450 individuals by 2028) and large-scale military-patriotic training (targeting 20% of the population). Education here is viewed as an instrument to transform «blurred» identity into «achieved» (conscious) identity, which is critical for Eastern Ukraine.

3.3. Regional Specifics of the Donetsk Region: Implementation and Challenges

The practical implementation of these principles at the local level is reflected in the «Regional Targeted Social Program... in the Donetsk Region for the Period up to 2028» (2025). This document

¹ Про затвердження Державної цільової соціальної програми з утвердження української національної та громадянської ідентичності на період до 2028 року. Постанова Кабінету міністрів України від 30 липня 2024 р. № 864 URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/864-2024-%D0%BF#Text>

serves as a localized and intensified version of the national policy, specifically adapted to the conditions of a frontline zone¹.

Analysis of the Program reveals its *positive features*:

1. **Systemic Axiological Synchronization** – aligning regional educational goals with national security interests.

2. **Geohistorical Contextualization** – focusing on the «Donbas in the Ukrainian Context» narrative to dismantle myths of regional «separateness».

3. **Innovative Formats** – using interactive games («Gart Voli», «Sokil/Dzhura»), language quests, and «historical detective» modules to engage the youth².

However, implementation faces the risk of a «*reintegration lag*» (ideological distance of residents after prolonged occupation) and *administrative formalism*, where quantitative reporting may overshadow qualitative shifts in civic consciousness³.

It is of paramount importance to instruct students in information analysis, source verification, and the identification of fabricated content – effectively fostering critical thinking – while simultaneously deepening historical literacy. Such pedagogical efforts are essential, as they significantly mitigate susceptibility to manipulative influences and enhance cognitive resilience against disinformation⁴.

A comparative analysis of the Donetsk strategy with other frontline regions highlights its unique complexity⁵.

¹ Регіональна цільова соціальна програма з утвердження української національної та громадянської ідентичності у Донецькій області на період до 2028 року: затв. розпорядженням голови Донецької ОВА № 910/5-25 від кінця 2025 р. URL: <https://dn.gov.ua/npa/pro-zatverdzhennia-rehionalnoi-tsilovoi-sotsialnoi-prohramy-z-utverdzhennia-ukrainskoi-natsionalnoi-ta-hromadianskoi-identychnosti-u-donetskii-oblasti-na-period-do-2028-roku-2>

² Там само.

³ Богданович Г. Трансформація... С. 45.

⁴ Бевз Т. А. Когнітивна війна та національна ідентичність: протидія дезінформації як елемент стратегії ідентичності. *Утвердження української національної ідентичності в умовах воєнного стану: стратегічні орієнтири та інноваційні практики*: зб. наук. пр. / за ред. К. О. Журби, Л. В. Канишевської. Івано-Франківськ: НАІР, 2025. С. 16.

⁵ The author has synthesized the results of this analysis into the following table.

<i>Region</i>	<i>Primary Focus</i>	<i>Strategic</i>	<i>Core Challenge</i>	<i>Identity</i>
Donetsk Reg.	De-sovietization & Structural Transformation		Long-term (since 2014)	hybridity
Kharkiv Reg.	Academic Resilience & Linguistic Shift		Proximity to the border & shelling	
Kherson Reg.	Mental De-occupation & Trauma Work		Direct occupation consequences	

While the Kharkiv region focuses on «academic resilience» through university hubs and Kherson prioritizes «mental de-occupation» after direct Russian control, the Donetsk model requires a deeper structural transformation due to the duration of the conflict (since 2014). The Donetsk region must disentangle a web of contradictions that has been tightening for over a decade, combining «defensive education» with «reintegration therapy». Only through a systemic approach to education is it possible to foster not only a profound understanding of Ukrainian culture, history, and traditions, but also to cultivate civic engagement among the youth, alongside their critical thinking faculties and resilience to information manipulation¹.

3.4. Comparative Profile of State and Regional Strategies

The comparative analysis of State Program No. 864 and the Regional Program of the Donetsk region reveals a profound interdependence between central strategic planning and operational response within a frontline region. This vertical structure ensures that national identity policy remains both unified and locally relevant.

1. Strategic-Tactical Synergy

State Program No. 864 serves as the foundation, defining the ideological and value-based vectors of national development. It establishes the «standards» for national identity. In contrast, the

¹ Бойко С. М. Роль інноваційних освітніх проєктів та експериментів у зміцненні української національної ідентичності в умовах воєнного стану. *Утвердження української національної ідентичності в умовах воєнного стану: стратегічні орієнтири та інноваційні практики*: зб. наук. пр. / за ред. К. О. Журби, Л. В. Канішевської. Івано-Франківськ: НАІР, 2025. С. 21.

Regional Program of the Donetsk Region transforms these abstract goals into a specific toolkit. This demonstrates a transition from the *declarative level* (what do we want to achieve?) to the *instrumental level* (how do we implement this under conditions of constant threat?).

2. Reintegration Vector. Focus on TOT

For the state, the priority is creating conditions for future de-occupation through personnel training and the digitalization of education. However, Donetsk region, being on the front lines of cognitive warfare, focuses on «live» contact. «Unity Centers» and psychological support are not merely events; they are instruments of *social therapy* essential for mending the social fabric and neutralizing the effects of enemy propaganda.

3. Adaptation of the Security Component

While military-patriotic education at the national level takes the form of general preparation and pre-conscription training, the Regional Program imbues it with vital applied content. The prioritization of *mine safety and tactical medicine* indicates that the program is a «living» document that directly addresses the physical threats faced by citizens in a combat zone.

4. Convergence of Results

The state operates with percentages and global indicators (language proficiency, media literacy). The regional level, however, focuses on *inclusivity*. For the Donetsk region, success is measured by the specific engagement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and residents of frontline territories, serving as a direct indicator of the effectiveness of the state's «soft power» on the ground.

Based on this comparison, it can be concluded that the interaction between State Program No. 864 and the Regional Program of the Donetsk Region exemplifies *effective decentralization of national identity policy*.

Key Findings:

- Contextual Relevance

The regional program does not merely duplicate the state program; it «grounds» it. The unique characteristics of the Donetsk

region (proximity to the front, high concentration of IDPs, influence of the TOT) require a shift from theoretical patriotism to *practical resilience*.

- **Hierarchical Flexibility**

State Program No. 864 ensures the unity of the national course, preventing regional initiatives from deviating from national interests, while the regional initiative ensures the vitality of this course by accounting for local specifics.

- **Human-Centricity**

The emphasis on psychological support and mine safety in the regional program acknowledges that the assertion of identity is impossible without addressing the fundamental needs for physical safety and mental health.

In summary, this vertical structure creates a robust shield in cognitive warfare: the state formulates *meanings*, while the region translates them into *action*. This synergy is critical for preserving national integrity under the conditions of a prolonged state of war.

Education serves as the strategic foundation for identity affirmation, translating the theoretical norms of the 2022 Law into the practical plane of reintegration. Analysis of Resolutions No. 1322 and No. 864 indicates the creation of a systemic vertical where education functions as a national security tool. The Donetsk Regional Program is the most complex and critical element of this vertical. Its success depends on overcoming administrative formalism and adapting national values to the specific context of the «post-war trauma» prevalent in the East. Without the full implementation of the educational blocks in both programs, the risk of returning to pre-war identity deformations remains high, whereas their successful synergy builds long-term national resilience.

CONCLUSIONS

Education is the determining factor in overcoming the deformations of national identity among Ukrainians in the Donetsk region amidst war and reintegration. The historical fragmentation and Soviet legacy that shaped the region's «blurred» identity for decades are being dismantled by wartime consolidation, yet this process requires deep institutional support.

1. **State Normative Framework**

Resolutions No. 1322 and No. 864 have established a comprehensive system where identity affirmation through education is recognized as a national security priority until 2030. Education has transitioned from a social service to an instrument for forming defensive consciousness and civic resilience.

2. Regional Adaptation

The Donetsk region demonstrates a unique model of policy implementation, where general goals of media literacy and linguistic transformation are filled with practical tools for «geohistorical restoration». Reintegration success here depends on bridging the «reintegration lag» and neutralizing the ideological effects of occupation through innovative pedagogical practices.

3. Synergy of Efforts

Comparative analysis underscores that the restoration of a unified «identity space» is only possible through the interaction of national strategy and flexible regional tactics. Education fills the ideological vacuum left by the collapse of colonial myths and ensures the integration of the Donetsk region into a unified Ukrainian political nation.

The successful realization of these educational programs in the Donetsk region will guarantee that wartime solidarity evolves into lasting national resilience, transforming the region from a zone of deformation into a stronghold of a new, conscious Ukrainian identity.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the strategic role of education in overcoming the historical and spatial deformations of national identity among residents of the Donetsk region. For decades, the region's socio-cultural landscape was defined by Soviet legacies and industrial regionalism, leading to «blurred» and hybrid forms of self-identification. The full-scale invasion of 2022 acted as a catalyst, accelerating the transition to a conscious «achieved» Ukrainian identity based on shared democratic values. Central to this process is the national policy framework established by Resolutions No. 1322 (Strategy 2030) and No. 864 (State Program 2028), which position education as a primary tool for national security and civic resilience. These documents facilitate the restoration of «geohistorical unity» by integrating national-patriotic

and civic components into all levels of education. At the regional level, the Donetsk Program for 2028 adapts these national goals through innovative pedagogical practices aimed at neutralizing the ideological effects of prolonged occupation. The findings highlight that the synergy between national strategy and flexible regional tactics is essential for transforming wartime consolidation into permanent national stability. Ultimately, education serves as the foundation for the successful reintegration of the Donetsk region into a unified and resilient Ukrainian political nation.

АНОТАЦІЯ

У дослідженні розглянуто роль освіти у подоланні історичних та просторових деформацій ідентичності мешканців Донецчини. Визначено, що повномасштабне вторгнення 2022 року прискорило перехід від «розмитих» форм самоідентифікації до свідомої української ідентичності. На основі аналізу державних стратегій (№ 1322 та № 864) обґрунтовано статус освіти як ключового інструменту національної безпеки та громадянської стійкості. Особливу увагу приділено регіональній програмі Донецчини до 2028 року, яка адаптує державні цілі до умов прифронтової зони через інноваційні педагогічні практики. Результати підкреслюють, що синергія загальнодержавної стратегії та гнучкої регіональної тактики забезпечує перетворення воєнної консолідації на тривалу національну стійкість. Освіта визначена фундаментом успішної реінтеграції Донецького регіону в єдину українську політичну націю.

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POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY IN THE SPHERES OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE (1950–1980s)

Haliv M. D., Ilnytskyi V. I.

INTRODUCTION

During the 1950s–1980s, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) underwent a series of higher education reforms that led to the emergence of mass universities, the implementation of the educational objectives of the welfare state, and exerted a significant influence on the labor market, economic development, and the socio-political and civic activity of German society. At the same time, in the second half of the twentieth century, science policy (Wissenschaftspolitik) in West Germany became increasingly active. As is well known, the 1950s–1980s marked a period of intensive modernization of the Federal Republic of Germany following World War II, and the science policy of the young state during this time became an important factor in the «economic miracle» (Wirtschaftswunder) and in the integration of the FRG into Western political and economic structures.

The study of the legal and organizational foundations of science policy and higher education reform makes it possible to understand the state's strategy in forming innovation systems that contributed to reconstruction and growth. The analysis of the historical experience of the FRG may be useful for contemporary countries, including Ukraine, which are reforming their systems of higher education and science, building institutional mechanisms for human capital formation, supporting research, and ensuring the integration of science with the economy and international scientific processes.

1. Reforming the Higher Education System in West Germany

The development of the higher education system in West Germany after World War II has long attracted the attention of German and other Western scholars. Among them, it is worth

highlighting the works of J. M. Mushaben¹, C. Oehler², C. Führ³, K. H. Jarausch⁴, B. M. Kehm⁵, G. Turner⁶, and B. M. Puaca⁷, in which the democratic nature of the reforms carried out in the field of education as a whole was emphasized, and their socially oriented character was underscored. A more critical assessment of the transformations in the higher education system of the FRG was offered by E. Göztepe-Çelebi, F. Stallmann, and A. Zimmer, who pointed to the shortcomings and failures of the reform process⁸. O. Anweiler, H.-J. Fuchs, M. Dorner, and E. Petermann compiled documentary materials on educational policy in the GDR during 1945–1990⁹. G. Baldi conducted a comparative analysis of postwar educational policy in Germany and Britain¹⁰. S. Hnilica analyzed the architectural development of universities in the FRG since the

¹ Mushaben J. M. Reform in three phases: judicial action and the German Federal Framework Law for Higher Education of 1976. *Higher Education*. 1984. Nr. 13. P. 423–438.

² Oehler C. Hochschulentwicklung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland seit 1945. Frankfurt am Main and New York, Campus, 1989. 273 s.

³ Führ, C. The German university: basically healthy or rotten? Reflections on an overdue reorientation of German higher education policy. In *Phillips D. (Ed). Education in Germany. Tradition and Reform in Historical Context*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995. P. 80–91; Führ C. The German Education System since 1945: Outlines and Problems. Bonn, 1997. 335 p.

⁴ Jarausch K. H. (1997). The Humboldt syndrome: West German universities, 1945–1989. In *Ash M. G. (Ed.). German Universities Past and Future: Crisis or Renewal?* New York: Berghahn Books, 1997. P. 33–49

⁵ Kehm B. M. Higher Education in Germany. Developments Problems, Future Perspectives. Bucarest: CEPES, 1999. 145 p.

⁶ Turner G. Hochschule zwischen Vorstellung und Wirklichkeit. Zur Geschichte der Hochschulreform im letzten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2001. 294 s.

⁷ Puaca B. M. Learning Democracy: Education Reform in West Germany, 1945–1965. New York: Berghahn Books, 2009. 236 p.

⁸ Göztepe-Çelebi E., Stallmann F., Zimmer A. Looking back: Higher Education Reform in Germany. *German Policy Studies*. 2002. Vol 2. No 3. P. 1–22.

⁹ Anweiler O., Fuchs H.-J., Dorner M., Petermann E. Bildungspolitik in Deutschland 1945–1990. Ein historisch-vergleichender Quellenband. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1992. 574 p.

¹⁰ Baldi G. Ideas, Institutions, and the Politics of Schools in Postwar Britain and Germany. Springer International Publishing, 2022. 372 p.

1960s¹. Researchers such as K. Mause², H. A. Welsh³, R. Pritchard⁴, G. Buck-Bechler⁵, and others have examined higher education reforms at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century, offering historical excursions and comparisons with the reforms of the 1960s–1980s. The sociologist H. Schomburg investigated the employment of higher education graduates in Germany⁶. Among the studies of Ukrainian scholars, particular attention should be paid to the article by O. Ohienko, which outlines the reform of higher education in Germany at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century⁷. The stages of development of German universities in the second half of the twentieth century were proposed by H. Oleksiv and O. Shyika⁸. Of general theoretical significance for this study are the works of Å. Gornitzka and P. Maassen⁹, M. Kwiek¹⁰, D. Müller-Böling¹¹, as well as M. Haliv and V. Ilnytskyi¹.

¹ Hnilica S. Experiments with Megastuctures and Building Systems. University Building in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s and 1970s. *Architectural Histories*. 2022. Issue 10(1). Nr. 1. P. 1–34.

² Mause K. Transformations of the Educating Leviathan: The Restructuring of German Higher Education in the Noughties (October 1, 2011). *Austausch – German Studies Online Journal*. 2011. Vol. 1. No. 2. P. 13–35.

³ Welsh H. A. Higher Education Reform in Germany. Advocacy and Discourse. *German Politics and Society*. 2009. Issue 90. Vol. 27. No. 1. P. 1–23.

⁴ Pritchard R. Trends in the Restructuring of German Universities. *Comparative Education Review*. 2006. Issue 50(1). P. 90–112.

⁵ Buck-Bechler G. Hochschule zwischen fremdgesteuertem Veränderungsdruck und selbstgesteuerten Entwicklungstendenzen. Anmerkungen zu einem unerledigten Thema. *Beiträge zur Hochschulforschung*. 2000. Nr. 1/2. P. 31–45.

⁶ Schomburg H. Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Germany. *European Journal of Education*. 2000. Issue 35(2). P. 189–200.

⁷ Огієнко О. Реформування вищої освіти Німеччини у 90-х роках ХХ – початку ХХІ століття. *Освіта дорослих: теорія, досвід, перспективи*. 2012. Вип. 5. С. 252–259.

⁸ Олексів Г., Шийка О. Розвиток університетів Німеччини у другій половині ХХ століття. *Педагогічні науки. Збірник наукових праць*. 2019. Вип. 87. С. 27–32.

⁹ Gornitzka Å., Maassen P. Analyzing organizational change in higher education. *Comparative Social Research*. 2000. Issue 19. P. 83–99.

¹⁰ Kwiek M. Globalization and higher education. *Higher Education in Europe*. 2001. Issue 26. P. 27–37.

¹¹ Müller-Böling D. Die entfesselte Hochschule. Gütersloh: Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2000. 256 s.

After World War II, higher education in West Germany, which was occupied by the United States, France, and Great Britain, required renewal, primarily the restoration of university autonomy, rebuilding of human resources, and the implementation of denazification. The Western Allies generally supported the revival of German universities. After the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, German governments focused considerable attention on economic reconstruction, relying on international assistance, domestic resources, and human capital. Higher education, however, was not among the primary governmental priorities in the 1950s. Nevertheless, already in 1957, higher education experts recommended structural and institutional reforms of German universities, which were characterized by insufficient democracy in decision-making procedures and administrative structures, as well as by the dominance of professors in governance, creating a form of academic autocracy².

The situation changed in the 1960s. Leading German intellectuals increasingly pointed to serious problems in the field of education in general and higher education in particular. In 1964, a series of articles by the educator and philosopher Georg Picht was published, in which he described the state of German education using the concept of an «educational catastrophe». He argued that the FRG's education system was in a neglected state, since only 6–7% of secondary school graduates were sufficiently prepared to enter universities (a significantly lower rate than in neighboring countries), and there existed a considerable disparity in educational opportunities between urban and rural children, as well as between children from wealthy and poor families. Consequently, he emphasized the insufficient development of human potential on a national scale and warned of threats to the economy, noting that

¹ Галів М., Ільницький В. Вища освіта в Боснії і Герцеговині (кінець XX – початок XXI ст.): між реформами і традицією. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук*. 2025. Вип. 86. Том 1. С. 19–28; Галів М. Освітня політика в Хорватії (кінець XX – початок XXI ст.): стратегія післявоєнної відбудови і європейського розвитку. *Проблеми гуманітарних наук*. Серія Історія. 2024. Спецвипуск. С. 147–159.

² Göztepe-Çelebi E., Stallmann F., Zimmer A. Looking back: Higher Education Reform in Germany. *German Policy Studies*. 2002. Vol 2. No 3. P. 4.

without a sufficient number of qualified workers, the FRG would not be able to remain competitive in the global economy¹.

According to G. Picht, overcoming this lag required a substantial increase in the number of graduates, particularly at higher levels of education. The federal states, which had previously been responsible for this sphere, were unable to cope independently with the necessary planning and financing. Together with the federal government, they needed to launch an «emergency program» to significantly increase the number of university graduates within the shortest possible time. To this end, Picht proposed the establishment of an Education Council (analogous to the Science Council), the abolition of the «dead-end system of sharply divided types of schools», the opening of universities to graduates without traditional secondary education qualifications, the shortening of study duration in higher education institutions by dividing it into a lower level of professional training and a higher, research-oriented level, as well as the continuous updating of scholars' knowledge in line with the latest research achievements through ongoing professional development².

The conclusions and proposals of G. Picht sparked a broad public discussion, which was taken up by the media, politicians, and civic organizations. Consequently, the issue of educational reform became a matter of national debate, and the attention of both federal and state governments to these problems increased. Already in 1964, debates on the FRG's educational policy unfolded in the Bundestag³. Relevant signals also came from abroad: as early as 1962, British scholars presented statistical data indicating the extent to which the FRG lagged behind most Western European countries in terms of expenditure on higher education and enrollment rates. The shortage of qualified school graduates and teachers was perceived as a threat to Germany's economic future and prosperity⁴.

¹ Picht G. Die deutsche Bildungskatastrophe: Analyse und Dokumentation. Walter-Verl, 1964. S. 16–42.

² Ibid. S. 65–85.

³ Ibid. S. 102–181.

⁴ Göztepe-Çelebi E., Stallmann F., Zimmer A. Looking back: Higher Education Reform in Germany. *German Policy Studies*. 2002. Vol 2. No 3. P. 4.

Ultimately, with the coming to power of the coalition government headed by Kurt Georg Kiesinger (1966), and subsequently the Social Democratic government of Willy Brandt (1969), the reform of higher education in the FRG was initiated. In 1969, amendments were introduced to the Basic Law of the FRG, granting the federal government the authority to establish framework legislation in the field of higher education. In the same year, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research was created. At this time, a new type of higher education institution was established—universities of applied sciences (Universitäten für Angewandte Wissenschaften / Fachhochschulen). The formal decision to establish these institutions was adopted on October 31, 1968, in the «Agreement between the Federal States of the FRG on the Integration of Fachhochschulen into the Higher Education System». The first universities of applied sciences opened in August 1969 (in the cities of Flensburg, Lübeck, and Kiel) following the signing of the relevant agreements by the federal states. Universities of applied sciences differed from traditional German universities in several respects. First, they were oriented toward practical training. These institutions prepared practitioners, especially in the fields of engineering, economics, management, administration, and design. Their educational programs included extended practical semesters or internships, and the training focused on professional skills in real production and professional contexts. Second, they paid less attention to theoretical and research work. Universities of applied sciences did not have a strong foundation in fundamental research and instead concentrated on developing applied competencies in students. These institutions did not have the right to award academic degrees. Third, the teaching staff of universities of applied sciences consisted largely of practitioners. Professors at such institutions were traditionally required to have substantial professional experience rather than exclusively academic careers, which distinguished them from professors at classical universities. Fourth, studies at universities of applied sciences were often shorter in duration and had a clearer connection to labor market needs¹.

¹ History of the the universities of applied sciences. 2025. URL: <https://www.hochschulkompass.de/en/higher-education->

Legislative changes were also of great importance. On September 1, 1969, the Bundestag adopted the Act on the «Expansion and Construction of Higher Education Institutions» (Hochschulbauförderungsgesetz)¹. The government recognized that increasing the number of students required the creation of an appropriate material base: modernization of existing institutions and construction of new higher education institutions. At that time, the university infrastructure in the FRG faced a number of problems, including a shortage of lecture halls (leading to overcrowding), outdated buildings, and insufficient laboratories and scientific equipment. There were also regional disparities in the distribution of universities among the German federal states, as most institutions were located in the southern and western regions (Bavaria, Westphalia). In addition, policymakers were influenced by other factors: the student movement of 1967–1969, the advocacy by Social Democrats of education as a means of achieving social equality, and the desire of the German bureaucracy to coordinate educational development and manage related funding.

The Act on the promotion of university construction established joint responsibility between the federal government and the governments of the federal states in the field of university infrastructure development. Essentially, funding for the reconstruction and construction of universities was to be carried out on a parity basis. Funds were allocated for teaching buildings, research facilities, libraries, medical faculties, and university hospitals². The law did not interfere with the content of education but focused on material infrastructure.

The importance of this law is difficult to overestimate. On its basis, in the 1970s–1980s, a large-scale modernization of higher education infrastructure in the FRG was carried out: dozens of new universities and campuses were established (for example, in Bremen, Hagen, Kassel, Passau, Trier, Ulm, and others), existing classical universities were expanded, and modern laboratories and libraries were created. As a result, access to higher education for

institutions/history/history-of-the-universities-of-applied-sciences

¹ Gesetz über die Gemeinschaftsaufgabe “Ausbau und Neubau von Hochschulen” (Hochschulbauförderungsgesetz). *Bundesgesetzblatt*. 1969. Teil I. S. 1556–1559.

² Ibid.

German youth was significantly expanded, as higher education institutions were able to accommodate a much larger number of students. Importantly, regional disparities between federal states in terms of the number and capacity of universities were reduced. Of course, there were also certain negative aspects, including slow decision-making, complex coordination procedures between the federal center and regions, and an emphasis on quantity rather than quality.

It is known that in 1970–1994, the federal and state governments jointly invested approximately 66.2 billion German marks in the construction and expansion of universities and campuses. The federal share amounted to 29.9 billion marks, while the states contributed 36.3 billion¹. Only for buildings (excluding equipment), 37.7 billion marks were spent in 1970–1985². By the mid-1980s, 38 new universities had been opened in the FRG alongside 27 already existing ones³. For most of the newly established institutions, new buildings in a modern style were constructed. The most intensive construction activity took place in North Rhine–Westphalia, where 14 new universities were built at a cost of nearly 11 billion marks. Their academic facilities together comprised 1.5 million square meters. Over approximately 30 years (approximately 1960–1989), the usable space of German university buildings increased sevenfold, laying the material foundation for a tenfold increase in the number of students⁴.

At the initiative of the Social Democrats, on August 26, 1971, the Federal Training Assistance Act (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz, BAföG) was adopted⁵. According to this law, students of universities, higher vocational schools, and secondary vocational institutions were entitled to receive grants, provided that their own income and that of their

¹ Führ C. The German Education System since 1945: Outlines and Problems. Bonn, 1997, P. 45.

² Hnilica S. Experiments with Megastructures and Building Systems: University Building in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s and 1970s. *Architectural Histories*. 2022. Issue 10(1). Nr. 1, P. 6.

³ Ibid. S. 2.

⁴ Ibid. S. 6.

⁵ Bundesgesetz über individuelle Förderung der Ausbildung (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz – BAföG). URL: https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/baf_g/BAf%C3%B6G.pdf

parents were insufficient to cover the costs of education. Essentially, these grants were provided in the form of non-repayable stipends, the amount of which was determined after a thorough assessment by state authorities of parental income, the student's place of residence, and family status¹. The maximum grant could reach 420 marks per month. As early as 1972, 44.6% of West German students received educational grants. However, in 1974, due to financial constraints, the government introduced a mandatory loan component within the grant structure, ranging from 70 to 150 marks. Despite widespread student protests, part of the grant thus became a debt that had to be repaid to the state after graduation. This development somewhat reduced the number of grant recipients. By 1981, approximately 33% of students were receiving financial support². Overall, the grant system ensured a minimum standard of living for students and contributed to an increase in the number of higher education participants from working-class and low-income families.

In 1976, the Framework Law on Higher Education (Hochschulrahmengesetz) was adopted³. Prior to this, higher education in the FRG had been regulated by state laws, which led to significant differences in standards, admission procedures, and assessment practices. Ultimately, there were not only legal but also social and political prerequisites for the introduction of a federal framework law, as during the rule of the Social Democratic governments of W. Brandt and H. Schmidt, particular attention was given to expanding access to higher education for children from working-class and rural backgrounds, as well as to the effective use of human capital for further economic and scientific-technological development of the country.

The 1976 Higher Education Act defined the structure of universities, their functions, and governance, affirmed university autonomy, while also emphasizing the need for cooperation with

¹ Ibid.

² BAföG. 2025. URL: <https://grokipedia.com/page/BAf%C3%B6G#bafög>; Geschichte und Statistik zum BAföG. 2025. URL: <https://www.studierendenwerke.de/themen/studienfinanzierung/bafoeg/geschichte-und-statistik>

³ Hochschulrahmengesetz. Vom 26. Januar 1976. Bundesgesetzblatt. 1976. Teil I. Nr. 10. S. 185–206.

relevant state authorities. It was stressed that universities, in accordance with their mission, serve the development of sciences and the arts through research, teaching, study, and continuing education. They prepare students for professional activities requiring the application of scientific knowledge and methods or the capacity for artistic creativity. The law also outlined the tasks of universities in fostering the development of young scholars and artists, providing continuing education for their staff, and supporting the social development of students (taking into account the special needs of students with children and students with disabilities). Universities were required to participate in international, particularly European, cooperation in higher education and exchanges between German and foreign higher education institutions, while also addressing the specific needs of international students. The law emphasized the necessity of cooperation with other state and state-funded research and educational institutions¹.

All types of German higher education institutions were integrated into a unified system of higher education in the FRG. Existing universities could be expanded or merged to form so-called comprehensive (integrated) universities. If they wished to maintain their legal independence, they could cooperate through the establishment of joint bodies, thus becoming cooperative comprehensive universities. When forming a comprehensive university, it was necessary to ensure that, given its structure and the geographical distribution of its units, it could effectively perform its functions and implement the required range of educational programs². The introduction of a unified system of higher education was undoubtedly a positive development, as it eliminated the structural fragmentation that had existed among different types of higher education institutions across the federal states.

The 1976 law also established rules for admission, membership in the university, and the organization and governance of universities. It defined the rights and responsibilities of professors, students, academic staff, and other employees, as well as the

¹ Ibid. S. 187.

² Ibid. S. 188.

principles of student participation in university governance. In particular, it specified that students had the right to representation in collegiate bodies such as the senate, faculty councils, and committees. At the same time, it emphasized that primary responsibility for academic matters rested with professors, which somewhat limited the influence of students, especially in issues related to educational programs and regulations. The law also guaranteed students the right to establish self-governing bodies, independently address issues related to the protection of student interests, social and cultural matters, and to participate in governance within the university¹.

Naturally, the federal government, in cooperation with the governments of the federal states, monitored the implementation of the Higher Education Framework Law. In January 1984, a commission appointed by the Federal Minister of Education and Science to evaluate the effectiveness of the law presented a report that prompted legislators to introduce amendments to the main legal framework governing higher education. These amendments were enacted through a separate law in March 1985². First and foremost, university autonomy in student selection procedures was expanded. Alongside centralized admission for certain fields, local admission interviews at universities were introduced or expanded as part of the admissions process, giving institutions greater influence over their own selection procedures. At the same time, the 1985 amendments strengthened the role of professors and internal university bodies. The law introduced the possibility of choosing between two models of university governance – the rectoral model and the presidential model – thus allowing institutions to shape their governance structures more flexibly.

Furthermore, the law removed certain provisions concerning curricula and study programs from the list of requirements requiring governmental approval, thereby reducing the necessity for mandatory state approval of a number of internal university regulations (particularly those related to curricula and study plans). As a result, higher education institutions gained greater autonomy

¹ Ibid. S. 196.

² Zweites Gesetz zur Änderung des Hochschulrahmengesetzes. *Bundesgesetzblatt*. 1985. Teil I. Nr 18. S. 605–607.

in developing and approving their own academic regulations and internal procedures. The 1985 legislative changes also strengthened the legal status of professors in managing external funding (third-party funds) for research projects, granting them greater freedom and responsibility in the use of such resources¹, which contributed to enhancing research activity within universities.

It should be noted that the 1976 Framework Law on Higher Education served as a guideline for the adoption of new or the amendment of existing state laws, which specified particular issues. Thus, in 1978, amendments were introduced to the Bavarian Higher Education Act of 1973². These changes concerned the organization of university life in accordance with the framework law, the legal status of universities, student participation in administrative life, and structural issues related to academic bodies and governance. The Bavarian law of 1973 stipulated that universities possess a dual legal nature – they are both public corporations and state institutions. Universities manage their own affairs as corporations (corporate matters), while the state exercises only legal supervision in this regard. In both corporate and state matters, the university acts through its elected bodies and administration, headed by the chancellor (the principle of unified management).

Regarding the key issue of university structure, namely parity in governance, the Bavarian legislature, taking into account the jurisprudence of the Federal Constitutional Court, provided that the professoriate should hold a majority of seats in all university bodies. Professors, distinguished by their academic achievements, knowledge, and experience, bear decisive responsibility for the future of the university. In the assembly and senate of the university—which also include the president, vice-presidents, and chancellor—various groups (professors, associate professors, full-time teaching staff, academic and artistic personnel, students, and non-academic staff) were to be represented in the ratio 6:1:1:2:1. The functions of the assembly were essentially limited to adopting decisions on the university statute and electing the president, vice-presidents, and members of the presidential council. In the new

¹ Ibid.

² Bayerisches Hochschulgesetz (BayHSchG). *Bayerisches Gesetz- und Verordnungsblatt*. 1973. Nr. 26. S. 679–707.

organizational structure, the traditional faculty model («faculty of full professors») was replaced by the department as the primary organizational unit of the university. Academic institutions and operational units could be established under its authority. At the same time, a departmental council was created as an elected body, in which, alongside professors and associate professors, students were also represented. Within the departmental council, the number of professor representatives was increased to seven. According to the law, the university was headed by a president or a presidential council. Thus, the rector – who had previously led the university on a voluntary basis alongside his professorial duties – was replaced by a president or chair of the presidential council, who was typically a full-time employee¹.

The Bavarian Higher Education Act of 1973 also established and expanded students' rights to participate in university life. Students were recognized as members of the university and were granted the right to participate, through their representatives, in governing bodies and other committees. All elected student representatives in departmental councils and the senate formed the so-called Student Convention, which elected from among its members a Speakers' Council (up to four persons). The activities of the Student Convention and the Speakers' Council were financed from the state budget². Considerable attention in the Bavarian law was devoted to regulating educational programs and examinations. Study programs had to be designed in such a way that educational objectives could be achieved within the standard period of study. It was prohibited to base the assessment of an examination solely on coursework evaluation. The law also established the obligation of universities to support students through continuous academic advising³.

In 1978, Bavarian legislators introduced minor amendments to the state higher education law, aligning it with the 1976 federal framework law. Overall, adaptation was carried out in relation to provisions concerning the reorganization of higher education (§ 4

¹ Störle J. Die Entwicklung des Hochschulrechts in Bayern. 25 Jahre Bayerisches Hochschulgesetz. Journal of Higher Education Research. 2000. Issue 1–2. P. 49–50.

² Ibid. S. 50.

³ Ibid. S. 50–51.

of the framework law), study reform commissions (§ 9), voting rights in academic matters (§ 38), third-party funded research (§ 25), and compliance with the standard duration of studies (§ 16, para. 3)¹. Subsequent amendments were linked to the changes introduced into the Higher Education Framework Law in 1985. Three years later, the adaptation of Bavarian legislation to federal norms addressed issues of third-party funded research, expanded participation rights of professors in governance, the promotion of equal opportunities for women, the replacement of government approval requirements for academic regulations with notification procedures, and the introduction of a choice between rectoral and presidential governance models².

Among the most notable developments in the field of higher education in the FRG resulting from legislative changes, the expansion of universities, diversification of educational programs, and the allocation of significant funding, the following should be highlighted.

First, the growth in the number of students in the FRG. In 1960, nearly 247,000 students were enrolled in 131 universities and other higher education institutions (including art colleges), and five years later, the number exceeded 308,000. Between 1970 and 1975 alone, the number of students doubled – from 422,000 to 836,000. By 1980, there were already more than 1.2 million students in the FRG, and by 1989, more than 1.5 million³, studying both at traditional universities and at universities of applied sciences and various specialized colleges.

It should be noted that the number of graduates in general universities and other higher education institutions (including art colleges) was not particularly high. In 1960, 16,458 individuals passed diploma or equivalent examinations (6.6% of the total number of students), in 1975 – 33,669 (4.8%), and in 1990 – 81,524 (6.7%). Thus, over 30 years, the number of graduates increased more than fivefold in absolute terms, but not in relative terms. The number of students who passed certified teacher

¹ Ibid. S. 51.

² Ibid. S. 52

³ Development of Higher Education in East and West Germany (1960–1990). URL: https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/development-of-higher-education-in-east-and-west-germany-1960-1990.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

examinations initially increased and then declined: 11,143 in 1960, 40,349 in 1975, and 10,231 in 1990¹. In contrast, universities of applied sciences and colleges of public administration demonstrated a somewhat higher proportion of graduates relative to the number of students. In 1975, 144,713 students were enrolled in 97 such institutions, and 31,865 individuals passed diploma or equivalent examinations (23.4%). By 1990, enrollment had reached 370,988 students, with 55,852 graduates (15%)².

Second, the vast majority of graduates from universities and colleges of various levels and specializations entered the labor market. During the period under study, West Germany maintained a low level of unemployment among higher education graduates due to high demand for qualified personnel in industry, education, and administration. Consequently, higher education was generally considered a worthwhile investment. Even despite the rapid expansion of higher education in the 1960s–1980s, and thus the increase in the number of graduates, they generally found employment in their professional fields or in positions corresponding to their level of education at the early stages of their careers³.

Third, the increase in the number of university laboratories and research activities. In the 1960s–1980s, universities in the FRG actively expanded their research activities, receiving funding from federal and state budgets, as well as from third-party sources such as private companies and national and international foundations. However, it should be noted that university-based research in West Germany still lagged behind independent research institutes in terms of scale and productivity⁴.

Fourth, the growth in the number of young researchers. In 1960, 5,874 individuals in West German universities passed examinations (defended dissertations) for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Klein M. The association between graduates' field of study and occupational attainment in West Germany, 1980–2008. *Journal for Labour Market Research*. 2016. Issue 49. P. 53–55.

⁴ Dusdal J., Powell J. J. W., Baker D. P., Fu Y. Ch., Shamekhi Y., Stock M. University vs. Research Institute? The Dual Pillars of German Science Production, 1950–2010. *Minerva*. 2020. Issue 58. P. 319–342.

(PhD). By 1970, this number had risen to 10,515; in 1980 – to 12,222; and in 1990 – to 18,494¹. The majority of these young scholars gradually replaced the older generation of professors, lecturers, and researchers.

Of course, reforms in the field of higher education in the FRG did not always produce positive outcomes and were therefore subject to criticism by experts and researchers. Thus, Ece Göztepe-Çelebi, Freya Stallmann, and Annette Zimmer, largely relying on the research of Georg Turner (2001), pointed to a sharp increase in bureaucracy and the growing dependence of universities on the state and political forces. «The new power structure led to a situation in which state bureaucracy, namely governmental agencies for science and education of the German federal states, became very important political actors, thereby largely depriving universities of their former autonomy»², the scholars noted. In their view, the idea of comprehensive universities also failed to justify itself. Instead of democratizing decision-making processes by shifting power from the professoriate to broader corporate representation of university members—including students, young researchers, teaching staff, and auxiliary personnel—negative tendencies emerged. The dissonance among faculty, as well as the economic and political diversity of the growing number of students, led to a sharp politicization of factions within universities, making consensus-based decision-making difficult. Under such conditions, it became challenging to ensure long-term strategic development and effective planning of higher education institutions³.

Moreover, beginning in the late 1970s, funding for higher education gradually declined. Although the need for broader access to higher education remained widely recognized, federal and state budgets did not keep pace with the increasing number of students. At the same time, federal-level policy planning predicted a decline in student numbers in the coming years, basing such forecasts solely on birth rates and failing to anticipate the growing interest of

¹ Development of Higher Education in East and West Germany (1960–1990). URL: <https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/development-of-higher-education-in-east-and-west-germany-1960-1990.pdf>

² Göztepe-Çelebi E., Stallmann F., Zimmer A. Looking back: Higher Education Reform in Germany. *German Policy Studies*. 2002. Vol 2. No 3. P. 5.

³ Ibid. S. 5–6.

young people in higher education¹. The mismatch between rising student numbers and shrinking higher education budgets led to chronic underfunding of German universities². This situation was also influenced by the economic recession of 1981–1983. The new conservative-liberal coalition that came to power in 1983 gradually revised and partially neutralized the results of earlier reforms. For instance, the student grant program introduced in 1971 was transformed into a loan-based system. Long-term educational planning programs initiated in 1969 were discontinued³. In 1988, the Science Council (Wissenschaftsrat) reported that although the number of students continued to grow, expenditures on higher education had actually decreased by 2.4% since 1975⁴. As a result of budget reductions, the proportion of students receiving financial support declined from 27% in 1982 to 23% in 1988, while the share of students from working-class backgrounds decreased from 23% in 1982 to less than 7% in 1986⁵.

2. Science Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany

Science policy in the Federal Republic of Germany became the subject of scholarly research as early as the 1970s. Thus, in 1973, the analytical work of Klaus König was published, which examined the relationship between the scientific sphere and political authority in West Germany after World War II. From the perspective of his time, the author demonstrated how science shapes political decision-making in a democratic society, revealed the structures and mechanisms of interaction between the scientific sphere and state institutions in the FRG, and showed the influence of political life on the financing and prioritization of scientific development⁶. In 1976, Otto Keck analyzed the science policy of West German

¹ Katzenstein P. Y. Policy and politics in West Germany. The Growth of a semisovereign State. Philadelphia, 1987. P. 307.

² Göztepe-Çelebi E., Stallmann F., Zimmer A. Looking back: Higher Education Reform in Germany. *German Policy Studies*. 2002. Vol 2. No 3. P. 7.

³ Turner G. Hochschule zwischen Vorstellung und Wirklichkeit. Zur Geschichte der Hochschulreform im letzten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2001. S. 26.

⁴ Ibid. S. 27.

⁵ Ibid. S. 148.

⁶ König K. *Wissenschaft und Politik in der Bundesrepublik*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1973.

governments, providing numerous comparisons between the FRG and countries of Europe, the United States, and Japan¹. A philosophical article on the politicization of science in the FRG was published in 1983 by Peter Weingart². In 1985, Arthur Benz published a study on the influence of German federalism on the organization of science and research in West Germany³.

The interaction between state authorities, scientific organizations, and the autonomy of science in the FRG was examined by Hans-Willi Hohn and Uwe Schimank⁴. Gerhard Ritter provided a comprehensive overview of the development of large-scale («big science») research institutes in the FRG⁵. A thorough analysis of political influence on science in West Germany was conducted by Dietmar Braun⁶. Susanne Lütz characterized the functional aspects and conditions of maintaining public funding for industrial research⁷.

Stefan Laffin, Albrecht Cordes, and Barbara Kuhn addressed the issue of constructing German science policy abroad, using the example of the development of the German Research Centre in Venice (1965–1985)⁸. A comparative analysis of science policy in the FRG and the GDR in the 1950s–1980s was carried out by Gernot Gutmann and Siegfried Mampel⁹. The relationship between

¹ Keck O. West German science policy since the early 1960's: trends and objectives. *Research Policy*. 1976. Vol. 5 (2). P. 116–157.

² Weingart P. Verwissenschaftlichung der Gesellschaft – Politisierung der Wissenschaft. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, Jg. 12, Heft 3, Juli 1983, S. 225–241.

³ Benz A. *Föderalismus und Wissenschaftspolitik*. Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1985.

⁴ Hohn H.-W., Schimank U. *Konflikte und Gleichgewichte im Forschungssystem*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 444 s.

⁵ Ritter G. A. Big science in Germany. Past and present. London: German Historical Institute, 1994. 35 p.

⁶ Braun D. *Die politische Steuerung der Wissenschaft*. Ein Beitrag zum “kooperativen Staat”. Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1997. 450 s.

⁷ Lütz S. Die Steuerung industrieller Forschungsk Kooperation: Funktionsweise und Bfolgsbedingungen da staatlichen Förderirutments Verbundforschung. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1993. 251 s.

⁸ Laffin S., Cordes A., Kuhn B. (Hrsg.). *Deutsche Wissenschaftspolitik im Ausland und gelebtes Patriarchat Gründung und Aufbau des Deutschen Studienzentrums in Venedig, 1965–1985*, 2023. 352 s.

⁹ Szöllösi-Janze M. *Wissenschaftspolitik im geteilten Deutschland*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2024.

science in Germany and politics, the economy, and the mass media was outlined by Peter Weingart¹.

Andreas Stucke identified the functions of state actors in science policy². The short-lived functioning of the German Research Council was examined by Catherine Carson and Michael Gubser³. Ulrich Teichler and Rudolf Stichweh analyzed the role and place of scientific research within the higher education system of the FRG⁴. Dagmar Schipanski described the structure of the German research system at the turn of the 1980s–1990s⁵. Regional aspects of the development of «non-university science» in the Land of North Rhine–Westphalia were examined by Michael Farrenkopf⁶. The system of science funding through intermediary organizations in the FRG was analyzed in the dissertation of Felix Streiter⁷. A number of studies are devoted to well-known scientific public organizations that unite hundreds of German research institutes⁸.

¹ Weingart P. Die Stunde der Wahrheit? Zum Verhältnis der Wissenschaft zu Politik, Wirtschaft und Medien. Weilerswist: Velbrück Wissenschaft, 2001. 397 s.

² Stucke A. Staatliche Akteure in der Wissenschaftspolitik. In: Simon, D., Knie, A., Hornbostel, S. (eds) Handbuch Wissenschaftspolitik. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-91993-5_25

³ Carson C., Gubser M. Science Advising and Science Policy in Post-War West Germany: The example of the Deutscher Forschungsrat. *Minerva*. 2002. Vol. 40. P. 147–179. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015708903590>

⁴ Teichler U. Hochschulsysteme und Hochschulpolitik. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Campus Verlag, 1988; Teichler U. The future of higher education and the future of higher education research. *Tertiary Education and Management*. 2003. Vol. 9(3). P. 171–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2003.9967102>; Stichweh R. Wissenschaft, Universität, Professionen: Soziologische Analysen. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Suhrkamp, 1994.

⁵ Schipanski D. Structures of the German Research System. In Detlef Müller-Böling, Evelies Mayer, Anne J. MacLachlan, Jutta Fedrowitz (eds.). *University in Transition Research Mission – Interdisciplinarity – Governance*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 1998. P. 103–113.

⁶ Farrenkopf M. Außeruniversitäre Wissenschaft in NRW am Beispiel der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft und ihrer Forschungsmuseen. *Der Anschnitt* 74. 2022. H. 5–6. S. 210–225.

⁷ Streiter F. Wissenschaftsförderung durch Mittlerorganisationen. Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde der rechtswissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg. Bonn, 2008. 519 s.

⁸ *History of the Max Planck Society*. Berlin: Max Planck Society, 2008; Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. *Anwendungsorientierte Forschung in Deutschland*. München: Fraunhofer IRB Verlag, 1999; Parthier B. Die Leopoldina. Bestand und Wandel der ältesten deutschen Akademie. Halle: Druck-Zuck, 1994.

After the establishment of the independent West German federal state in 1949, the government of Konrad Adenauer focused primarily on the reconstruction of Germany after World War II, the development of its economy and social sphere, and the building of international relations. Issues of education and science did not always receive sufficient attention. In these areas, the government largely limited itself to minor denazification measures. In general, economic recovery relied on the scientific personnel who remained after the fall of the Third Reich or who returned from emigration.

It should be noted that former émigrés played a significant role in the revival of research traditions in universities and scientific associations. Within the framework of the deliberate policy of «integration with the West» (Westbindung), the return of scholars from exile was seen as an ideal opportunity to reorient German liberal thought toward the Western intellectual sphere and to provide theoretical justification for the new political order. Particular importance was attached to the return of German sociologists, who had been forced to leave Germany during the Nazi period due to the persecution of sociology as a «Jewish science» (jüdische Wissenschaft)¹. Among the well-known sociologists who returned from emigration were René König, Max Horkheimer, Helmuth Plessner, and Arnold Bergstraesser.

At the same time, many sociologists who had previously served the Nazi regime continued to work in universities and research institutions. Among them were Arnold Gehlen, Helmut Schelsky, Hans Freyer, and Karl Valentin Müller². Other former supporters of the Nazi regime initially also found employment at the Center for Social Research of the University of Münster in Dortmund³. As researchers note, well-known Nazi sociologists were only rarely permanently dismissed from public service. On the contrary, in the early postwar years, it was often easier to become a member of the

¹ Strote N. B. *Emigration and the Foundation of West Germany, 1933–1963*. A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History in the Graduate Division of the University of California, Berkeley, 2011. P. 81–82.

² Moebius S. *Sociology in Germany. A History*. Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. P. 57.

³ Rehberg K.-S. Auch keine Stunde Null. Westdeutsche Soziologie nach 1945. In Walter H. Pehle & Peter Sillem (eds). *Wissenschaft im geteilten Deutschland. Restauration oder Neubeginn nach 1945?* Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1992. Pp. 26–44.

German Sociological Association as a sociologist with a National Socialist past than as a left-wing sociologist persecuted by the Nazis¹.

This situation resulted from government policies of the early 1950s. Laws introduced by the government under Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer shortly after the establishment of the FRG benefited many individuals previously associated with the Nazi regime. In essence, they guaranteed impunity to former supporters of the regime and broadly interpreted the legal status of former officials. This contributed to the fact that a number of individuals who had built careers during the Nazi period occupied high positions, including in universities².

Only in the second half of the 1950s did the government take its first steps toward regulating the scientific sphere and defining its priorities and objectives. On September 5, 1957, Chancellor K. Adenauer signed an Administrative Agreement establishing the Science and Humanities Council (Wissenschaftsrat) as an advisory body to the federal government and the governments of the federal states. According to this agreement, the Science Council was to provide recommendations to both levels of government on the development of science, research, and universities; promote the international competitiveness of German science; evaluate research institutions, higher education institutions, and research programs; and prepare recommendations for reforms in higher education. Federal and state governments were expected to take these recommendations into account when drafting their budgets within available resources. Relevant federal and state institutions were obliged to support the work of the Science Council by providing continuous information and consultation. The newly established body was to consist of 54 members – scientists or recognized public figures. The Federal President was granted the authority to appoint 32 members, including 24 nominated jointly by major

¹ Baur N., Castillo Ulloa I., Mennell S., Million, A. The Refiguration of Spaces and the Refiguration of Epistemic Cultures: The Changing Balance of Involvement and Engagement in Fundamental and Applied Research. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. 2021. Vol. 22(3). Art. 21 (pp. 1–61). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-22.3.3810>

² Stephan M. *Sociology in Germany. A History*. Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. P. 57.

scientific organizations and 8 nominated jointly by the federal and state governments. These members were appointed for three-year terms, with the possibility of reappointment. In addition, the federal and state governments appointed 22 members (six from the federal government and one from each federal state), with a permanent deputy assigned to each member¹.

In his speech at the opening of the Science Council on September 5, 1957, Chancellor Adenauer stated: «For the first time in Germany, an institution is being created that will provide a comprehensive overview of scientific work in the Federal Republic and submit proposals to the federal and state governments regarding the development of science. Representatives of science and public life will cooperate with representatives of the federal and state governments within this body»². At the same time, he emphasized that the Administrative Agreement establishing the Science Council «will not initiate a centralized science policy. The centers of German scientific life, which have developed differently across the federal states throughout history, will be preserved and further developed. However, this agreement will demonstrate that science and research, wherever they are conducted, serve not only individual regions but the entire nation, and therefore the entire community must intervene where necessary»³.

At the beginning of 1958, the first meeting of the Science Council took place, chaired by the renowned German legal historian, Rector of the University of Frankfurt am Main (1955–1956), and former reserve captain of the Wehrmacht, Helmut Coing⁴.

It should be noted that the powers of the Science Council were, to some extent, influenced by the Königstein Agreement of March

¹ Verwaltungsabkommen zwischen Bund und Ländern über die Errichtung eines Wissenschaftsrates vom 5. September 1957. *Wissenschaftsrates*. https://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/DE/Ueber-uns/Grundsatzdokumente/grundsatzdokumente?utm_source

² Wissenschaftsrat 1957–1982. Köln: Herausgegeben vom Wissenschaftsrat, 1983. S. 5.

³ Wissenschaftsrat 1957–1982. Köln: Herausgegeben vom Wissenschaftsrat, 1983. S. 5–6.

⁴ Coing H. Für Wissenschaften und Künste Lebensbericht eines europäischen. Rechtsgelehrten Herausgegeben, kommentiert und mit einem Nachwort von Michael F. Feldkamp. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, S. 59, 171–174, 182.

31, 1949, which regulated the financing of German research institutions and organizations, including the German Research Foundation, the Max Planck Society, and others¹. In his speech, Adenauer pointed out the limitations of financing research institutions under this agreement, as such tasks exceeded the capabilities of individual federal states. From that point onward, the federal government assumed half of the subsidies that the states were required to provide to research institutions, allowing the savings (approximately 22 million marks) to be redirected toward the development of engineering schools².

As early as June 1958, the Science Council presented its first recommendations to the federal government regarding the allocation of funds (85 million marks). It also issued recommendations to state governments concerning construction projects in higher education³. Subsequently, it regularly submitted financial proposals. In November 1960, the Science Council prepared a comprehensive expert report with recommendations on the expansion of higher education institutions, faculties, departments, and the increase in the number of professors⁴. These recommendations applied to all classical and technological universities in the FRG. In the field of university research, the Council recommended, in particular, maintaining the unity of research and teaching, ensuring each university had a basic set of professorial positions and equipment, and establishing specialized areas in certain universities for the development of specific disciplines⁵. Considerable attention was also given to research in university hospitals⁶. Overall, this document demonstrates the active role of the state, universities, and research institutions in shaping science policy (Wissenschaftspolitik) in the FRG.

¹ Königsteiner Staatsabkommen. URL: https://dewiki.de/Lexikon/K%C3%B6nigsteiner_Staatsabkommen?utm_source

² Wissenschaftsrat 1957–1982. Köln: Herausgegeben vom Wissenschaftsrat, 1983. S. 5.

³ Wissenschaftsrat 1957–1982. Köln: Herausgegeben vom Wissenschaftsrat, 1983. S. 66.

⁴ Empfehlungen des Wissenschaftsrates zum Ausbau der wissenschaftlichen Einrichtungen. Teil I. Wissenschaftliche Hochschulen. Bonn: Bundesdruckerei, 1960. 535 s.

⁵ Empfehlungen des Wissenschaftsrates... S. 408.

⁶ Empfehlungen des Wissenschaftsrates... S. 415–417.

The formation of science policy acquired an institutional foundation in the early 1960s with the emergence of a specialized Federal Ministry for Scientific Research. Its origins lay in the Federal Ministry for Special Affairs, established in October 1953 under the leadership of Franz Josef Strauss. In 1955, it was renamed the Federal Ministry for Atomic Affairs. In view of the emergence of new fields of technological development, such as space research and electronic data processing, on December 14, 1962, the ministry was renamed the Federal Ministry for Scientific Research. Following an amendment to the Basic Law in 1969, the federal government obtained new competencies in the field of educational planning and research funding (a joint task enshrined in Article 91b). Accordingly, on October 22, 1969, the ministry was transformed into the Federal Ministry of Education and Science. At the end of 1972, this ministry transferred its departments III (research planning; technological research and development), IV (nuclear technologies, data processing), and V (space research and technology; aeronautical research) to the newly established Federal Ministry for Research and Technology (BMFT)¹.

The Federal Ministry for Research and Technology was created through the division of the Federal Ministry of Education and Science in order to promote fundamental and applied research as well as technological development. From the outset, its priorities included the aerospace and transport sectors, environment and energy, data processing, biotechnology, and health research. As part of these organizational changes, the new ministry assumed the following responsibilities: (a) from the Federal Ministry of Education and Science – fundamental and coordinating responsibility for information technologies; coordinating responsibility for civilian and military aerospace research and development; general funding of research (excluding the German Research Foundation (DFG) and Joint Research Centres); planning and coordination of research (technological research, development, and innovation in life sciences and biomedicine; data processing; nuclear technologies and nuclear research; space research and technology; aeronautical research); (b) from the Federal Ministry of the Interior – responsibility for the

¹ Bundesministerium für Forschung und Technologie (Bestand). URL: <https://www.archivportal-d.de/item/7NAR24PI4O222IJEKKX4BMWPDCIERGMI>

working group on database systems; coordination of federal information systems; (c) from the Ministry of Economics – responsibility for the promotion of electronic data processing¹.

Further responsibilities of the Federal Ministry for Research and Technology in the field of research were assumed on the basis of written agreements with other ministries. In particular, under an agreement of July 25, 1973, with the Federal Ministry of Transport, responsibilities for conducting hydrological research and related projects, especially in the field of environmental protection, were transferred to the ministry². Two years later (March 26, 1975), another agreement with the Federal Ministry of Transport was concluded, this time concerning cooperation in transport research and development. In April 1976, an agreement was signed with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development regarding technology development and transfer in developing countries. On December 11, 1978, cooperation with the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources was established on the basis of an agreement with the Federal Ministry of Economics. An agreement with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (November 1980) defined the content and forms of cooperation with the Federal Centre for the Humanization of Working Life, which operated under the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health³. Of course, this is only a brief overview of the powers and interests of the Federal Ministry for Research and Technology in the 1970s–1980s, which were considerably broader

Another center of influence on the formation of West German science policy was the Federal–State Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion. As is well known, on June 25, 1970, the federal government and the Länder concluded an administrative agreement that established in Bonn a joint Commission for Educational Planning as a permanent forum for

¹ Bundesministerium für Forschung und Technologie (Bestand). URL: <https://www.archivportal-d.de/item/7NAR24PI4O222IJEKKX4BMWPDCIERGMI>

² Bundesministerium für Forschung und Technologie. Organisationsunterlagen. URL: https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/N6NWM22LHKQJCVE6FG6RTIEYT4QC2MEO?utm_source

³ Bundesministerium für Forschung und Technologie. Organisationsunterlagen. *Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek*. URL: https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/N6NWM22LHKQJCVE6FG6RTIEYT4QC2MEO?utm_source

discussion, as well as a planning and advisory body for all educational matters concerning both the federal government and the Länder. According to the agreement, the Commission was tasked with developing a long-term framework plan for the entire education system, including subplans and funding proposals¹. The Commission's powers in the field of research were defined by the Framework Agreement on Research Promotion of November 28, 1975², which primarily regulated the financing of scientific research. The Commission, composed of representatives of the federal and state governments, included four committees, one of which dealt with research promotion. After 1983, the Commission's powers were reduced due to political resistance to its reform (and funding) plans, and the number of committees was reduced to two: educational and research. Notably, each of them included a working group on the «Promotion of Women in Science»³. At the level of the Länder, ministries and commissions responsible for higher education, science, and research development also operated.

Scholars typically identify two pillars of the FRG's scientific landscape in the period under study: *universities* and *research institutes*. Universities, in the view of researchers, became the foundation for the revival of scientific life in postwar West Germany. «No matter how successful institutes may have been, universities nonetheless formed the foundation upon which Germany restored a significant part of its scientific recognition among highly competitive European and global scientific systems after the low point of 1945», researchers noted⁴. As mentioned above, the expansion of universities continued in the 1960s–1970s. Ultimately, German universities

¹ Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung. *Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek*. URL: <https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/6IULCCNAAEUTW6YYG3NAJGMJQQNNN5KI>

² Rahmenvereinbarung Forschungsförderung (RV-Fo) – vom 28. November 1975. *Kultusministerkonferenz*. URL: <https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/pdf/foederalismus/Dok21.pdf>

³ Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung. *Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek*. URL: <https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/6IULCCNAAEUTW6YYG3NAJGMJQQNNN5KI>

⁴ Dusdal J., Powell J. J. W., Baker D. P., Fu Y. Ch., Shamekhi Y., Stock M. University vs. Research Institute? The Dual Pillars of German Science Production, 1950–2010. *Minerva*. 2020. Issue 58. P. 336.

(especially classical and technological institutions, and to a lesser extent universities of applied sciences) consistently demonstrated higher publication output in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) than research institutes. From 1970 onward, when institutes began to generate significant publication output, and up to the early twenty-first century, for every publication authored solely by institute researchers, there were more than three publications authored solely by university researchers¹. At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge the close interaction between universities and research institutes (organized within the Max Planck Society, the Fraunhofer Society, or operating independently) in the implementation of various research projects funded both by the state (at federal and state levels) and by private actors.

A key factor in the development of science and research in the FRG was undoubtedly the growth of funding. The increase in financial expenditures on science in the FRG is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1.

Science Funding in the FRG (1965–1990)

Year	Expenditures of the federal and state governments (million euros)*	Share (%) of the budget	Enterprises	Private non-profit organizations	Total R&D expenditures (million euros)*
1965	1915	2,7	2076	48	4 039
1970	3528	3,5	3891	97	7 516
1975	6153	3,4	6029	159	12 341
1980	8194	3,1	10 172	61	18 427
1985	10 587	3,4	15 896	68	26 551
1990	12 729	3,2	22081	182	34 992

* Financial indicators are presented as converted from German marks into euros.

Source: R&D expenditure of the Federal Republic of Germany and funding thereof (Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space; Federal Statistical Office; Stifterverband Wissenschaftsstatistik). 2025. URL: <https://www.datenportal.bmfr.bund.de/portal/en/Table-1.1.2.html>

¹ Dusdal J., Powell J. J. W., Baker D. P., Fu Y. Ch., Shamekhi Y., Stock M. University vs. Research Institute? The Dual Pillars of German Science Production, 1950–2010. *Minerva*. 2020. Issue 58. P. 331.

As can be seen, government expenditures on scientific research increased over 25 years from 1.9 billion euros to 12.7 billion euros, i.e., almost sevenfold. At the same time, they fluctuated within the range of 2.7% to 3.5% of total public expenditure (federal and state budgets). It is important to note that the majority of research funding was provided on a contractual basis by enterprises and non-profit organizations. Only in 1975 did public expenditure account for nearly 50% of the «German science budget», while in other years it was significantly lower than contributions from commercial and non-commercial organizations.

Science funding was carried out by both public and private actors through a number of organizations, including the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), the Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science, and the Fraunhofer Society for the Advancement of Applied Research. It should be noted that the General Education Plan submitted to the Bundestag in 1973 emphasized the need to develop methods and criteria for research planning within the overall scientific system of the FRG, as well as the need to coordinate overall research funding. Accordingly, it clearly highlighted the importance of supporting the Max Planck Society and the Fraunhofer Society as the principal bodies financing fundamental and applied research outside universities. Particular importance was attached to the German Research Foundation as «the principal organization for the promotion of research, especially in universities, and for the dissemination of research planning within its own sector»¹.

The German Research Foundation, established in 1951, was formally a private organization but in practice performed public functions by distributing funding received from the Länder among universities, research institutions, and scientific societies. Since its establishment, it has funded individual grants, research fellowships, research leave (since 1952), priority programs (since 1953), grants for fulfilling international obligations (since 1955), central research centers (since 1957), scientists' travel to conferences (since 1959), collaborative research centers (since 1968), international scientific

¹ Unterrichtung durch die Bundesregierung. Bildungsgesamtplan. Bundestag Drucksache 7/1474. 1973. S. 49. URL: https://dserver.bundestag.de/btd/07/014/0701474.pdf?utm_source

events in Germany (since 1972), the Heinz Maier-Leibnitz Prize (since 1977), the Heisenberg Program (since 1978), and the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Program (since 1985), among others¹.

The Max Planck Society, founded in 1948, developed quite extensively. In 1948, it consisted of 25 institutes and research institutions with a total budget of approximately 7 million marks (about 3.6 million euros), while by 1960 it included 40 institutes and research institutions employing around 2,600 people, including 750 scientists, and its annual budget approached 80 million marks (about 40.9 million euros)². The 1960s saw unprecedented growth of the Society. By 1966, the number of research institutions had increased to 52, and the number of newly established institutes had nearly doubled. By 1970, the Society's budget exceeded 400 million marks (about 204.5 million euros). Under these conditions, major new international-level research centers were established in biochemistry, biophysical chemistry, molecular genetics, immunobiology, biological cybernetics, and cell biology. New and costly research directions were initiated in physics and chemistry, and institutes were founded for radio astronomy, optical astronomy, space research, and solid-state research. The humanities and social sciences, which had previously received little attention, were now more closely integrated into the Society's research spectrum. In the field of law, institutes were established specializing in European legal history, criminal law, and patent, copyright, and competition law³.

The expansion of the Max Planck Society slowed in the 1970s, when 20 institutes and departments were closed. New institutes could thereafter be established only through the reorganization or reorientation of existing ones. Greater attention was given to restructuring and adjusting the research focus of entire institutes, alongside an increased emphasis on adopting new and innovative research themes. Increased attention was also paid to participation in large-scale research projects, including BESSY (synchrotron

¹ Chronology of Funding Programmes. *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*. URL: <https://www.dfg.de/en/about-us/about-the-dfg/history/funding-past-and-present/chronology-funding-programmes>

² History of the Max Planck Society. URL: https://www.mpg.de/10423756/History_of_the_Max_Planck_Society.pdf

³ History of the Max Planck Society. URL: https://www.mpg.de/10423756/History_of_the_Max_Planck_Society.pdf

radiation research), EISCAT (incoherent scatter studies in the auroral zone), and IRAM (millimeter radio astronomy research)¹.

The Fraunhofer Society was established at the end of March 1949 in Munich and, in the first years of its existence, operated primarily within Bavaria. In 1951, it participated for the first time in the allocation of research funding from the European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan). Already the following year, the Fraunhofer Society became the third major actor in the West German research landscape, after the German Research Foundation and the Max Planck Society. However, the Society's real expansion began in the second half of the 1950s, when, as a result of the FRG's economic growth, private-sector expenditures on research and development increased, reaching 600 million marks. In 1955, the Patent Office for German Research of the Fraunhofer Society was established, and new institutes were subsequently created (for example, the Institute for Hygienic-Bacteriological Work Processes in Munich, the Institute for Stone and Wood Research in Bonn, the Institute for Electrical Materials in Freiburg, and the Institute for Applied Physics in Stuttgart). From 1956 onward, the Society began receiving contracts from the Ministry of Defense, which covered up to 50% of its research budget. By 1959, the organization comprised nine institutes with 135 employees, and its budget had reached 3.6 million marks. By 1964, the Fraunhofer Society consisted of 19 institutes, with total revenues amounting to 16 million marks. Five years later, its budget had increased to 33 million marks².

In 1968, at the initiative of the Federal Ministry for Scientific Research, a Commission for the Promotion of the Expansion of the Fraunhofer Society was established, which represented one of the examples of science policy in the FRG. Two years later, the Commission presented its recommendations, which included proposals for the establishment of potential future institutes of the Fraunhofer Society, as well as for conceptual and organizational changes. In particular, these involved the integrated combination of

¹ History of the Max Planck Society. URL: https://www.mpg.de/10423756/History_of_the_Max_Planck_Society.pdf

² Geschichte der Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. *Fraunhofer*. URL: <https://www.fraunhofer.de/de/ueber-fraunhofer/profil-struktur/geschichte-fraunhofer.html>

prior research, contract research, and commissioned research; a balanced regional distribution of institutes; the creation of spatial and thematic centers of excellence; and the introduction of performance-based remuneration. For the detailed planning of the Society's expansion, a «Joint Commission» was established, comprising members of the Federal Ministry for Scientific Research and the Fraunhofer Society. In 1972, the Joint Commission presented its project, which envisaged an increase in baseline public funding in accordance with the success of the Fraunhofer Society in acquiring contract research projects (the so-called «Fraunhofer model»). This was intended to strengthen the market orientation of research and development activities. In 1973, the government approved the basic structure of the «Fraunhofer model», which consisted of core funding largely based on research performance, as well as additional funds managed by the Society's Executive Board. This reflected the government's intention to transform the Fraunhofer Society into a leading umbrella organization for applied research institutes¹.

By 1974, the Fraunhofer Society comprised 27 institutes (nearly 1,700 employees), generating 100 million marks, and five years later already more than 180 million marks. A program to promote contract research for small and medium-sized enterprises was launched. In 1976, the Ministry of Defense required the organizational and financial separation of defense-related research departments within institutes from those engaged in civilian projects. As a result, the assets of the institutes were divided into three areas: defense research, contract research, and service facilities. The following year, a framework agreement on research funding for non-defense-related institutes was introduced. It provided for joint political responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal Ministry of Defense for the development of the Society. The agreement stipulated that the civilian research sector would be funded by the federal government and the governments of the Länder in a ratio of 9 to 1. In 1978, the Fraunhofer Society's program for small and medium-sized

¹ Geschichte der Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. *Fraunhofer*. URL: <https://www.fraunhofer.de/de/ueber-fraunhofer/profil-struktur/geschichte-fraunhofer.html>

enterprises was transformed into a comprehensive federal program, which became an important factor in the organization's growth and prestige. In the 1980s, the Society focused on the development of research in the fields of computer and laser technologies. Orders from the civilian sector gradually increased, while those from the defense sector declined. By 1984, more than 3,500 people were employed in 33 institutes of the Fraunhofer Society, and its budget amounted to 360 million marks. By 1989, nearly 6,700 employees were working in 37 institutes, and total revenues reached 700 million marks¹.

In addition to the aforementioned organizations and universities, numerous independent research institutes operated in the FRG throughout the 1950s–1980s, constituting a «third force» in German science. Among them, two groups of institutions should be distinguished: (a) national research centers in the fields of nuclear and space research, computer science, and biotechnology; (b) smaller institutes in the areas of economics, technology, and the social sciences.

The former of these were consolidated in the early 1990s into the Hermann von Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres (Hermann von Helmholtz Gemeinschaft Deutscher Forschungszentren, HGF). The first national research centers in Karlsruhe, Jülich, and Geesthacht were established in the mid-1950s for conducting nuclear research and developing nuclear technologies. In 1959, the Center for High-Energy Physics (Stiftung Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, DESY) was opened in Hamburg. The next stage in the development of national research centers in the mid- and late 1960s was characterized by the establishment of centers for space research, data processing and computer science, heavy-ion research, cancer research, molecular biology, and biotechnology. By the end of the 1980s, 13 large federal research centers were operating in West Germany, and after the reunification of the country, three additional centers were established in the eastern part².

¹ Geschichte der Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. *Fraunhofer*. URL: <https://www.fraunhofer.de/de/ueber-fraunhofer/profil-struktur/geschichte-fraunhofer.html>

² Schipanski D. Structures of the German Research System. In Detlef Müller-Böling, Evelies Mayer, Anne J. MacLachlan, Jutta Fedrowitz (eds.). *University in*

The number of research institutions in the second group was significantly larger. They relied primarily on financial support from the governments of the Länder. In 1969, amendments were introduced to the Basic Law of the FRG, according to which the federal government and the governments of the Länder obtained the constitutional right to cooperate on research projects of supraregional significance that constituted a «national science policy interest». After intensive negotiations involving more than 300 institutions, an agreement was finally reached in 1977 on the joint funding of 46 institutions included in the so-called «Blue List» (Blauer Liste – named after the color of the paper on which the list was printed). From 1979 onward, the institutions included in the Blue List were regularly evaluated by the Science Council in order to ensure a high level of scientific performance and to initiate targeted development. By 1989, five institutions had been removed from the list, while six new ones had been added. Through the Blue List, the federal government and the governments of the Länder created an instrument that enabled them to respond flexibly and rapidly to scientific innovations and the demands of science policy. At the same time, the Blue List project proved difficult to implement, and the number of institutions receiving public funding remained almost unchanged. Limitations on total expenditures for the Blue List led to the so-called «omnibus principle»: the funds required to include a new institution could only be made available by removing other institutes from the list¹. As is well known, in 1997 most of the Blue List research institutes were consolidated into the Leibniz Association.

As Dagmar Schipianski aptly noted, the German research system is governed by three types of «organizing agents»: (a) research organizations (Max Planck Society, Fraunhofer Society, national research centers, «Blue List» institutions); (b) federal and state governments; (c) intermediary bodies that analyze systemic problems and provide recommendations (the Science Council, the

Transition Research Mission – Interdisciplinarity – Governance. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 1998. P. 106.

¹ Die Geschichte der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft. *Leibniz-Gemeinschaft*. <https://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/ueber-uns/geschichte/leibniz-gemeinschaft>

Federal–State Commission, the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education)¹.

At the same time, researchers point to a number of problematic aspects in the science policy of the FRG that accumulated over the period under study. The complex system of scientific institutions, societies, foundations, governing and auxiliary structures described above was characterized by several general gaps in coordination: 1) the governments of the Länder controlled the higher education system but did not always act in a coordinated manner, even despite the existence of framework legislation in the field of higher education (since 1976); 2) the institutional structure provided for a strong role of individual research organizations vis-à-vis the government, yet in the FRG no mechanisms were developed to achieve high-level consensus on general policy issues involving all key actors – scientific organizations, the governments of the Länder, and the federal government; 3) FRG legislation established a fairly clear division of responsibilities between the federal government and the governments of the Länder, but neither of these actors functioned as an independent player in science policy and could not operate without the support of the other; 4) the entire scientific system of the FRG was characterized by a pronounced bias toward fundamental research².

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the research system of the FRG during the period under study possessed substantial institutional, human, and financial potential. The effectiveness of state policy in this field can be illustrated through regional examples. For instance, in a 1984 research report, the Ministry of Science and Research of the Land of North Rhine–Westphalia assessed the expansion of non-university research activities since the late 1970s as «highly successful». In the sphere of large research institutions, this primarily concerned the Nuclear Research Center in Jülich, the Society for Mathematics and Data Processing in Sankt Augustin, and the German Aerospace Research Center in Cologne, which together required funding amounting to 537

¹ Schipanski D. Structures of the German Research System. In Detlef Müller-Böling, Evelies Mayer, Anne J. MacLachlan, Jutta Fedrowitz (eds.). *University in Transition Research Mission – Interdisciplinarity – Governance*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 1998. P. 107, 111.

² Schipanski D. Structures of the German Research System... P. 111.

million marks in 1984. Owing to the existing 90:10 funding ratio between the federal government and the Länder, North Rhine–Westphalia received approximately 54 million marks in subsidies in 1984. Institutes of the Fraunhofer Society and the Max Planck Society were also actively developing in this Land. Prior to 1980, there were only two Fraunhofer institutes in North Rhine–Westphalia: a branch of the Institute for Toxicology and Aerosol Research located in the Hochsauerland region and the Water Resources Documentation Center in Düsseldorf. Subsequently, these were joined by the Fraunhofer Institutes for Production Technology in Aachen and for Transport Technologies and Goods Distribution in Dortmund, and in the autumn of 1984, the Institute for Microelectronic Circuits and Systems began its work in Duisburg. Under the Königstein Agreement, the Ministry of Science and Research of North Rhine–Westphalia was required to allocate nearly 100 million marks to the Max Planck Society in 1984 alone. Thus, in the 1980s, the Institute of Mathematics in Bonn, the Institute for Plant Research in Cologne-Vogelsang, and the Institute for Neurological Research in Cologne-Merheim were established¹. Undoubtedly, similar indicators were demonstrated in other Länder of the FRG.

CONCLUSION

Thus, in the 1950s–1980s, the FRG developed a comprehensive state policy in the fields of higher education and science aimed at ensuring economic growth and the implementation of scientific and technological progress. Higher education reforms – supported by the 1969 amendments to the Basic Law, the establishment of specialized federal institutions, and the adoption of key legislative acts (1969, 1971, 1976) – led to the expansion of the university network, an increase in the number of students and young researchers, the intensification of research activities, and the strengthening of links between education and the labor market. At the same time, an effective model of science policy was formed, combining state regulation with a strong self-governing component

¹ Farrenkopf M. Außeruniversitäre Wissenschaft in NRW am Beispiel der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft und ihrer Forschungsmuseen. *Der Anschnitt* 74, 2022, H. 5–6. S. 218.

and relying on substantial growth in funding, the development of both university and non-university research, and support for both fundamental and applied research. However, these reforms were also characterized by contradictions, including increased bureaucratization, limitations on university autonomy, and a reduction in financial support in the 1980s.

ABSTRACT

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the fields of higher education and science during the 1950s–1980s. It examines the preconditions, content, and consequences of higher education reforms in postwar West Germany, including the restoration of university autonomy, the democratization of governance, the expansion of access to education, and the emergence of the mass university. Particular attention is paid to the role of key legislative acts, such as the University Construction Promotion Act (1969), the Federal Training Assistance Act (1971), and the Framework Act for Higher Education (1976), in modernizing the institutional structure and financing of the educational system. The chapter also highlights the establishment of universities of applied sciences as a new type of institution oriented toward labor market needs, as well as analyzes the growth in student numbers, the expansion of research activities, and the increase in the number of young scholars. At the same time, it identifies the contradictions of the reform process, including increasing bureaucratization, limitations on university autonomy, and underfunding amid expanding enrollment.

The second part of the chapter focuses on the development of science policy in the FRG, emphasizing the role of state institutions in regulating the research sector. It explores the activities of the Science Council, the Federal Ministry of Education and Science, and the Federal Ministry of Research and Technology in shaping research priorities. Special attention is given to the mechanisms of cooperation between the federal government and the Länder, as well as to the system of research funding. The study demonstrates that the combination of higher education reforms and an active science policy became a key factor in the economic growth of the FRG and the formation of an effective innovation system. The

findings may be useful for understanding contemporary educational reforms and the development of science policy in Ukraine.

АНОТАЦІЯ

Комплексно досліджено політику Федеративної Республіки Німеччини у сферах вищої освіти та науки в 1950–1980-х рр. Розкрито передумови, зміст і наслідки реформування системи вищої освіти Західної Німеччини після Другої світової війни, зокрема процеси відновлення університетської автономії, демократизації управління, розширення доступу до освіти та формування масового університету. Проаналізовано роль ключових законодавчих актів, зокрема Закону про сприяння будівництву університетів (1969), Федерального закону про сприяння освіти (1971) та Рамкового закону про вищу освіту (1976), у модернізації інституційної структури та фінансового забезпечення освітньої системи. Висвітлено створення університетів прикладних наук як нового типу закладів освіти, орієнтованих на потреби ринку праці, а також проаналізовано зростання кількості студентів, розвиток науково-дослідницької діяльності та збільшення чисельності молодих учених. Окреслено суперечності реформ, зокрема посилення бюрократизації, обмеження університетської автономії та проблему недофінансування в умовах зростання контингенту студентів.

Проаналізовано становлення наукової політики ФРН, зокрема роль державних інституцій у регулюванні наукової сфери. Висвітлено діяльність Наукової ради, Федерального міністерства освіти і науки, а також Федерального міністерства досліджень і технологій у формуванні пріоритетів розвитку науки. Розкрито механізми взаємодії між федеральним урядом і землями, а також особливості фінансування досліджень. Доведено, що поєднання реформ у сфері вищої освіти та активної наукової політики стало важливим чинником економічного зростання ФРН і формування ефективної інноваційної системи. Отримані результати можуть бути використані для осмислення сучасних освітніх реформ і розвитку наукової політики в Україні.

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HYBRID INFORMATION POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE TURN OF THE 1990s–EARLY 2000s AS A PRIMARY THREAT TO UKRAINE’S NATIONAL SECURITY

Zubkovich O. I., Sytnyk O. M.

INTRODUCTION

From the moment Ukraine proclaimed its independence and throughout the 1990s, the Kremlin regime – acting as the principal driver of Russian neo-imperialism – set itself the objective of reviving the Soviet Union, albeit under the dominance of the Russian Federation rather than Moscow alone. Consequently, Russian policy was primarily directed toward restoring control over Ukraine.

The Kremlin regime has traditionally relied on a wide range of hybrid and informational methods, ranging from elementary economic pressure to direct military aggression. In particular, the use of one of the most effective forms of hybrid warfare – information and ideological expansion – significantly intensified. Historically, the Kremlin has sought to establish its authority in Ukraine and impose its own political order. A dominant role in this process has been played by the Great Russian imperial tradition, which has survived into the present in the form of Russian neo-imperialism.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Ukraine once again became the target of aggression by the Russian Federation. This occurred despite the fact that Russia, as one of the guarantor states under the Budapest Memorandum, had pledged to respect Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty, and existing borders, as well as to refrain from the threat or use of force against Ukraine’s territorial integrity and political independence. By flagrantly violating these international commitments, the Russian Federation demonstrated the cynical nature of its hybrid and ideological strategy.

Such developments were far from accidental. Over the past two decades, political culture within the Russian Federation has been characterized by the normalization of moral degradation, the arrogance of the ruling elite, and the aggressive rhetoric of state

propaganda. At the same time, while pursuing information-ideological expansion aimed at reviving a prototype of the Soviet Union – with its ideological and political attributes and symbols, including marginal ideological constructs and post-Soviet symbolic elements – the Kremlin regime has attempted to combine inherently incompatible elements. These include communism alongside the so-called «spiritual bonds» promoted by the Russian Orthodox establishment, Russian nationalism intertwined with chauvinistic ideology, and Vladimir Putin's reliance on paramilitary formations such as the Kadyrov forces.

For more than three decades – especially following the collapse of the Soviet Union – the Western world largely believed that large-scale military conflict in Europe had become unlikely. However, by disregarding the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum and international law more broadly, the Russian Federation launched an unprovoked act of aggression against Ukraine. This occurred despite the fact that, due to continuous processes of disarmament, Ukraine had effectively become one of the most pacifist states in Europe.

The post-totalitarian society of the Russian Federation during the Yeltsin era proved incapable of transforming into a genuinely democratic and civilized political system, contrary to the optimistic expectations held in many Western countries. This failure was due not only to the dominance of oligarchic interests but, more importantly, to the persistence of the traditions and operational methods of the KGB within the Kremlin's political structure. Individuals who came to power during the wave of democratic reforms quickly adapted to a system in which the rule of law was replaced by the rule of force. The consequences of this transformation were profound. In particular, the revival of nepotism within this pseudo-democratic system ultimately facilitated the rise to power not only of Vladimir Putin personally but also of the broader political network associated with him.

Beginning in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Kremlin regime deliberately employed a wide array of information-ideological instruments – primarily of a hybrid nature – in order to systematically disseminate manipulative and destructive narratives. At the same time, the Kremlin increasingly utilized the resources and capabilities of cyberspace and social media to promote

messages that largely possessed a hybrid informational character. In doing so, the Kremlin employed a variety of methods, ranging from economic pressure to coordinated hybrid-information campaigns, including the use of cyber-political technologies.

As a result, the hybrid policy of Russian neo-imperialism eventually evolved into the full-scale military invasion of Ukraine by the armed forces of the Russian Federation. This aggression has generated severe destructive consequences and risks not only for European security but also for global stability, including within the domain of cyberspace. The Russian-Ukrainian war has undermined stability in Europe and poses significant global risks. In this context, Ukraine has effectively become one of the principal frontiers of the defense of democratic civilization – not only in Europe but potentially on a global scale.

One of the characteristic methods of the Kremlin's hybrid policy is the systematic attempt to shift responsibility for the consequences of its own aggression onto the governments of the countries that become victims of such aggression. These states are pressured to accept the conditions imposed by the occupying power – conditions that, as in the case of contemporary Ukraine, are aimed at undermining and ultimately destroying sovereign statehood. At the same time, the Russian Federation attempts to present itself as a «peacekeeper».

While Russian propaganda claims that a supposed «genocide of the people of Donbas» has taken place, the Russian military has in reality carried out actions that can be characterized as genocidal toward the Ukrainian nation. Significantly, this violence has primarily targeted the largely Russian-speaking populations of cities such as Mariupol, Kharkiv, and numerous urban centers in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

1. General Characteristics of the Hybrid Information Policy of the Russian Federation at the Turn of the 1990s–Early 2000s

An important component of the hybrid policy of the Russian Federation toward Ukraine, particularly in its informational dimension, was the attempt to exert active influence on the consciousness of the political and business elites, the leadership of political parties and various social groups, as well as on Ukrainian society as a whole.

This influence manifested itself primarily in the information manipulation and demoralization of the population, including attempts to suppress the will to resist and to transform Ukrainian citizens into a convenient and compliant instrument for achieving Russia's neo-imperial objectives.

One of the key elements of Russia's hybrid policy toward Ukraine has been, and unfortunately remains, the religious factor, particularly through the activities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, which effectively functions as a branch of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The overarching objective of the Kremlin's hybrid policy has consistently involved a large-scale geopolitical task: undermining confidence among the states of Central Europe and the Baltic region in the security guarantees provided by NATO and the European Union, while simultaneously fostering tensions between the United States and its European allies.

For a long time, the real threat posed by Russian hybrid policy to the European Union and the broader democratic world was largely underestimated by many European political leaders. One example frequently cited is the relatively cautious policy pursued by some European governments toward the Kremlin.

In particular, the risks associated with the financial and informational support provided by the Kremlin to far-right and far-left political movements in Europe were significantly underestimated. One of the most dangerous consequences of such support lies in the potential erosion of the rights and political influence of electorates that adhere to fundamental European democratic values.

Thus, the Russian Federation has been implementing a provocative and insidious hybrid information policy designed to destabilize democratic institutions and political systems.

The Russian Federation retained military basing rights in Sevastopol and several other locations in Crimea following the signing on May 28, 1997, of an interstate agreement between Ukraine and Russia concerning the status and conditions of the stationing of the Russian Black Sea Fleet on Ukrainian territory.

Simultaneously, policies aimed at supporting the so-called «Russian-speaking population» and orienting it toward the Russian Federation were actively pursued in Crimea.

On April 21, 2010, the so-called Kharkiv Agreements extended the duration of the agreement governing the presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea. According to this arrangement, the fleet's stay was prolonged for an additional twenty-five years from May 28, 2017, with automatic extensions every five years unless either party objected in writing.

The signing of this document became one of the preparatory stages for the hybrid annexation of Crimea in 2014.

The hybrid information policy of the Russian Federation toward Ukraine intensified at the beginning of the twenty-first century. One manifestation of this policy was the Russian-Ukrainian conflict over Tuzla Island in the Kerch Strait in September 2003.

This conflict occurred during the period between the signing and ratification of the Treaty on the Ukrainian-Russian State Border. Although the treaty establishing the land border between Ukraine and Russia was signed on January 28, 2003, the dispute over Tuzla was widely interpreted by experts as an attempt by Russia to exert pressure on Ukraine regarding the delimitation of the maritime boundary in the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov.

The treaty ultimately entered into force on April 23, 2004, following the exchange of ratification instruments. Ukraine ratified the agreement on April 20, 2004¹, and Russia on April 22, 2004. The Tuzla crisis demonstrated that the 1994 Budapest Memorandum was not a reliable security instrument for Ukraine, revealing that the states acting as guarantors of Ukraine's security could potentially become aggressors themselves.

Hybrid policy represents a complex phenomenon involving the systematic and coordinated application of political, military, diplomatic, economic, and informational-propaganda measures. Such measures are typically employed by one state – or a coalition of states – in order to subordinate the internal and external policies of another state. In the case of Russia's neo-imperial policy toward Ukraine and the Baltic states, systematic interference in both external and, at times, internal sovereignty has been clearly observed.

¹ Закон України. Про ратифікацію Договору між Україною і Російською Федерацією про українсько-російський державний кордон. *Відомості Верховної Ради (ВВР)*. 2004. № 32. Ст. 386. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20210207193719/https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1681-15#Text>

The essence of the concept of «hybrid policy» lies in the use of a wide arsenal of asymmetric instruments designed to influence and control the political spectrum of other states. Such policy often operates covertly but maintains an inherently aggressive character toward other countries, both in the «near abroad» and in more distant regions.

Within the framework of Russia's hybrid geopolitical strategy during the 1990s and early 2000s, a number of measures were implemented to strengthen Russia's political, economic, and military power and to expand its international influence.

The practical manifestations of this hybrid policy included:

- threats and intimidation;
- political blackmail;
- the dissemination of disinformation and rumors;
- the spread of so-called «information bombs» through targeted information campaigns.

Among the narratives promoted within this framework were:

- alleged plans for the use of nuclear weapons in future conflicts with NATO or the United States;
- claims of an existential threat posed by NATO;
- projects such as the creation of the pseudo-state entity «Novorossiia»;
- proposals concerning the incorporation of the occupied territories of Donbas into the Russian Federation;
- initiatives aimed at creating the so-called «Donetsk People's Republic» and «Luhansk People's Republic».

Other narratives included proposals to recognize Russia's control over Crimea in exchange for ending the war in Donbas, or attempts to promote the idea of a geopolitical «grand bargain» between Russia and the United States reminiscent of a «second Yalta» or «second Potsdam».

Additionally, narratives were circulated claiming that the United States had allegedly «abandoned Ukraine», along with calls for federalization of Ukraine or the freezing of the conflict following the models of Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, or Nagorno-Karabakh.

Hybrid practices themselves have a long historical tradition. However, in the contemporary era they have become widely employed

across nearly all spheres of military-political confrontation¹.

Russia inherited many elements of hybrid aggression from the traditions of the Russian Empire. These include:

- the use of a «fifth column»;
- elite fragmentation;
- provocations followed by accusations against the victim;
- secret agreements;
- the erosion of state institutions;
- military intimidation and troop deployments near borders;
- ultimatums and threats;
- the establishment of puppet governments;
- staged elections;
- repressive measures.

At the same time, the Russian Federation frequently attempts to portray itself as a peacekeeper or protector². During the Cold War and the post-Cold War period, global competition for resources also played an important role. Both the United States and the Soviet Union were industrial societies requiring continuous economic growth and increasing resource consumption.

In 2012, researcher Yu. Badakh expressed concerns regarding the actions of Russian leadership in international relations and its interference in the internal affairs of other states, including Ukraine. According to his analysis, such actions could potentially lead to a new Cold War.

By that time it had already become clear that future conflicts would be driven not primarily by ideology but by civilizational incompatibility between different parts of humanity. Other scholars have also emphasized structural factors contributing to regional instability³.

¹ Гудзь В., Полякова Л., Крилова А. Шкільні підручники з історії в путінській Росії як засіб інформаційної війни з Україною. *Проблеми гуманітарних наук: збірник наукових праць Дрогобицького державного педагогічного університету імені Івана Франка. Серія Історія*. 2023. № 14(56). С. 174.

² Ситник, О., Зубкович, О. Переосмислення витоків російсько-української війни початку ХХІ століття. *Українські історичні студії*. Дрогобич: Видавничий дім «Гельветика», 2024. Спецвипуск. С. 14.

³ Бадах Ю. Г. «Холодна війна». загальний огляд (1946–1991 pp.). «Холодна війна»: історія та уроки. 1946–1991 pp.: науковий збірник. Матеріали Міжнародної наукової військово-історичної конференції, 4-5 жовтня 2012 року, м. Севастополь. URL: <http://nvimu.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/Pages.pdf>

For example, Yu. Liber argued that Ukraine's historically formed geopolitical division contributed to differing geopolitical orientations within the country. Many residents of western Ukraine viewed their future within the European Union, while a significant portion of the population in eastern regions perceived closer relations with Russia as more advantageous¹. This division was later exploited by Russian aggression in 2014.

Similarly, R. Dodonov emphasized that modern military-political processes are often rooted in internal civilizational conflicts. Comparable dynamics were observed in Moldova, Yugoslavia, and Georgia. Such conflicts are influenced by both external factors – including Euro-Atlantic integration and Russian geopolitical ambitions – and internal factors, such as political instability, corruption, and weak border protection².

The Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 became an important test of mechanisms aimed at neutralizing Western responses. Russia conducted a direct military intervention and subsequently recognized the «independence» of the occupied territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

According to scholars O. Haran and P. Burkovskiy, the Georgian case demonstrated that attempts by an aggressor state to transform itself into a mediator within a peace process often lead to the renewal of conflict in the future³.

Thus, the Kremlin regime sought to revive the traditions of Russian neo-imperialism across the territory of the former Soviet Union. As Taras Kuzio has noted, Russian political discourse attempted to draw moral equivalence between the independence of Kosovo and the separatist movements in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Later, the Russian Federation applied similar rhetoric in justifying the illegal annexation of Crimea, claiming a supposed

¹ Лібер Ю. Тотальні війни: творення модерної України в 1914–1954 роках / пер. з англ. А. Дейнеки. Харків: Віват, 2019. С. 437–438.

² Гібридна війна: in verbo et in praxi: монографія / Донецький національний університет імені Василя Стуса / під заг. ред. проф. Р. О. Додонova. Вінниця: ТОВ «НіланЛТД», 2017. С. 146.

³ Гарань О., Бурковський П. Російська агресія на Донбасі у стратегічному контексті відносин України і Заходу. Російська окупація і деокупація України: історія, сучасні загрози та виклики сьогодення: Матеріали Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції (Київ, 2016 р.) / Упор. П. Гай-Нижник. Київ: «МП Леся», 2016. С. 263.

«right of self-determination» for the population of the peninsula¹. Despite the clear violation of Georgia's sovereignty in 2008, Western states did not impose significant sanctions on Russia at that time. In 2009, the United States even initiated a «reset» policy in relations with Russia.

Kremlin leaders interpreted this development as evidence that future aggressive actions might also be undertaken without serious international consequences. The intensification of Russian propaganda and the systematic promotion of Kremlin narratives became particularly evident after 2008, while 2014 marked the beginning of a new phase of hybrid informational aggression against Ukraine.

Russia has also sought to maintain geopolitical influence in the Balkan region, systematically developing and implementing methods of hybrid policy and hybrid warfare. Russian intelligence services traditionally considered the Balkans one of the most vulnerable regions in Europe².

Historically, Russia claimed a special role as the protector of Orthodox populations, a narrative that closely corresponds to the modern ideological construct of the «Russian World».

Although Russia has experienced setbacks in the Balkans, the Kremlin continues to employ hybrid methods to counteract European integration processes in the region. In many cases, Russian actors have operated under the guise of peacekeeping missions while acting in violation of international legal norms. For example, in 1999 Russian paratroopers seized control of the Slatina airport in Pristina during the Kosovo conflict.

Such actions illustrate a typical method of Kremlin policy: transforming de facto actions into de jure legitimacy, often through attempts to obtain authorization for peacekeeping missions through international institutions.

For example, by obtaining from the UN Security Council the right to introduce a certain peacekeeping mission. In particular, this method was used by the Russian Federation in Transnistria and the

¹ Кузьо Т. Війна Путіна проти України. Революція, націоналізм і криміналітет / Пер. з англ. Андрія Павлишина. Київ: ДУХ І ЛІТЕРА, 2018. С. 54.

² Ситник О., Дрогомирецький Б. Ідеологічні витoki, трансформації та наслідки гібридної російської політики на Балканах. *«Дриновський збірник»*. Т. XV. 2022. Софія – Харків. С. 157–158.

Caucasus, where peacekeeping rhetoric actually covered up the expansionist policy of the Kremlin regime. It was the presence of Russian «peacekeepers» that became a significant factor in the Abkhaz and Tskhinvali conflicts, and the so-called «five-day war» in Georgia in August 2008 actually became «coercion for peace». The Russian Federation acts in a similar way in the Middle East. First of all, this concerns the participation of the Russian side in the Syrian conflict with the previously declared goal of establishing peace and order there. In fact, this became a disguise for peacekeepers – in order to cover up its actually aggressive policy¹.

It is quite obvious that by unleashing hybrid aggression, the Kremlin was counting on a certain global result. Thus, the geopolitical tasks of the Russian Federation could be solved only thanks to a global hybrid conflict. It was with its use that the authorities of the Russian Federation planned, by implementing the methods of hybrid war, to destroy the existing world order and artificially increase their own status. And this is at a time when Russia has an inefficient economy and inefficient state administration². That is, by launching a hybrid war against the civilized world, the Russian Federation raises the stakes and increases the risks, first of all, for neighboring countries and its own people.

According to Yu. Felshtinsky and M. Stanchev, the power of the modern Russian Federation is a bluff and a PR project, which is actively produced with the help of the Russian propaganda media³. Therefore, the hybridity of Russian imperial policy implies a large role of informational influences on the population, which are carried out at all levels of communication, influencing all aspects of the worldview.

Historically, ideology and propaganda have occupied a prominent place in the policy of the Kremlin regime. Their massive use, with the widespread use of cyberspace, took place in the period

¹ Гібридна війна... С. 125–126.

² Світова гібридна війна: український фронт: монографія / за заг. ред. В. П. Горбуліна. Київ: НІСД, 2017. С. 8–9.

³ Фельштинський Ю., Станчев М. Третя світова: битва за Україну. Київ: Наш Формат, 2015. 456 с. URL: <https://readukrainianbooks.com/page-86-1670-tretja-svitova-bitva-za-ukrayinu-jurij-georgijovich-felshtinskij.html>

2008–2014, when the Russian Federation’s hybrid information operations began to gain momentum not only in Europe but also throughout the world. According to I. Tyshkevich, perhaps the greatest indicator and evidence of the power of the Russian Federation’s propaganda work is the mood within Russian society. After all, over the past 20 years, a kind of information bubble has been artificially formed around the average resident of the Russian Federation. Gradually, it has encompassed not only traditional media, but also the vast majority of so-called new media. This entire array of information fields and information resources, despite different positions or the possibility of using them as tools of internal political struggle, always retains the signs of a general propaganda structure that ensures the loyalty of the population. Typically, none of the groups in the orbit of the Kremlin regime is able to control all segments of the media space. That is, each of the «Kremlin towers» is able to influence only a certain part of the Russian population through its own controlled media, unable to cover the entire segment of the media market due to conditional professional, age, property, and regional restrictions¹. Television (especially in the Russian Federation) has a great influence on the population, as it acts on hearing, sight, and energy. This causes significant dependence, primarily of the Russian population, on massive propaganda. And even in the conditions of the growing role of cyberspace (with the massive spread of social networks), such dependence of Russian citizens causes not only internal problems of the Russian Federation, but also significantly complicates international relations. This is especially true of the current Russian-Ukrainian war and the confrontation of the Russian Federation with the West.

Most international military experts recognize that there is a threat of new conflicts on the territory of Europe. And the aggression of the Russian Federation threatens the security not only of Ukraine, but of all of Europe. It is difficult to win a hybrid war on one’s own territory, since such a war has no borders. Therefore, it is this factor that influenced the miscalculations of the Ukrainian authorities in conducting the anti-terrorist operation. The

¹ Тышкевич І. Російська медіаімперія ізсередини. Цензор.НЕТ «Блоги». 17.02.23. URL: <https://censor.net/ua/b3400412>

Ukrainian-Russian border cannot be blocked if Ukraine does not control the information space and airspace of Eastern Ukraine. At the same time, terrorists will continue provocations on the border and in the captured territories with the information support of the Russian mass media. The network actions of terrorists on the captured territory, together with the support of Russian troops on the border, will constantly allow further supplies of terrorists, weapons and ammunition to Ukrainian territory. Therefore, until the information space in Donbas is under control, Ukraine will not be able to count on the support of its own population in the conflict region. This situation will contribute to the formation of a permanent social base for LPR and DPR terrorists¹.

The hybrid policy of the Kremlin regime was also manifested in the fact that in order to maintain its power against the background of modest achievements in the socio-economic and cultural development of the Russian Federation, the authorities of this country systematically sought to stimulate its popularity by constantly searching for enemies and fighting them. At the same time, the implementation of this adventurous policy was combined with the purposeful support of the tense situation in its country and in the world. This was largely due to the chauvinistic nature of Russian imperialism. After all, it is especially aggressive towards those nations that defend their own identity and independence². For a long time, Kremlin leaders, engaged in preparing aggression against Ukraine, paid special attention to the ideological processing of the population of the Russian Federation in order to direct its consciousness in the direction of the ideas of nationalism, great-power chauvinism, the protection of the so-called «national values and interests», the fight against the «external enemy», etc. In parallel, the actual occupation of the information space of Ukraine and its use in their own interests to form pro-Russian sentiments were carried out. Along with this, the destruction of the state power of Ukraine took place, including: blackmail and bribery of influential officials, political figures and the leadership of

¹ Дацюк С. А. Стратегія перемоги України у війні з Росією. 12.05.2014. URL: <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/datsuk/53a5542ba2a4a/>

² Sytnyk O. M. Russian-ukrainian war 2014–2019 years as the decisive stage of the struggle for the Ukrainian independent state. *Relevant research of historical sciences: collective monograph*. Lviv-Toruń: Liha-Pres, 2019. P. 196.

government structures; the nomination of their own agents of influence to positions in state authorities; the incitement of interethnic and interreligious conflicts; the undermining of the trust of the Ukrainian population in their own government; the spread of protest and separatist sentiments in society; the discrediting of Ukraine's foreign and domestic policy; the imposition of certain ideas and values on its leadership and population through an active information campaign using special methods of «zombifying» society with the broad involvement of a whole range of various organizations aimed primarily at spreading the ideology of the «Russian world»¹.

M. Galeotti, made an attempt to dispel some myths about Russian hybrid warfare. In particular, he examines how the concept of hybrid warfare has taken root in Western thinking, and compares it with Russian thinking and practice. This researcher traces how the Russian Federation is simultaneously afraid of and seeks to use non-military forms of coercion. In particular, in his opinion, the annexation of Crimea and the intervention in southeastern Ukraine in 2014 gave a new meaning to the concept of «hybrid warfare». Thus, the post-imperial Russian Federation has posed the most serious challenge and threat to the international order. Among the reasons for this is, first of all, that the Russian leadership has developed and implemented a «new way of waging war», which uses, among other things, modern cybernetic technologies. And this is in order to tilt the balance of power in its favor in the confrontation with Western countries². Moscow is certainly waging an aggressive geopolitical campaign, asserting its claims to great power status. The failure to define and understand Russia's prospects leads to academic confusion, futile efforts, and fundamentally misinformed political debates in the West. While the West talks about the «Russian approach to hybrid warfare» (leaving

¹ Sytnyk O. M. Evolution of a hybrid-information war in the context of aggressive policy of the Russian Federation in respect to Ukraine. *Challenges of study, conservation and interpretation of historical and cultural heritage: collective monograph*. Lviv-Toruń: Liha-Pres, 2019. P. 83–84.

² Galeotti M. *Russian Political War: Moving Beyond the Hybrid*. 2019. London: Routledge. 136 p.
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780429443442/russian-political-war-mark-galeotti>

aside the thorny question of whether it is worth calling this phenomenon «hybrid warfare» at all), the Russian military is following the model we saw in Crimea and Donbas, using non-military means to prepare the battlefield for the introduction of soldiers. At the same time, the Russians have been quite adept at mastering basic modern cyber technologies.

At the same time, the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine was preceded by a phase of political destabilization and division in that country. Yet, despite the exaggerated and alarmist claims about some special Russian way of waging war (including the mythical «Gerasimov Doctrine»), there is nothing fundamentally new about it. While many in NATO are concerned about an outright Russian invasion, we should not be mesmerized by this chimera. The Kremlin's main goal is rather to divide, demoralize and distract the West enough to make it unable to resist, as Russia claims to be a «great power». Bluff, subversion, corruption and threats have always been the best tools of this state formation¹. Modern war is primarily an ideological confrontation between the remnants of the Soviet mentality and a civilized pro-Western paradigm. In General Gerasimov's hybrid concept, the leading role was assigned to the fifth column in Ukraine. That is, in fact, to those communist figures and their followers who, over the past three decades, have done everything possible not only to enrich themselves, but also to devalue and weaken Ukraine.

2. Propaganda of the «Russian World» as a Leading Factor in Characterizing the Hybrid-Information Policy of the Russian Federation at the Turn of the 1990s – Beginning of the 2000s as the Main Threat to Ukraine's National Security

Arguably the greatest challenge and threat to Ukraine's national security in the information-ideological sphere has been the active propaganda of the «Russian World». To a significant extent, this propaganda was based on the deformation of historical memory and national consciousness of Ukrainians². At the same time, it must be

¹ Sytnyk O. M. Evolution of a hybrid-information war in the context of aggressive policy of the Russian Federation in respect to Ukraine... P. 83–84.

² Якубова Л., Головки В., Примаченко Я. Русский мир на Донбасі та в Криму: історичні витоки, політична технологія, інструмент агресії: Аналітична доповідь / Відп. ред. В. Смолій. НАН України. Інститут історії України. Київ:

taken into account that the ideological foundation of a nation is formed precisely on the basis of historical memory and national consciousness. Its complete destruction would open broad prospects for the Russian Federation to occupy Ukraine not only physically, but above all mentally and ideologically-politically.

H. Turchenko and F. Turchenko argue that Russian society has always fundamentally denied the existence of Ukrainians as a separate nation. Moscow's peculiar mission was seen in gathering the parts of what was once a «single whole» and gradually «erasing» the differences that had accumulated during the period of «forced disunity». In fact, this was one of the main tasks of the Russian «development» of Southern Ukraine or, in modern terms, the introduction of the «Russian World» here¹. To this end, the Kremlin regime initiated the process of creating the imperial project «Novorossiia».

In Russian imperial projects, Southern Ukraine was assigned the role of a springboard for further expansion of the Russian Empire into the Balkans and the Mediterranean. It was even planned to build a third capital of the Russian Empire here, in addition to St. Petersburg and Moscow. The «Novorossiia» project was purely predatory in nature. In imposing the «Russian World», all centers of Ukrainian life were destroyed, while Russian despotism was introduced instead². At the same time, the authorities of the Russian Empire widely disseminated the version that the lands of «Novorossiia» were «originally Russian». Already then, this served as the basis for information-propaganda practices of distorting historical realities, which were later developed by the Russian Federation in the early 21st century.

Throughout the 1990s, Russian society and political circles increasingly leaned toward supporting the idea of the «Russian World», which claimed the role of the leading consolidating national doctrine. Simultaneously, the idea of the «Russian World» acquired a certain geopolitical significance in terms of transforming

Інститут історії України, 2018. С. 24, 130, 131.

¹ Турченко Г., Турченко Ф. Проект «Новоросія» і новітня російсько-українська війна; [видання 2-е, доп.]. Запоріжжя: «Просвіта», 2015. С. 33.

² Sytnyk O. M. Russian-ukrainian war 2014–2019 years as the decisive stage of the struggle for the Ukrainian independent state... P. 185–186.

Russian neo-imperial policy¹. The beginning of the 21st century was marked by the establishment of the «Russian World» as a Russian neo-imperial geopolitical ideological doctrine. It was used by Putin's regime to orient the Russian population regarding the ideological foundations of the existence and development of Russian society through the formation of a symbiosis of perception of the historical past and prospective vision of the future in search of a new model of ideological content for the national idea of the new Russia, a strategy of geopolitical development in the territories of the former Soviet Union, a mass and socio-communication technology of influence of the Russian Federation on the internal politics of neighboring states, socio-political practice and an eclectic worldview mixture in party building and ideological, agitation-propaganda activity, an ideological concept in Russian political and intellectual discourse to designate a supranational and transcontinental community, a comprehensive political technology of the Kremlin, and a geopolitical approach to interpreting contemporary political processes of both right and left spectra in a single stream in the form of an eclectic combination of elements of Pan-Slavism, Eurasianism, Russian messianism and imperialism (including in the form of an informal empire), the ideology of Russian Bolshevism and extreme nationalist currents of the Russian White anti-communist movement during the Russian Civil War and in emigration².

It is considered that the syncretic policy of the «Russian World» is a generic concept, the hyperonym of which is defined not only by a combination of two standard poles of the right and left political spectra or their denial on the basis of a one-dimensional political spectrum, but also encompasses the social term «russkiy mir», which as a figure of speech is used to designate not any associations with Russian culture, but is applied in the form of conceptualizing it as the «Russian cultural sphere» as a set of those countries and peoples of the Russian Federation whose culture was formed under the influence of models from the times of Rus', to the

¹ Ільницький В., Старка В., Галів М. Російська пропаганда як елемент підготовки до збройної агресії проти України. *Український історичний журнал*. 2022. № 5. С. 47.

² Гула Р. В. «Русский мир» – фантом чи реальність? Аспекти політологічного аналізу. *Наукові праці МАУП*. 2016. Вип. 50. С. 12.

Muscovite Tsardom, the Russian Empire, post-Soviet events of the early 1990s, and from the early 2000s – the Putin era, and includes both the Russian diaspora and Russian culture together with its influence in the world. The ideology of the «Russian World» is a socio-political doctrine promoted by the leaders of the Russian Federation¹.

Yu. Felshtinsky and V. Popov believe that the concept of the «Russian World» was borrowed by Putin from the program of the NPSR (National-Patriotic Union of Russia) and the rhetoric of one of the ideologists of this organization, Podberezkin². And as a kind of attribute of the «Russian World», starting from the early 2000s, Soviet symbolism was gradually returned (the anthem of Russia, toponymy, the erection of about a hundred monuments to Stalin after 2005, etc.).

Due to the multi-faceted nature of the concept of the «Russian World», there are various approaches to its understanding: geopolitical, civilizational, cultural-civilizational, geo-cultural, network-globalist, historical-mental, state-instrumental, socio-communicative, etc. From the very beginning of its existence, the «Russian World» was an ideological project aimed at the geopolitical formation of the «Eurasian Union». In fact, the goal was to restore the former Soviet Union in new geopolitical realities. At the same time, one of the most important components of this formation was supposed to be a pro-Russian Ukraine. And it was this ideological project that later became one of the main motives for justifying direct military aggression against Ukraine. Initially, Russian chauvinist circles actively spread the idea of uniting the Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian peoples into a single «all-Russian people». Later, various ideological projects such as the «Russian World» and «Novorossiya» emerged. At the same time, the main declarative motivation of these projects was presented by the authorities of the Russian Federation as support for «compatriots» and «protection of the Russian and Russian-speaking

¹ Бойко А. «Образ «русского мира» в інформаційному просторі України / Журналістика: наук. зб. / за ред. Н. Сидоренко. Київ: Інститут журналістики КНУ імені Тараса Шевченка, 2016. Вип. 15. С. 79.

² Фельштинський Ю., Попов В. Від Червоного терору до мафіозної держави. Спецслужби Росії в боротьбі за світове панування (1917–2036). Київ: Наш Формат, 2021. С. 485.

population». The full cynicism of such motivation was first revealed in Donbas in 2014 and in the territories of Northern, Northeastern, and Southern Ukraine – already during the current full-scale aggression of Russia. It was precisely in these regions (predominantly populated by ethnic Russians and their descendants) that the Russian-speaking population suffered the most from the war unleashed by the Russian Federation.

Already since the 1990s, the authorities of the Russian Federation paid significant attention to Ukraine in spreading various kinds of fake and disinforming ideologemes. At the same time, numerous means of information influence were actively used, primarily to impose their manipulative propaganda among the population of Ukraine. Thus, in particular, the concepts of the «Russian World» and «Novorossiia» were artificially created and purposefully disseminated¹. Simultaneously, Kremlin authorities widely began to use the resources and capabilities of cyberspace and social networks to promote their own narratives, which were predominantly of a hybrid-information nature.

For a long time, Kremlin regime ideologists formed various kinds of narratives aimed at deforming historical heritage, distorting historical facts, manipulating public consciousness, etc. Gradually, targeted disinformation covered literally the entire socio-political space. Official state clichés were systematically imposed on virtually all spheres of life. At the same time, special attention was paid to diminishing, discrediting, and eradicating everything genuinely Ukrainian – that is, related to national traditions, consciousness, and culture. As T. Kuzio noted, Ukrainophobia, which has flooded Russian television propaganda and the public discourse of the Russian political class, has significantly worsened the situation regarding human rights not only for Ukrainians but also for all national minorities of Ukraine – in the territories of Donbas and Crimea occupied by the Russian Federation². And perhaps the greatest paradox of the «Russian

¹ Турченко Г. Історична наука і сучасна гібридна війна Росії проти України. *Наукові праці історичного факультету Запорізького національного університету*. Вип. 46. 2014. С. 217.

² Kuzio T. *Putin's War Against Ukraine: Revolution, Nationalism, and Crime*. North Charleston: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2017. 474 pp. URL:

World» policy is that through it, to a significant extent, ethnic Russians themselves suffer (as was the case, incidentally, during the wars unleashed by the Kremlin regime in Chechnya and other regions of the former Soviet Union).

There exists an entire spectrum of Russian technologies for zombifying people through television content. Each project has its own clearly defined target audience (groups of viewers by age, gender, education, occupation) and corresponding airtime. The topics brought up for general discussion are always resonant, loud events or extreme situations; otherwise, viewers are not interested. Television channels are usually predominantly private and fully engaged during election preparation periods. In the inter-election periods, they serve the corporate interests of the owners, including fulfilling orders from certain political forces or individual deputies for PR, promotion of certain ideologies, programs, or preparation of the groundwork for lobbying bills. A significant part of television projects and various shows that supposedly belong to Ukrainian channels are in fact not original – the idea is borrowed, a copy of similar projects from the Russian Federation. Such hidden «import» from a country where, at the state level, all information policy is directed toward justifying and approving imperial ambitions, disregard for human rights, cultivation of ignorance and legal nihilism, poses a serious danger to our nation. We are surprised at how television in the Russian Federation has replaced reason for the average viewer and become an instrument of turning the people into a herd, we laugh at the victims of propaganda, but we do not notice the poisonous sprouts that Russian television has planted in our media space. Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine «On the Fundamentals of National Security of Ukraine» classifies attempts to manipulate public consciousness, including through the dissemination of unreliable, incomplete, or biased information, as threats to national interests in the information sphere. However, the legislator has still not developed effective legal mechanisms for the further implementation of measures to counter such manifestations, and therefore we are losing the information war. Thus, there is a

tendency toward uncontrolled use of methods of negative propaganda and manipulative techniques of information-psychological influence, which in the future threaten irreversible changes in public consciousness.

This, along with the objective lack of legal culture among a significant part of the population, especially adolescents and youth, gives grounds to consider the measures applied by the state to be insufficient. In the activities of, in particular, television and radio broadcasting bodies, which are responsible for analyzing processes and trends in the field of information security, there are significant obstacles. Monitoring of the television and radio (which is directly provided for among the tasks of the National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting) and the development of measures to prevent internal and external information influence that threatens the information security of the state, society, and the individual (duties of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine) are carried out insufficiently effectively due to the imperfection of the applied criteria for evaluating audio and video materials. All this convincingly indicates the need to increase attention from expert and controlling bodies of the state to the issue of stopping the harmful, and sometimes destructive, influence of such phenomena on mass consciousness and the mental health of citizens¹. However, Ukrainian legislators have not hastened to develop effective legal mechanisms for the further implementation of measures to counter such manifestations. And therefore Ukraine has essentially lost the information war to the adversary. Thus, on the part of the Russian Federation, there is a tendency toward uncontrolled use of methods of negative propaganda and manipulative techniques of information-psychological influence. It is precisely this that created a favorable ground for the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

3. The Conclusion of the «Budapest Memorandum» as a Concession to the Hybrid Policy of the Russian Federation

According to V. Kotsur, a characteristic example of the folly of the West's policy of appeasing the Russian Federation was the

¹ Кременовська І. Небезпечні шоу на вітчизняному телебаченні, або Як за допомогою телевізора в Україні обкатують кремлівські зомбі-програми. 12.05.2014. URL: http://gazeta.dt.ua/internal/gibridna-viyina-yak-kluychoviy-instrument-rosiyskoyi-geostrategiyi-revanshu-_.html

«Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1994»¹. After all, the established scheme of «balance of power» with a possible adversary using military force in the 21st century has not justified itself, unlike new methods of armed conflicts that are introduced every year in unstable regions.

It should be noted that the «Budapest Memorandum» did not even have the status of an international treaty. Since it did not contain legal obligations, the parliaments of the guarantor countries did not ratify it. And this despite the fact that among the assurances (obligations) of the Memorandum were listed: respect for the independence, sovereignty, and borders of Ukraine; refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine; no weapons would ever be used against it except in self-defense; refraining from economic coercion, etc. At the end of February – March 2014, the Russian Federation violated these international assurances through the military occupation and annexation of Crimea and aggression in Donbas.

As former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine S. Pifer asserts, the choice of the term – «guarantees» or «assurances» – caused debate during the negotiations in Budapest. The first term was used to provide guarantees to NATO members, which implies military obligations. But the American administration was not ready to provide Ukraine with any military obligations; moreover, it was clear that the Senate would not ensure the possibility of ratifying a treaty with such strict obligations. Therefore, according to S. Pifer, the Memorandum was planned as a political agreement that provided «assurances, but not military guarantees»². Since the conclusion of the Memorandum, a whole series of

¹ Коцур В. В. «Гібридні» війни як феномен ХХІ ст. Матеріали всеукраїнської наукової конференції «Гуманітарне та патріотичне виховання студентської молоді в умовах глобалізації та євроінтеграції» (19 листопада 2015 року). Київ: НУХТ, 2015. URL: <http://confpol.webnode.com.ua/naukova-robota/kotsurv/>

² Гай-Нижник П. Будапештський меморандум: передумови і наслідки (не)гарантії національної безпеки України. Агресія Росії проти України: історичні передумови та сучасні виклики / П. П. Гай-Нижник (керівник проекту, упоряд. і наук. ред.); авт. кол.: П. П. Гай-Нижник, Л. Л. Залізняк, І. Й. Краснодемська, Ю. С. Фігурний, О. А. Чирков, Л. В. Чупрій. Київ: «МП Леся», 2016. С. 212.

misunderstandings has arisen. Even in the very title, a contradiction was embedded. While in the Ukrainian version it is «Memorandum on Security Guarantees» («Memorandum pro harantii bezpeky»), in the English version it is «Memorandum on Security Assurances» («Memorandum on security assurances»). It should be emphasized that the term «Security Assurances» does not contain any specific basis or meaningful confirmation of the real effect of the Budapest Memorandum. It is therefore quite obvious that the «Budapest Memorandum» never became an actual mechanism for guaranteeing Ukraine's security. Failure to comply with the provisions of the «Budapest Memorandum» was committed by the Russian Federation as one of the signatory countries. And this was in exchange for Ukraine's renunciation of the world's third-largest nuclear potential. This clearly demonstrated not only the perfidy of the Russian Federation as the aggressor country, but also the indisputable fact of the devalued system of security guarantees that had developed after the Second World War.

According to S. Plokhyy, the «Budapest Memorandum» to some extent filled the security gap in Ukraine that arose as a result of forced nuclear disarmament. At the same time, this gap gradually widened until the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, when the ineffectiveness of the guarantees provided by the «Budapest Memorandum» and related agreements became obvious¹. The Kremlin regime has always sought to use not only all means of hybrid-information warfare against Ukraine, but also direct armed intervention². First of all, the provisions of the «Budapest Memorandum», which was supposed to mark the completion of overcoming the consequences of the «Cold War», were discredited. Instead, it significantly undermined Ukraine's defense capability and its position in the international arena. Four years after the conclusion of the «Budapest Memorandum», in December 1998, Ukraine undertook to eliminate 44 heavy bombers and 1,068 X-55 cruise missiles, most of which were transferred to the Russian Federation. And now these missiles and their

¹ Плохій С. Російсько-українська війна: Повернення історії. Харків: КСД, 2023. С. 93.

² Гай-Нижник П. П. Росія проти України (1990–2016 рр.): від політики шантажу і примусу до війни на поглинання та спроби знищення. Київ: «МП Леся», 2017. С. 188.

modifications are flying from the Russian Federation into Ukraine, destroying peaceful cities and critical infrastructure. Thus, Ukraine, which inherited the world's third-largest nuclear potential (220 strategic delivery vehicles), was deprived of it without real security guarantees. Subsequently, this became one of the significant reasons for the beginning of hybrid-information expansion, and later – conventional aggression on the part of the Russian Federation.

S. Plokhyy asserts that when in 1994 Ukraine, by signing the «Budapest Memorandum», committed to handing over its nuclear weapons to the Russian Federation, the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, China, and France promised to respect Ukraine's borders and sovereignty. However, there were no obligations to defend Ukraine if these promises were violated. Accordingly, the rhetorical question arises – was this huge security vacuum not an invitation to war? The answer today is almost unequivocal: it was a significant abuse of Ukraine's trust in the world community and its largest neighbor¹. It should also be added that this was a significant geopolitical miscalculation by the leading countries of the world, and above all – the United States of America.

In June 1994, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted a special statement and resolution², according to which the Cabinet of Ministers was obliged within three months to develop a draft international legal document that would strengthen the international legal guarantees of Ukraine's security in the context of the «Budapest Memorandum»³. However, this decision was never

¹ Plokhyy S. The book Russian-Ukrainian war: the return of history. 2023. URL: <https://www.indigo.ca/en-ca/the-russo-ukrainian-war-the-return-of-history/fb730c40-3980-3181-ba5d-6fe9a30ab0f7.html>

² Гай-Нижник П. Прелюдія війни: українсько-російські військово-політичні взаємини в контексті міжнародного права і системи національної безпеки (1990–2010 рр.). Російська окупація і деокупація України: історія, сучасні загрози та виклики сьогодення: Матеріали Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції (Київ, 2016 р.) / Упор. П. Гай-Нижник. Київ: «МП Леся», 2016. С. 162.

³ «Про затвердження Положення про порядок укладення, виконання та денонсації міжнародних договорів України міжвідомчого характеру». Постанова КМ України від 17 червня 1994 р. N 422. Документ 422-94-п, поточна редакція – Редакція від 11.05.2006, підстава – 617-2006-п. *Верховна Рада України. Офіційний сайт*. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20210207193719/https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1681-15#Text>

practically implemented. In general, Ukraine as a state and its national security were protected and guaranteed not only by the «Budapest Memorandum», but also by a number of important international legal acts, namely: the UN Charter; the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations¹.

Although formally the «Budapest Memorandum» did not contain obligations of the guarantor countries to fight for Ukraine in case of aggression against it, nevertheless, as follows from the content of this document, the duty of responsibility for Ukraine's security lies with the guarantor countries: the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Russian Federation (and partially – France and China). The consequences of the failure of these countries to fulfill the obligation undertaken toward Ukraine began to manifest almost immediately. At first – through gas and trade wars unleashed by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and later – in the form of direct military aggression of the Russian Federation in Crimea and Donbas. At the same time, the Kremlin regime paid increasing attention to hybrid-information varieties of warfare, including hacker attacks against the United States.

CONCLUSIONS

The hybrid information policy of the Russian Federation during the 1990s and early 2000s formed the foundation for a broader strategy of neo-imperial expansion. Through the coordinated use of informational, political, economic, and military instruments, the Kremlin sought to influence political processes in neighboring states and weaken the unity of Western alliances.

The events of the early twenty-first century demonstrate that these hybrid instruments gradually evolved into open military aggression. The Russian-Ukrainian war therefore represents not merely a regional conflict but a manifestation of a broader confrontation between authoritarian neo-imperial ambitions and democratic international order.

¹ Декларація про принципи міжнародного права, що стосуються дружніх відносин та співробітництва між державами відповідно до Статуту Організації Об'єднаних Націй. *Верховна Рада України. Офіційний сайт*. URL: http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_569

Over the past more than thirty years – particularly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union – the Western world has, for the most part, remained in a state of conviction that large-scale military actions on the territory of Europe would no longer occur. However, the Russian Federation, having disregarded the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum and international law in general, unleashed an entirely unprovoked aggression against Ukraine. This took place despite the fact that, owing to the continuous process of disarmament, Ukraine was in practice the most pacifist country in Europe.

Having retained its military basing rights in Sevastopol and in a number of other settlements in Crimea, the authorities of the Russian Federation simultaneously pursued a systematic policy on the territory of Crimea of supporting the «Russian-speaking population» and orienting it specifically toward the Russian Federation.

The post-totalitarian society of the Russian Federation during the Yeltsin era proved incapable of transforming into a civilized environment (as naively anticipated in Western countries). This failure resulted not only from the dominance of oligarchs, but above all from the prevalence within the Kremlin regime of KGB traditions and methods. Individuals who rose to power on the wave of democracy adapted remarkably quickly to a system in which the rule of law and legal norms were not dominant, but rather the actual law of force – with all the ensuing consequences. In particular, the nepotism revived by this pseudo-democratic regime played a significant role in bringing to power not only the individual figure of Putin, but also his collective equivalent.

One of the methods employed in the Kremlin regime's hybrid policy consists in transferring full responsibility for the consequences of its own aggression onto the leadership of those countries that have become victims of this hybrid aggression. The governments of such countries are persistently presented with the occupier's conditions, directed (as in the contemporary case of Ukraine) toward the destruction of a sovereign state. At the same time, the Russian Federation endeavours to portray itself as a «peacemaker».

While Russian propaganda repeatedly asserts the existence of a supposed genocide of the «people of Donbas», it is the Russian

army that is carrying out a real genocide of the Ukrainian nation. Moreover, this genocide is directed primarily against the predominantly Russian-speaking residents of Mariupol, Kharkiv, Chernihiv, and the cities of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, among others. It must be emphasized that the Russian Federation prepared its full-scale invasion and war against Ukraine over an extended period of time. During this period, it consistently strengthened well-financed agent networks and combat units at all levels – both in the political and in the military spheres (down to ordinary civic formations and organizations). Concurrently, the Kremlin leadership sought to take account of the prevailing foreign-policy situation. The leadership of the Russian Federation also made every effort to secure the support of the world's leading states. This was primarily necessary for the realization of their geopolitical projects, such as the restoration of the USSR. Traditionally, the principal targets of Russian neo-imperialist aggression have included Ukraine, the Baltic states, the South Caucasus, and others. In pursuing these aims, the Russian Federation has employed an entire complex of hybrid instruments of an information-propaganda, political, diplomatic, trade-economic, and other character.

ABSTRACT

The article examines the hybrid information-ideological policy of the Russian Federation at the turn of the 1990s and early 2000s as a systemic threat to Ukraine's national security. It demonstrates that, since Ukraine's declaration of independence, the Kremlin consistently pursued the goal of restoring control over the country, employing a comprehensive set of hybrid tools: economic pressure, support for a «fifth column», the religious factor through the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, information zombification, manipulation of historical memory, and targeted promotion of the «Russian World» concept. Particular attention is devoted to the role of the «Russian World» ideology and the «Novorossiia» project as key elements of mental and geopolitical expansion that prepared the ground for subsequent aggression. The study analyzes pivotal precursor events (the 2003 Tuzla conflict, the 2010 Kharkiv Agreements, and the continued Russian military presence of the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea), which

constituted stages in the preparation for the hybrid annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas. Special emphasis is placed on the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 as an illustration of the ineffectiveness of international security assurances and a concession to Russia's hybrid policy in exchange for Ukraine's nuclear disarmament. It is argued that Russia's hybrid information expansion acquired a systematic character precisely during this period and served as direct preparation for the full-scale invasion of 2022. The cynicism of Kremlin propaganda is highlighted, as it shifted responsibility for aggression onto the victim while portraying Russia as a «peacemaker». The conclusion is drawn that the West's underestimation of the true nature of Russian neo-imperialism, combined with the weakness of international security guarantees, significantly increased Ukraine's vulnerability and posed a broader threat to European and global security.

АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті розглядається гібридна інформаційно-ідеологічна політика Російської Федерації на рубежі 1990-х та початку 2000-х років як системна загроза національній безпеці України. Вона демонструє, що з моменту проголошення незалежності України Кремль послідовно прагнув відновлення контролю над країною, використовуючи комплексний набір гібридних інструментів: економічний тиск, підтримку «п'ятої колони», релігійний фактор через Українську православну церкву Московського патріархату, інформаційне зомбування, маніпуляції історичною пам'яттю та цілеспрямоване просування концепції «русского мира». Особлива увага приділяється ролі ідеології «русского мира» та проекту «Новоросія» як ключових елементів ментальної та геополітичної експансії, що підготували ґрунт для подальшої агресії. У дослідженні аналізуються ключові події-попередники (конфлікт у Тузлі 2003 року, Харківські угоди 2010 року та продовження російської військової присутності Чорноморського флоту в Криму), які становили етапи підготовки до гібридної анексії Криму та війни на Донбасі. Особливий акцент робиться на Будапештському меморандумі 1994 року як ілюстрації неефективності міжнародних гарантій безпеки та поступки гібридній політиці Росії в обмін на ядерне роззброєння України. Стверджується, що гібридна інформа-

ційна експансія Росії набула систематичного характеру саме в цей період і служила безпосередньою підготовкою до повномасштабного вторгнення 2022 року. Підкреслюється цинізм кремлівської пропаганди, яка перекладала відповідальність за агресію на жертву, одночасно зображуючи Росію як «миротворця». Робиться висновок, що недооцінка Заходом справжньої природи російського неоімперіалізму в поєднанні зі слабкістю міжнародних гарантій безпеки значно посилила вразливість України та створила ширшу загрозу європейській та світовій безпеці.

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HISTORICAL POLICY OF PUTIN'S RUSSIA AS A COMPONENT OF THE INFORMATION WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

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INTRODUCTION

A distinctive feature of the hybrid war that Russia has been continuously waging against Ukraine is its comprehensive nature. As early as the presidency of B. Yeltsin, the use of political, economic, ideological, diplomatic, socio-psychological, and informational instruments of influence, as well as other forms of pressure, could be observed in relations with Ukraine and other post-Soviet republics. In the new millennium, V. Putin supplemented this arsenal with direct military intervention. In all cases, the goal of Russia's hybrid warfare is not so much the conquest of new territories as a geopolitical revanche through the creation of a new form of empire, which would include quasi-states with puppet regimes and a loyal population.

A decisive role in achieving this goal of the aggressor state is played by the informational component (information warfare), whose forms include the active dissemination and propaganda of historical myths, ideological postulates, and the use of information-psychological subversion, among others. In the era of globalization and informatization, the formula «whoever controls information controls the world» is more relevant than ever. There is even a term, «brainwashing», which refers to the manipulation of consciousness through information and psychological influence aimed at indoctrinating individuals, shaping passive and obedient behavior, and transforming social groups or entire nations into easily controllable masses. Competition for access to information resources and control over information flows, along with their use for neurolinguistic programming, has led to a situation in which the global community is becoming a society of disinformation, manipulated by certain groups, corporations, and state structures.

As a totalitarian neo-imperial formation, Russia has primarily employed the methods of information warfare against Ukraine, which represents the greatest obstacle to its revanchist ambitions. The «war of memories», as a product of historical policy and a

component of the information war unleashed by Russian aggressors, is aimed at the de-subjectification of Ukraine through the manipulation of historical myths claiming that the Ukrainian people never had their own state and were always objects of influence by other states. Accordingly, the pseudo-historian V. Putin, followed by politicians, ideologues, scholars, publicists, and educators of the Russian Federation, attempts to interpret Ukrainian history exclusively within the context of Russian statehood, recognizing the emergence of the Ukrainian state only after the collapse of the USSR. Another aspect of these historical manipulations is the claim that Ukrainians are an artificially separated (by Poles or Austrians) part of the Russian people and therefore should reunite with it on the basis of the values of the «Russian world»: the Russian language, Orthodoxy, and a shared historical past.

Such ideological clichés are intensively promoted within Russian society, reinforced through commemorative practices and historical education, and persistently disseminated in Russian media, including abroad, shaping the perception of Russia as a superpower – a civilizational core with a «natural» right to annex post-Soviet territories. Therefore, since the war of memory is an integral component of the Russian Federation's information warfare, it remains relevant to clarify its characteristic features and methods of influence, which constitutes the purpose of this study. For a comprehensive analysis of the historical component of Russia's information war against Ukraine, interdisciplinary, system-structural, problem-historical, and other methods have been employed. Their combined application makes it possible to examine the memory policy of the hostile state as an interconnected system within a specific historical context and to identify the forms and methods of manipulating history for information-psychological influence on both its own population and Ukrainian society.

1. Russia's Information War Against Ukraine in the 21st Century

The theoretical foundations for the study of information warfare were laid by the Canadian scholar M. McLuhan, who viewed information warfare as a total struggle conducted through information and analyzed the means of influencing mass consciousness across various forms of mass communication, including advertis-

ing, television, cinema, and others¹. The concept of «information warfare» was largely developed in the United States in the early 1990s in the works of D. Denning and M. S. Libicki. The subject of information warfare as a distinct socio-political phenomenon has been studied relatively recently, while the term «information warfare» was introduced into academic circulation in 1967 by A. Dulles (USA).

Information wars, including the Russian-Ukrainian one, have been studied quite extensively, including at the level of collective monographs edited by V. Horbulin² and V. Krotiuk³, as well as in individual works by V. Zelenin⁴, H. Liubovets and V. Korol⁵, H. Pocheptsov⁶, I. Rushchenko⁷, and others.

The concept of «information warfare» is interpreted in various ways, highlighting its goals, objects, forms, methods of influence, information weapons, and so on. American scholars K. White, T. Thrall, and B. M. Mazanets define information warfare as «the deliberate manipulation or use of information by one side against an adversary to influence the choices and decisions it makes in order to achieve military or strategic advantage»⁸. British authors understand information warfare as «the use of information and communication technologies for offensive or defensive purposes to achieve immediate intrusion, disruption, or control over an oppo-

¹ McLuhan M. *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man*. N.Y.: The Vanguard Press, 1951. 157 p.

² Світова гібридна війна: український фронт: монографія / за заг. ред. В. П. Горбуліна. К.: НІСД, 2017. 496 с.

³ Війни інформаційної епохи: міждисциплінарний дискурс: монографія/за ред. В.А. Кротюка. Харків: ФОП Федорко М. Ю., 2021. 558 с.

⁴ Зеленін В. В. По той бік правди: нейролінгвістичне програмування як зброя інформаційно-пропагандистської війни. Вінниця: Віндрук, 2014. 384 с.

⁵ Любовець Г., Король В. Контент негативу. Як захистити себе та країну в умовах тотального інформаційного протистояння: монографія. К: Києво-Могилянська академія, 2021. 266 с.

⁶ Почешцов Г. Сенси і війни: Україна і Росія в інформаційній і смисловій війнах. Київ: Києво-Могилянська академія, 2016. 312 с.

⁷ Рущенко І. П. Російсько-українська гібридна війна: погляд соціолога: монографія. Харків: ФОП Павленко О. Г., 2015. 268 с.

⁸ Whyte C., Thrall A. T., & Mazanec B. M. (Eds.). *Information Warfare in the Age of Cyber Conflict*. London: Routledge and CRC, 2020. 270 p.

ment's resource»¹. In the Ukrainian encyclopedia, the term «information warfare» is interpreted as a form of confrontation between various actors (governmental and non-governmental), which includes a set of measures aimed at damaging the opponent's information sphere while protecting one's own information security².

According to O. Danylyan and O. Dzoban, information warfare means a targeted influence on the public consciousness of the adversary in order to achieve informational superiority and political or military objectives (in the case of interstate war) by damaging the opponent's information capabilities³. These definitions appear reliable and mutually complementary, but they do not fully exhaust the meaning of the concept, as they are primarily focused on the goals of information warfare.

The peculiarities of Russian propaganda as a means of information warfare and preparation for armed invasion of Ukraine have also been thoroughly studied by A. Bobrov⁴, V. Ilnytskyi, V. Starka, M. Haliv⁵, M. Pavliukh⁶, and other scholars. Researchers agree that Russia's information war, with its historical component and aggressive propaganda, is at the forefront of Ukraine's War of Independence just as much as the military component.

In the context of this study, which focuses on the historical component, the definition proposed by Ye. Mahda is more appro-

¹ Taddeo, M. (2020). Information warfare: A philosophical perspective. In *The Ethics of Information Technologies*. 2020. P. 461.

² Велика Українська енциклопедія. Режим доступу: https://vue.gov.ua/%D0%86%D0%BD%D1%84%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BC%D0%B0%D1%86%D1%96%D0%B9%D0%BD%D0%B0_%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B9%D0%BD%D0%B0.

³ Данильян, О., Дзюбань, О. Інформаційна війна у медіапросторі сучасного суспільства. *Вісник НІОУ імені Ярослава Мудрого*. Серія: Філософія, філософія права, політологія, соціологія. 2022. 3(54). DOI:<https://doi.org/10.21564/2663-5704.54.265589>

⁴ Бобров А. Є. Пропаганда 2023. Інформаційні війни під час російської агресії. Харків: Фоліо, 2024. 157 с.

⁵ Ільницький В., Старка В., Галів М. Російська пропаганда як елемент підготовки до збройної агресії проти України. *Український історичний журнал*. 2022. Вип. 5. С. 43–55. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.15407/uhj2022.05.043>

⁶ Павлюх М. Методи та засоби російсько-української інформаційної війни (2014–2022): міфи і риторика пропаганди. *The Russian-Ukrainian war (2014–2022): historical, political, cultural-educational, religious, economic, and legal aspects*. Riga, Latvia: "Baltija Publishing", 2022. С. 1017–1026.

priate. In addition to its goal-exerting influence – it also emphasizes its means and complex nature: the concept of «information warfare» has a synthetic character, as it incorporates a number of phenomena that manifest themselves in the interaction of different social groups and includes various forms of influence on society – propaganda, counter-propaganda, disinformation, psychological warfare, and so on¹. Information warfare is most intensively conducted by totalitarian, aggressive regimes, such as the Russian one, which combines the monopolization of internet resources (MAX in the Russian Federation), print media, radio, and television (mass media) with the prohibition and/or restriction of freedom of speech, the blocking of «undesirable» social networks, and the publication of materials aimed at discrediting a particular state, political or public figure («foreign agents»), political or civic organization, or public event within or beyond the country. Russia's information war against Ukraine, which constitutes its external dimension, combines information-psychological operations, cyberattacks, and large-scale disinformation.

Since mass media play a decisive role in the war of memories, V. Putin – a president with a background in the KGB-FSB – was well aware of this and, already in the first year of his rule (2000), ensured the adoption of the «Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation», which has been repeatedly supplemented, laying the theoretical and organizational foundation for information expansion and the war of memories. This foundation was developed conceptually, within the education system, in the public sphere, and in military planning. At the First World Congress of Compatriots on October 11, 2001, V. Putin promised Russia's protection to compatriots – that is, Russian-speaking populations in post-Soviet republics – and the creation of a «common cultural and information space». As emphasized by V. Ilnytskyi, V. Starka, and M. Haliv, this speech marked the launch of a mechanism for propagating a neo-imperial chauvinistic ideology and proclaimed a course toward the «gathering of lands»².

¹ Магда Є. Гібридна агресія Росії: уроки для Європи. Київ: КАЛАМАР, 2017. С. 103.

² Ільницький В., Старка В., Галів М. Російська пропаганда. С. 47.

In February 2004, without concealing intentions to return post-Soviet republics «under Russia's control», Putin publicly described the collapse of the USSR for the first time as a major national tragedy, and in his Address to the Federal Assembly of Russia (April 2005) as the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century¹.

Thus, according to the assessment of A. Besançon, Putin's policy not only fits into the Russian imperial tradition but also develops it: «It is a path of chauvinism, but with certain features it has often acquired in this country: a mixture of lies, violence, and arrogance»².

In the same year, Putin delivered his anti-Western revanchist speech in Munich, asserting claims to dominance in the post-Soviet space. In his Valdai speech in 2013, he presented the concept of forming a Eurasian civilizational identity for Russia in opposition to the West across the territory of the former USSR. Accordingly, following Putin's directives, the Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation was once again adjusted to intensify information warfare. It is no coincidence that the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, General V. Gerasimov, speaking at a conference at the Academy of Military Sciences in January 2013, emphasized: «...The focus has shifted to the use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian, and other non-military measures, combined with the exploitation of the protest potential of the local population. All this should be accompanied by covert military operations – for example, using methods of information warfare...»³.

With the addition of a military component to Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine in 2014, the arsenal of information weapons was also expanded: information-psychological operations (IPSO), the use of bots, and the dissemination of outright lies, hatred, and fake narratives aimed at the dehumanization of Ukrainians – from

¹ Гудзь В., Полякова Л., Ситник О. Спадщина Русі як сегмент російської історичної політики та інформаційної війни з Україною. *Сучасна російсько-українська війна: історіографічні, суспільно-політичні, соціально-економічні та культурно-духовні виміри. Наукова монографія*. Riga, Latvia: "Baltija Publishing", 2024. С. 35.

² Марусик Т. Ален Безансон: людина, що не захотіла бути часткою імперії брехні. *Дзеркало тижня*. (Київ). 2012. 18–25 травня. Вип. 18.

³ Цит за: Рущенко І.П. Російсько-українська гібридна війна. С. 112.

«they are bombing Donbas», «killing civilians», to «the atrocities of the Banderites», including the story of the «crucified boy». The goals of Russia's information warfare on both external and internal fronts are achieved through various methods of manipulating public consciousness, in particular:

- direct lies – open falsification of facts and dissemination of false information;

- half-truths – processing information in such a way that insignificant details are presented objectively while important facts are concealed or distorted;

- concealment – blocking truthful information about the activities of a particular political actor, public figure, phenomenon, event, etc.;

- the introduction of reputational images and clichés – implanting in public consciousness desired stereotypes regarding certain political actors, ideological doctrines, individual events, and facts;

- labeling – imposing negative evaluative categories on society in order to discredit particular political actors (a state, party, movement, or individual), such as «imperialist», «nationalist», «fascist», «chauvinist», «anti-Semite», etc¹.

Among the most popular and effective tools of information technologies used against Ukraine are films that shape images of heroes, create value orientations, and form perceptions of particular historical events; television series – also filled with emotional content – intended to establish more stable worldview narratives than films; and, perhaps most effective of all, viral messages in internet messengers, in particular, as means of spreading panic and anxiety, etc.².

The well-known organization Freedom House stated in December 2014: «Ukrainian media have faced DDoS attacks and massive information warfare, including through the use of bots in comment sections, as well as propaganda and disinformation from the Rus-

¹ Дмитренко М.А. Політична система України: розвиток в умовах глобалізації та інформаційної революції. Київ: Знання, 2008. С. 38.

² Кресіна І.О., Тарасюк ВМ. Особливості застосування країною-агресором інформаційних технологій у гібридній війні. *Держава і право. Серія: Політичні науки*. 2018. Вип. 81. С. 29.

sian state and Russian media»¹. At the same time, as analysts noted, Ukraine lost that information war even in territories under its control, not only in the occupied ones. At that time, the West also lost it, as it cultivated illusions of appeasing the aggressor imposed by Russian propaganda.

The reasons for this situation also lay in the financial and managerial priorities of the parties. While controlling the media within the country and broadcasting abroad, the Russian authorities also spent around 20 billion annually on implementing a program of national-patriotic education², and in 2016 Putin proclaimed patriotism the national idea of Russia³. Meanwhile, Ukraine at that time still had an «information security gap», and an «unprotected history of Ukraine – playing into Russia’s hands». Only in 2017 did the decision of the National Security and Defense Council «On the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine» appear, and only in 2021 – the Decree of the President of Ukraine «On the Information Security Strategy», which outlined tasks for countering disinformation in the media, particularly Russian mythologemes.

One such mythologeme was the idea of a new «reunification» of Ukraine with Russia, set out, in particular, in the article «On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians», published on behalf of Putin on July 12, 2021, on the Kremlin website and disseminated through other media outlets⁴.

The destructive impact of information warfare and such ideologemes on the self-identification of Ukrainians was revealed by a survey conducted by the Sociological Group «Rating» in July 2021: 41% of respondents supported the thesis from Putin’s «fresh» opus that «Russians and Ukrainians are one people, with a single histori-

¹ Freedom house визнає, що Росія веде проти України масовану інформаційну війну. УНІАН. 06.12.14. URL: <https://www.unian.ua/politics/1018401-freedomhouse-viznae-scho-rosiya-vede-proti-ukrajini-masovanu-informatsiynu-viynu.html>

² Якубова Л. Україна та українці в світоглядній матриці “русского мира”. Аналітична записка / відп. ред. В. А. Смолій. Київ Ін-тут історії України НАНУ, 2023. С. 46.

³ Гібридні загрози Україні і суспільна безпека. Досвід ЄС і Східного партнерства / за заг. ред. В. Мартинюка. Київ: Центр глобалістики “Стратегія ХХІ”, 2018. С. 43, 48.

⁴ Путин В. Об историческом единстве русских и украинцев. 12 июля 2021 года. URL: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181>

cal and spiritual space», including more than 60% of respondents in Eastern Ukraine and among parishioners of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate¹. The prolonged dominance of Russian media, social networks, and pro-Russian television channels made many Ukrainians «people without memory», receptive to «one-people» values and ideologemes and indifferent to the history of their country, language, and culture. This situation demonstrated both the effectiveness of Russia's information weaponry and the weakness of Ukraine's information security system, as well as critical gaps in state historical policy and national-patriotic education. The situation was observed by O. Udod: «It is precisely traditional mass media and the newest phenomenon—social networks – that serve as a fertile ground for historical myth-making and pseudoscience. It has not been possible to bridge the gap between academic historical scholarship and mass public consciousness through a well-thought-out system of popularizing historical knowledge»².

Only the total genocide unleashed by Russian occupiers since 2022 led to a radical shift in the consciousness of the Ukrainian people. Three months after the large-scale invasion by the aggressor, the Verkhovna Rada, in order to counter the ideology of «rashism», adopted the law «On the prohibition of propaganda of the Russian Nazi totalitarian regime, the armed aggression of the Russian Federation as a terrorist state against Ukraine, and the symbols of the military invasion of the Russian Nazi totalitarian regime in Ukraine», and blocked Russian information channels, which became a safeguard against the zombification of Ukrainians.

2. Modulation and Transmission of Historical Rhetoric by Putin in the Context of Information Warfare

Dozens of studies by domestic and foreign scholars are directly related to the contemporary Russian-Ukrainian historical debate and the war of memory in the context of information warfare. The history of the two countries has become not only a means of informational confrontation but also one of the causes of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and 2022. As S. Plokyh noted: «To a large extent,

¹ Общественно-политические настроения населения (23 – 25 июля 2021): URL: https://ratinggroup.ua/ru/research/ukraine/obschestvenno-politicheskie_nastroeniya_naseleniya_23-25_iyulya_2021.html

² Удод О. Исторична наука як фактор. С. 16.

the current conflict is an old-fashioned imperial war waged by Russian elites who consider themselves heirs to the great-power expansionist traditions of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union»¹.

The content, goals, and tools of Russian manipulations of Ukraine's history, including after the full-scale invasion by the aggressor, have attracted the attention of many researchers. In particular, various aspects of this topic have been explored in the works of S. Baturina², V. Gudz, L. Poliakova, A. Krylova³, V. Gudz, L. Poliakova and O. Sytnyk⁴, M. Doroshko⁵, H. Kasianov, V. Smolii and O. Tolochko⁶, O. Liubovets and I. Tsymbal⁷, V. Masnenko and V. Telvak⁸, O. Sytnyk, O. Zubkovych⁹, O. Udod¹⁰, V. Yaremchuk, V. Telvak¹, V. Masnenko and V. Telvak, V. Yaremchuk and A. Smirnov², and others.

¹ Плохий С. Російсько-українська війна: повернення історії / пер. з англ. М. Ларченка. Харків: Книжковий Клуб «Клуб Сімейного Дозвілля», 2023. С. 7.

² Батуріна С. Українська історія в сучасних російських підручниках з історії (2009 – 2015 рр.). *Історіографічні дослідження в Україні*. 2016. Вип. 26. С. 468–482.

³ Гудзь В., Полякова Л., Крилова А. Шкільні підручники з історії в путінській Росії як засіб інформаційної війни з Україною. *Проблеми гуманітарних наук*. Серія Історія. 2023. Вип. 14/56. С. 173–184.

⁴ Гудзь В., Полякова Л., Ситник О. Спадщина Русі. С. 35–75.

⁵ Дорошко М. Росія проти України: історичний фронт. *Wschód Europy. Studia Humanistyczno-Społeczne*. 2022. Vol. 8. № 2. С. 142 – 153.

⁶ Касьянов Г., Смолий В., Толочко О. Україна в російському історичному дискурсі: проблеми дослідження та інтерпретації. Київ: Ін-тут історії України, 2013. 128 с.

⁷ Любовець О., Цимбал І. Історична політика РФ як складова інформаційної війни проти України. *Актуальні питання у сучасній науці*. 2023. № 12(18). С. 1187–1198. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.52058/2786-6300-2023-12\(18\)-1187-1198](https://doi.org/10.52058/2786-6300-2023-12(18)-1187-1198).

⁸ Yaremchuk V., Telvak Vitalii, Masnenko V., Telvak Viktoria. Representation of Ukraine in russian history textbooks (until 2021). *Danubius*. 2024. Vol. XLII. P. 179–203.

⁹ Sytnyk O.M, Zubkovych O.I. Hybrid information ideological practice of the kremlin regime as one of the prerequisites for the modern russian ukrainian war. *The current Russian-Ukrainian war: historiographical, socio-political, socio-economic and cultural-spiritual dimensions. Scientific monograph*. Riga, Latvia: “Baltija Publishing”, 2025. P. 126–141.

¹⁰ Удод О. Історична наука як фактор деміфологізації історичної культури: простір мас-медіа і соціальних мереж. *Деміфологізація історії та творення міфів в українській науці та публічному просторі: колективна монографія / наук. ред. О. О. Салата, Ю. І. Ковбасенко*. Львів – Торунь: Liha-Pres, 2021. С. 16. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36059/978-966-397-233-6-1>

One of the varieties of modern information warfare is the «war of memories», which has three main dimensions – historical, political, and socio-mental – and encompasses virtually all levels of social life. Wars of memory, unlike conventional historical policy, are generated by its aggressive content and claims to historical revisionism, which are used to justify the right to territorial expansion. As T. G. Schmidt established, the term «historical policy», in the context of manipulating the past in the interests of the present, was already used in journalism in the 1930s³. In a broader sense, without a negative connotation, the term was first used in 1970 in the monograph of the American historian H. Zinn⁴. However, the final introduction of the concept of «historical policy» (Geschichtspolitik) into academic circulation is associated with the scholarly debate in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1986–1987 regarding the interpretation of the country's past, particularly the Nazi period.

It was the researcher of German historical policy, E. Wolfrum, who proposed one of the most relevant definitions of such policy: «a type of activity and a field of politics in which various actors use history for their specific political purposes. It is addressed to the public and performs the functions of legitimization, mobilization, politicization, scandalization, defamation, etc.»⁵ At the same time, the author emphasized that the key issue lies in the methods, intentions, and results of the actions of the political actor who actualizes the experience of the past.

Specialists of the National Institute for Strategic Studies (NISS) understand historical policy as a set of practices through which

¹ Masnenko V., Telvak V. Reinterpreting the theoretical model and methodological tools of 'memory studies' in the context of the russian-ukrainian war. *Наукові записки Вінницького державного педагогічного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського. Серія: Історія*. Вип. 53. 2025. С. 180–190.

² Яремчук В., Смирнов А. Аналітичний огляд "Історія України в російських шкільних підручниках з історії". Київ: Алменда, 2023. 31 с.

³ Schmid H. Vom publizistischen Kampfbegriff zum Forschungskonzept: Zur Historisierung der Kategorie «Geschichtspolitik». *Geschichtspolitik und kollektives Gedächtnis: Erinnerungskulturen in Theorie und Praxis*. Göttingen, 2009. S. 53–75.

⁴ Zinn H. *The Politics of History*. Chicago; Urbana, 1990 (2-nd ed.). 392 p.

⁵ Wolfrum E. *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Der Weg zur bundesrepublikanischen Erinnerung 1948–1990*: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft. Darmstadt, 1999. S. 25.

political forces or states instrumentalize the historical past for their own purposes. Historical policy performs three functions: 1) symbolic (assigning significance to a particular event); 2) interpretative (interpreting a historical event or phenomenon for the needs of current policy); 3) identificational (influencing the formation of national identity and social mobilization)¹. The same scholars emphasize: «Russia's historical policy toward Ukraine should be considered in the context of the implementation of such important geopolitical projects as the 'Russian world' and the 'Eurasian Union,' which aim at the integration of the post-Soviet space and, in the future, using the mythology of 'civilizational choice,' the complete incorporation into the Russian state»².

The origins of Moscow's religious messianism, historical revanchism, and territorial expansionism date back to the end of the 15th century, when the principality intensified its aggressive policy of «gathering the heritage of Rus'», justifying it with the mythological concept of the monk Philotheus – «Moscow as the Third Rome». Since then, Russian tsars and emperors, who emerged «from the bloody swamp of Mongol slavery», expanded their territories by fire and sword and destroyed surrounding peoples, seizing one-sixth of the landmass. This policy was continued by the general secretaries of the Soviet empire, who managed to preserve most of what had been seized by the tsars. With the collapse of the USSR and the emergence of opportunities to build a democratic, civilized state in the Russian Federation, the imperial appetites of its presidents only intensified, fueled by a desire for historical revanchism. If in the 19th century Moscow's mythology of the Third Rome was supplemented by S. Uvarov's formula «Autocracy, Orthodoxy, and Nationality», adapted from the triad of the German historian H. Luden «Fatherland, People, State», then the autocracy of V. Putin found its foundation in the concept of the «Russian world», based on the unity of faith, language, and historical memory, supplemented by the expansionism and messianism of the ideology of «rashism».

¹ Політика історичної пам'яті в контексті національної безпеки України: аналіт. доповідь / за заг. ред. В. М. Яблонського. Київ: НІСД, 2019. С. 26.

² Ibid. С. 36.

Of course, the implementation of the imperial goals of post-Soviet Russia began as early as the early 1990s, which manifested itself in the Russian Federation's Supreme Council raising the issue before Ukraine of the legality and «historical justice» of the transfer of Crimea to the Ukrainian SSR, as well as in a resolution that defined the federal status of the city of Sevastopol as of December 1991. During the following years, the Russian Federation attempted to detach Crimea through special services and the proclamation of V. Meshkov as its president, as well as through «soft power»: granting a «Russian-language status» and Russian citizenship to residents of the peninsula, establishing its own educational institutions, and, most importantly, controlling the information space of Crimea with the dissemination of historical myths about «primordially Russian lands» and Sevastopol as a «city of Russian glory».

However, the observation by J. Le Goff is most clearly illustrated by the actions and messages of the Russian political elite of the 21st century, above all the pseudo-historian V. Putin: «For classes, groups, or individuals who have ruled and continue to rule in the history of societies, their control over memory and forgetting remains one of their principal concerns»¹.

The war of memory reached its greatest scale with the rise to power of V. Putin, obsessed with geopolitical revanchism and historical revisionism. As L. Yakubova noted: «since the beginning of the millennium, the Ukrainian question has remained one of the top issues on the all-Russian political agenda», as politicians and intellectuals directed their efforts toward undermining the identity, historical memory, and political culture of Ukrainians instead of addressing their own domestic problems². Armed with historical literature and the ideological constructs of V. Ilyin, A. Dugin, S. Pereslegin, and other precursors of rashism as a Russian form of fascism, V. Putin realized that without Ukraine it would be difficult to legitimize both Russian Orthodoxy and the Russian state, whose history he traces back to Kyivan Rus. Emphasis is placed on the identity of the terms «Rus'» and «Russia», and «Rus'» and «Russian» population in the Russian language, which serves to justify

¹ Le Goff J. *History and Memory* / transl. by S. Rendall, E. Claman. Columbia University Press. 1992. XXIII. P. 54.

² Якубова Л. Україна та українці. С. 19.

Russia's claims to Ukrainian lands as «primordially Russian». Without Ukraine and the baptism of Volodymyr in the 10th century, the foundational myth of a «thousand-year-old Russia» collapses, leaving only Muscovy of mixed origin, traceable at the earliest to Andrei Bogolyubsky of the 12th century. Moreover, without the territory, population, and resources of Ukraine, the realization of the neo-imperial project of «gathering Russian lands» under the guise of the «Russian world» is impossible. Therefore, Ukraine is perceived in Putin's Russia as an enemy that, through its aspiration for Euro-Atlantic integration, has betrayed and undermines Russian civilization and statehood.

The well-known researcher of the Putin regime, L. Shevtsova, in 2014, explaining Russia's aggression in Ukraine, noted: «First, Ukraine for Russia is the protection of its own history, and thus of the state. Second, it is the Kremlin's defense of its own legitimacy. Third, it is the prevention of a Maidan in Russia. Fourth, it is a challenge to Europe and the Western world»¹.

Thus, in the thinking and actions of the Russian authorities, history serves as an instrument of war for national memory, identity, and the self-preservation of the «besieged fortress» regime. It is therefore not surprising that while Ukraine until 2014 did not develop a system of measures to protect and promote its own history, and during the Yanukovych–Tabachnyk period even promoted the idea of a joint textbook, experts of the NISS stated that even after the Revolution of Dignity Ukraine's historical policy remained unsystematic and situational, contained elements of Soviet interpretation, and the authorities failed to offer society a coherent concept of the past².

Meanwhile, V. Putin, immediately after coming to power, began developing a historical policy and mobilizing scholars. Already in 2001–2002, he gathered humanities scholars, giving instructions on how to write history, which meant a return to «managed history» and the substitution of scholarship with historical policy. At Putin's request, in 2003, the monograph *Russia Between West and East: Bridges to the Future* was published, whose authors argued for the

¹ Лилия Шевцова: Путин ищет новые способы удушения Украины. URL: <https://minval.az/news/62621>

² Політика історичної пам'яті. С. 5.

need to form a special «Eurasian civilization» and a superpower by incorporating other peoples into the «Eurasian space» – primarily Ukraine and Belarus.

In 2007, Putin personally turned to historical education, promoting textbooks that justified Stalinist «management» and endorsed his own «managed democracy», while banning alternative publications.

At the NATO summit in Bucharest on April 4, 2008, Putin warned that Russia had important interests in Ukraine, where allegedly one-third of the population consisted of ethnic «Russians», and in certain regions only Russian population resided. In doing so, the President of the Russian Federation deliberately referred to Russian-speaking populations as Russians, in line with the thesis that «Russia ends where the sphere of use of the Russian language ends». In this speech, Ukraine was characterized as a complex artificial entity, allegedly formed as a state only in Soviet times at the expense of lands from other states – Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania¹.

In 2009, the «Commission under the President of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests» was established, which engaged in promoting Russian «spiritual bonds» and the war of memories. Commenting on the commission's tasks, President D. Medvedev repeated Putin's thesis about the harmful «confusion» in the minds of teachers and students due to the absence of a unified historical narrative in textbooks².

In 2012, proclaimed the «Year of Russian History», Putin signed a decree establishing a body under the presidential administration tasked with «strengthening the spiritual and moral foundations of Russian society» and intensifying patriotic education. At the same time, Putin personally initiated the creation of a canon of historical education and a unified history textbook aimed at instilling in students «respect for their heroic past». This directive was implemented already in 2014, when the Kremlin-controlled Russian Historical Society developed the «Unified Historical and Cul-

¹ Див: Любовець О., Цимбал І. Історична політика РФ. С. 1193.

² Турченко, Ф.Г. «Общая история»: наука чи політика? *Наукові праці історичного факультету Запорізького національного університету*. Вип. XXVIII. С. 346–359.

tural Standard» for teaching the school course «History of Russia». Notably, the history of Ukraine is studied within this course rather than as a separate state within world history. Since 2014, memes such as «Crimea is ours!», «people of Donbass», «Novorossiya», «Russian Odesa», etc. have been consistently implanted in the minds of the young Russian population.

The course toward the de-subjectification of Ukraine became a central direction in Russian historical policy, mass media, and the education system after the Revolution of Dignity and became directive in the 2020s, when the education sector was headed by V. Medinsky, known for his writings portraying Russians as a «nation of titans» with an «extra chromosome». Speaking at a conference in 2020, Medinsky argued that to become a «good citizen», every Russian must be «at least a little» of a historian and should not justify themselves but rather «...impose their view by all possible means», declaring that the main thing is for a theory – even a false one – to capture the masses, as was the case in the USSR¹.

With the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia launched a rapid «revision» of existing textbooks to incorporate Putin's narratives about a «Nazi» Ukraine. In December 2022, the Russian Ministry of Education approved a new school history curriculum revised in accordance with Putin's messages about the «Special Military Operation» (SMO) in Ukraine. V. Medinsky was tasked with introducing corresponding changes into the modern history textbook, and already in 2023 such a unified textbook of falsehood and hatred for graduating classes was published. In August of that year, Medinsky presented the first in a series of works co-authored with A. Torkunov and O. Chubaryan as a unified state textbook on modern history for the 11th grade².

In the «Medinsky textbook», sections on Soviet history beginning from the 1970s were rewritten, and a separate section on Russia's war in Ukraine (SMO) was added, filled with anti-Western and anti-Ukrainian rhetoric. Paragraph 14 of the book is titled: «Ukraine—an ultranationalist state». The roots of nationalism and

¹ Мединский В.Р. Образы будущего и историческое мировоззрение. *Преподавание военной истории в России и за рубежом*. Вып.3 / под ред. К.Пахалюка. Москва; Санкт-Петербург, 2020. С. 5, 6, 9.

² Мединский В.Р., Торкунов А.А. История России. 1945 год – начало XXI века. 11 класс. Москва, 2023. 448 с.

the idea of an «anti-Moscow Rus'» are traced back to the 19th century as an ideological diversion by Austrian intelligence in Galicia, allegedly intended to convince the local population that they were «not Russians but a separate people»¹.

Using the myth of the «Great Patriotic War», the authors of the book draw parallels with modern Ukraine in simulacra-like paragraphs such as «The Revival of Nazism» and «Ukrainian Neo-Nazism». The latter is portrayed in Ukraine as «angry national, linguistic, and cultural violence of an aggressive minority against the majority». Another blatant falsehood is also propagated: «Several generations in Ukraine, since the 1990s, have been raised in hostility toward Russia on neo-Nazi ideas»².

Following the paragraph on the «ultranationalist» Ukraine comes a subsection about the aggressive and insidious West. Students are persuaded that after the collapse of the USSR, the West became obsessed with the «fixed idea» of destabilizing and dismembering Russia in order to gain control over its resources. Ukraine was allegedly prepared by the United States and NATO as the «main battering ram» against Russia.

The reasons for the attack on Ukraine are presented as propaganda clichés: the SMO is portrayed as a forced measure to protect the Russian Donbas, which was allegedly bombed and subjected to genocide by the «Kyiv junta», and to protect Russia from Ukraine, which was supposedly planning to develop nuclear weapons, deploy NATO bases, create biolaboratories, and pose other threats.

By contrast, alongside the subsection on the «neo-Nazi» and aggressive Ukraine, a paragraph titled «Russia – a country of heroes» is presented, referring to the valiant «heroes» of the SMO who, like their grandfathers and great-grandfathers in the 1940s, are said to be «fighting for good and truth». Meanwhile, ideologically «pumped» Ukrainian «militants» are portrayed as inheritors of Hitler's punitive forces and accused of using the barbaric tactic of employing «their own citizens as a 'human shield'»³. Thus, the authors brazenly attribute to Ukraine's defenders the war crimes committed by Russian forces, not to mention the concealment of

¹ Ibid. P. 397–398.

² Ibid. P. 397–398.

³ Ibid. P. 407–408.

the bombing of Ukrainian residential areas and acts of torture in the occupied territories.

The authors insidiously urge high school students to «draw their own conclusions» and determine «where Ukrainian Nazism resides», for which they recommend two «Black Books», newly published in Moscow in 2023: *The Atrocities of the Banderites (1941–1945)* and *The Atrocities of Modern Banderites – Ukrainian Neo-Nazis (2014–2023)*¹. In doing so, information-psychological operations are carried out to dehumanize Ukrainian soldiers and to semantically link their combat actions with the crimes of the Nazis.

Among the pathos-filled paragraphs about nationwide support for the «heroic» SMO soldiers and the bright prospects for Russia's development is also a subsection about the triumph of the occupiers in the «new regions», whose populations allegedly willingly voted for the invaders. In reality, as numerous facts attest, the terrorist Russian Federation is conducting its own Nazi-style «denazification» there, carrying out the physical and spiritual genocide of the Ukrainian people².

In a teaser for one of the interviews with V. Medinsky and his co-author A. Torkunov, Russian TV presenter M. Kim referred to textbooks for grades 10–11 as «our main weapon in the information war» and emphasized their urgency and strategic importance³. Therefore, Russian propagandists are accelerating information attacks against Ukraine and the indoctrination of Russian youth.

In August 2024, the Minister of Science and Higher Education, V. Falkov, announced that, on Putin's instructions, the ministry had begun work «on forming a unified concept for teaching social sciences, in which history and philosophy will play a key role». The course on Russian history is to be supplemented by a course titled

¹ Ibid. P. 418.

² Lipkan V., & Artymyshyn P. The Concept of «Denazification» in the Context of the Information Component of the Modern Russian-Ukrainian War. *East European Historical Bulletin*. 2022. 25. P. 227–236. URL:<https://doi.org/10.24919/2519-058X.25.269561>.

³ Останній розділ Путіна: як війна стала національною навчальною програмою Росії. URL:<https://euvdsdisinfo.eu/ua/%d0%be%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b0-%d0%bd%d0%bd%d1%96%d0%b9-%d1%80%d0%be%d0%b7%d0%b4%d1%-96%d0%bb-%d0%bf%d1%83%d1%82%d1%96%d0%bd%d0%b0-%d1%8f%d0%ba-%d0%b2%d1%96%d0%b9%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b0%d0%bb%d0%b0/>

«Foundations of Russian Statehood». At the same time, the «grey cardinal» S. Naryshkin, director of the Foreign Intelligence Service, appeared in the role of a «historian» and supervised the preparation of a new textbook for university students of non-history faculties.

Russian society is increasingly resembling the society depicted in George Orwell's novel *1984*. Putin himself, like Orwell's Winston Smith, is engaged in revising history textbooks through the hands of figures such as Medinsky and Naryshkin. A form of «hybrid fascism», or rashism, has taken hold, incorporating elements of a single language, faith, historical memory, messianism, and expansionism.

Thus, in the context of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, the aggressor combines the physical destruction of the Ukrainian people with their «denazification», that is, the stripping away of national identity in order to merge them into the «Russian world». This goal is achieved, among other means, through information warfare, which in the temporarily occupied territories is supplemented by the destruction of sites of historical memory, the suppression of the Ukrainian language in education, publishing, toponymy, and more. As noted by V. Hudz, L. Polyakova, and O. Sytnyk: «In addition to strengthening the internal 'bonds' of the odious 'Russian world' and appropriating the heritage of Rus', the authorities of the Russian Federation aim to deprive Ukrainians of their own ethno-historical roots and to de-subjectify the Ukrainian state. ... The second goal of Putin's political revanchism and historical revisionism, and that of his ideological 'army,' is to fabricate justifications for their 'SMO-style' war and territorial claims against Ukraine as an allegedly artificial entity on 'primordially' Russian lands»¹.

Thus, during the years of Putin's presidency, and at his initiative, history has been subordinated to the state propaganda machine and information warfare in order to influence the consciousness of the population of both Russia and Ukraine, with the aim of imposing anti-Ukrainian historical stereotypes, fueling separatist sentiments, denationalizing Ukrainians, and de-subjectifying their state.

To maintain the Ukrainian historical front in the war of memory imposed by Russia, the authorities and society must consolidate

¹ Гудзь В., Полякова Л., Ситник О. Спадщина Русі. С. 35.

themselves in the same way as in the military rebuff of the aggressor. The strategic task of the Ukrainian authorities, professional historians, and the mass media is to bring Ukraine out of the shadow of the narratives of Russian history and culture prevalent in the world and into the subjective mental space.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, one of the main vectors of Russia's total war against Ukraine is information warfare. Through the use of various forms, methods, and technologies of manipulating consciousness, the aggressor has acted quite successfully within the Ukrainian information space. With the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Ukraine has undertaken a number of measures to counter the enemy's information aggression, but the information war continues. An important component of it is the war of memories, conducted through the dissemination of Russian historical myths and ideologemes aimed at depriving Ukrainians of their own state tradition and national memory. Such warfare is masked by a historical narrative of a «single Russian people» since the times of Rus' and a supposedly «shared historical past», and is subordinated to a geopolitical strategy aimed at achieving imperial and revanchist goals – restoring Russia's status as a superpower at the expense of the destruction of the Ukrainian state and Ukrainian national identity.

For Russia, as an authoritarian ideocratic state, it is characteristic that the war of memories is directed personally by President Putin, whose directives are filled with patriotic rhetoric in line with the imperial tradition of a «thousand-year-old Russia», modified through the concept of the «Russian world». The ideological myths disseminated in the information space, education system, and culture are based on pan-Russianism, messianism, Eurasianism, and Ukrainophobia, and serve to legitimize territorial conquests and strengthen the rashist regime.

Putin's directive messages are implemented by court historians and ideologues, such as V. Medinsky, in the public sphere, commemorative practices, educational programs, and textbooks, and are intensively broadcast by Russian and foreign media. These are directives of historical revisionism, revanchism, and neo-imperialism, filled with falsehood and hatred. One of the key components of Russian historical policy and information warfare –

dominant in affirmative and didactic narratives – is the appropriation of the past of the Ukrainian people, their de-subjectification, and their discrediting, which is most clearly evident in the history textbooks of the aggressor state.

Ukraine has also taken decisive measures to strengthen information security and adjust its historical policy, particularly in the information space, commemorative practices, toponymy, and the fields of education and culture. However, victory in the information war can be achieved not so much through defensive reactions to Russian information-psychological attacks and the promotion of imperial historical narratives, as through proactive strategies, including the ability to model the adversary's actions in various situations and determine one's own algorithm of countermeasures. Therefore, a comprehensive study of the components of Russia's information warfare against Ukraine, including in the field of historical memory, requires further continuation and deepening. By understanding and studying the content and plans of Russia's historical and informational war against Ukraine, we will be able to more effectively counter the enemy's intentions, better protect our own information environment, historical memory, and historical education, and promote the truth about national history and the just struggle for independence in the global information space.

АНОТАЦІЯ

У роботі з'ясовано, що одним із головних векторів тотальної війни Росії з Україною є інформаційна війна і встановлено, що внаслідок застосування різних форм і технологій маніпулювання свідомістю, агресор доволі успішно діяв в українському інформаційному просторі. Обґрунтовано висновок про те, що важливою складовою є війна пам'яті, яка ведеться засобами поширення російських історичних міфів, ідеологем, спрямованих на позбавлення українців власної державної традиції та національної пам'яті. Така війна маскується історичною складовою на кшталт «єдиного російського народу» з часів Русі та подальшого «спільного історичного минулого» та підпорядкована геополітичній стратегії на реалізацію імперських та реваншистських цілей – повернення Росії статусу наддержави за рахунок нищення держави України та її національної ідентичності. Простежено на фактах, що для Росії, як

авторитарної ідеократичної держави, характерне спрямування війни пам'ятей особисто президентом Путіним, чії директиви наповнені патріотичною риторикою у річищі імперської традиції «тисячолітньої Росії» з модифікацією «русского міра». Поширювані в інформаційному просторі, в системі освіти і культури ідеологічні міфи режиму базуються на засадах панрусизму, месіанства, євразійства, українофобії та служать легітимізації територіальних завоювань і зміцненню рашистського режиму. Виявлено, що директивні послання Путіна імплементуються придворними істориками та ідеологами, як-от В. Мединський, в публічний простір, в комеморативній практиці, в освітніх програмах та підручниках, інтенсивно транслиуються російських і зарубіжних ЗМІ. З'ясовано, що Україна також здійснила рішучі заходи на посилення інформаційної безпеки та з корекції історичної політики, проте потрібно не тільки протистояти імперським історичним наративам Росії, а й моделювати дії супротивника в різних ситуаціях і визначити власний алгоритм контрзаходів та поширювати правду про вітчизняну історію і справедливую боротьбу за незалежність у світовому інформаційному просторі.

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PATRIOTISM IN THE DIMENSION OF PEDAGOGICAL THEORY AND SOCIAL PRACTICE

Chepil M. M.

INTRODUCTION

The modern sociocultural situation in Ukraine, determined by the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation, has caused a radical transformation of the patriotic education paradigm. An urgent task of modern Ukrainian pedagogical science and practice is the formation of personal traits of a citizen of Ukraine in youth, among which the most important are patriotism, national self-awareness, and readiness to work for the sake of the state. Patriotism, as a deep feeling of love and devotion to one's Motherland, acquires particular sharpness and significance in periods of national crises and military conflicts. Patriotism ceases to be an abstract concept and becomes a vital value that consolidates society, strengthens national identity, and motivates the defense of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The system of patriotic education in educational institutions should be aimed at forming not only a sense of love for the Motherland but also at developing an active civic position, readiness for practical actions, and awareness of one's own responsibility for the future of the country.

Patriotism in the studies of Ukrainian educators

Under the conditions of existential challenges facing Ukrainian statehood, the scientific discourse surrounding the phenomenon of patriotism has gone beyond purely pedagogical categories, acquiring the characteristics of a fundamental problem of national security and the preservation of the nation's identity¹. Systemic analysis of the literature allows for the identification of an important aspect that was previously insufficiently articulated in pedagogical science, namely – the consideration of education as a

¹ Олексюк О. Національна ідентичність в університетській культурі: зовнішні виклики та внутрішні резерви. *Духовність особистості: методологія, теорія і практика*. 2022. Вип. 2. С. 75–83; Османова А., Співак Л. Національна ідентичність української студентської молоді в воєнний час. *Психологія: реальність і перспективи*. 2022. Вип. 18. С. 132–140.

direct component of national security. M. Haliv and O. Sviontyk, drawing on the experience of Israel and an analysis of domestic legislation, assert that «the education system in Ukraine should become an integral component of national security, called upon to solve the tasks of preserving and developing Ukrainian statehood and civil society»¹. M. Chepil emphasizes the need to integrate a security component into the content of education at all levels, which is important for the survival of the nation under conditions of permanent threat².

An important vector of scientific research is the problem of identity as the foundation of patriotic education³. L. Viktorova considers national identity as a civilizational brand and sociocultural niche of the country. The researcher emphasizes that «the issue of developing and supporting patriotism is inextricably linked with the sense of national identity»⁴, which actualizes the need to use updated pedagogical conditions and means of the educational process to strengthen it. A supplement to the understanding of the mechanisms of forming patriotism is the research of O. Levytskyi and O. Kurchaba, who consider the unity of military-patriotic and physical education. Scientists emphasize that in conditions of war «a purposeful organized process of forming patriotic feelings in ‘Defense of Ukraine’ classes allows the student to master the history of their native land, to build a hierarchy of cultural values»⁵. This confirms the need for an

¹ Галів М., Свйонтик О. Освіта як складова національної безпеки України в умовах сучасної російсько-української війни: правові засади, проблеми, досвід і завдання. *Молодь і ринок*. 2023. Вип. 3. С. 26.

² Чепіль М. Безпека життєдіяльності вихователів закладів дошкільної освіти: виклики сьогодення. *Людинознавчі студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2022. Вип. 14(46). С. 56–62. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2413-2039.13/46.8>

³ Мурсамітова І., Гарбузюк Т. Національно-патріотичне виховання як засіб формування соціальних та життєвих компетентностей студентської молоді. *Вісник Луганського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка (педагогічні науки)*. 2016. № 6. С. 252–259; Шевчук Г. Освітній процес в умовах війни: завдання і компетентності сучасного викладача. *Інноваційна педагогіка*. 2023. Вип. 61(2). С. 168–171.

⁴ Вікторова Л. Національно-патріотичне виховання студентської молоді засобами освітнього процесу у вимірах сучасності. *Збірник наукових праць Уманського державного педагогічного університету*. 2022. Вип. 2. С. 222.

⁵ Левицький О., Курчаба О. Патріотичне виховання студентів як частина освітнього процесу. *Acta paedagogica volynienses*. 2022. Вип. 2. С. 79.

interdisciplinary approach, where physical training is combined with moral-volitional tempering and historical enlightenment. A logical continuation of this theme is the research of M. Tymchyk and co-authors, who focus on the applied aspect, noting that physical training classes and military-sports games not only develop physical qualities but also form «readiness for self-sacrifice, the presence of a sense of self-dignity» and the ability to act in a team¹. Such an approach ensures the formation of active patriotism, ready for practical realization in the defense of the Motherland.

A paradigmatic shift in the understanding of the essence of patriotism also requires an update of diagnostic tools. M. Opachko and N. Deshko propose to consider patriotism through the prism of an axiological approach, defining it as an integrated indicator of the manifestations of values: national, civic, moral, and familial. As the researchers note, «knowing the general indicator of patriotism of a student group, it becomes possible to develop an individual-group program of psychological and pedagogical support for the formation of patriotism in student groups»². Such an approach allows for the transition of the upbringing process from the plane of intuitive searching to the plane of scientifically grounded technology.

A separate vector of scientific research is the consideration of student self-government as an effective tool for patriotic education and the formation of leadership qualities. A. Zhukova substantiates that the participation of youth in self-government bodies creates a space for self-determination, where «the key criterion for the functioning of student self-government today should be the direction of activities toward the formation of patriot-leaders»³. Such an approach allows for the transition of patriotic education

¹ Тимчик М., Скирда Т., Линик А. Єдність військово-патріотичного і фізичного виховання учнівської та студентської молоді. *Науковий часопис НПУ імені М.П. Драгоманова*. 2023. Вип. 2(160). С. 164.

² Опачко М., Дешко Н. Діагностування рівнів сформованості патріотизму у студентів університету: теоретичний аспект. *Перспективи та інновації науки. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2023. Вип. 14. С. 349.

³ Жукова А. Виховання лідерської компетентності у контексті національно-патріотичного виховання у студентів коледжу. *Вісник післядипломної освіти. Серія «Педагогічні науки»*. 2022. Вип. 21(50). С. 46. [https://doi.org/10.32405/2218-7650-2022-21\(50\)-40-52](https://doi.org/10.32405/2218-7650-2022-21(50)-40-52)

from the plane of passive perception of information to the plane of active social action.

In the context of researching the problems of student youth under martial law, there is an analysis of the mechanisms of socio-pedagogical support, which is considered a necessary condition for maintaining the resilience of students. O. Karpenko thoroughly investigates the phenomenon of social support, distinguishing within it emotional and instrumental components, where the former involves empathy and care, and the latter involves the provision of specific resources and assistance. In conditions of war, socio-pedagogical support must be comprehensive, covering not only financial or everyday aspects but also career counseling and involvement «in cultural events, since every student has the potential and opportunities to achieve goals and build life plans»¹. This correlates with the need to form in youth the ability to adapt and be flexible in planning the future under conditions of uncertainty².

The problem of uncertainty as an attributive characteristic of wartime becomes the subject of psychological analysis in the work of M. Shepelyova. The researcher considers the influence of subjective landmarks on students' understanding of uncertain situations, asserting that an information deficit can both block and stimulate mental activity. An important conclusion is that the ability to act constructively under conditions of uncertainty is linked to creative thinking and the ability to find non-standard solutions, which is critically important for the formation of a resilient personality in conditions of war³.

The motivational sphere of students has also undergone significant transformations, as convincingly demonstrated in the study by T. Mamontova and co-authors. Scientists record a change in the factors of motivation for educational and scientific work: if

¹ Карпенко О. Соціально-педагогічна підтримка студентів в умовах війни. *Перспективи та інновації науки. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2023. Вип. 12. С. 267–275.

² Czepil M., Sarzyńska-Mazurek E. Studenci ukraińscy wobec swojej przyszłości – perspektywa stanu wojennego. Lublin: Wyd. UMCS, 2024. 166 s.

³ Шепельова М. Вплив суб'єктивних орієнтирів на розуміння студентами невизначених ситуацій. *Вчені записки Таврійського національного університету імені В. І. Вернадського. Серія: Психологія*. 2023. Т. 34(73). № 1. С. 172.

before the war external stimuli (social approval, rewards) dominated, then under the conditions of martial law, internal factors such as interest in the activity itself and self-actualization come to the fore. The authors note that «the war significantly influenced the rethinking of attitudes toward scientific work and had a negative impact on the motivation for it among students», while simultaneously emphasizing gender differences in reactions to stress factors¹.

Museum pedagogy acts as an important tool for preserving historical memory and forming national identity, the potential of which is revealed by L. Prokopiv, N. Salyha, and V. Stynska. Using the example of higher education institutions in Western Ukraine, the scientists demonstrate how museum exhibitions become centers of national-patriotic education. The authors emphasize that «the formation of value orientations of students by means of museum pedagogy is carried out on the examples of the heroic struggle of the Ukrainian people for freedom and independence», which contributes to a deeper understanding of the historical continuity of state-building processes².

An analysis of the scientific legacy of recent years confirms that domestic researchers consider patriotism not as an abstract ideologeme, but as an integrative quality of the personality, manifested in active love for the Motherland, readiness for its defense, and conscious service to the interests of society. Generalizing the analyzed sources, it can be stated that modern pedagogical science views patriotic education in conditions of war as a multidimensional process covering psychological support, motivational stimulation, the use of digital and museum resources, as well as the integration of physical and military training. All these components are aimed at forming a resilient, conscious personality

¹ Мамонтова Т., Мякохліб А., Міщенко І., Донченко В., Мамонтова В. Аналіз факторів мотивації до навчальної та наукової роботи серед студентів під час війни. *Актуальні проблеми сучасної медицини*. 2023. Т. 23. Вип. 3. С. 164. <https://doi.org/10.31718/2077-1096.23.3.164>

² Прокопів Л., Салига Н., Стинська В. Національно-патріотичне виховання студентської молоді засобами музейної педагогіки у закладах вищої освіти західної України. *Перспективи та інновації науки. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. С. 581.

capable of acting effectively under conditions of existential challenges.

Historical Origins of Patriotism

Patriotism, as manifested in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war, is not only a reaction to aggression but also a reflection of the deep historical and cultural roots of the Ukrainian people. It serves as a testament to the indomitable will for freedom and the readiness to defend one's own identity. These values, passed down from generation to generation, found their reflection in the views of Ukrainian educators and public figures (M. Halushchynskyi, I. Franko, I. Yushchysyn, and others)¹.

I. Franko (1856–1916) placed great hopes on youth regarding the revival and development of Ukraine, considering them the driving force of the nation's future. He called upon youth to practice true patriotism, which manifests not in loud slogans but in persistent daily work. Sharply criticizing empty, declarative patriotism, he emphasized the importance of the purposeful development of physical and spiritual strengths. The scholar paid special attention to self-improvement and self-realization for the sake of the people, demanding an active life position from the younger generation. I. Franko believed in the potential of Ukrainian youth and their ability to build a strong and independent Ukraine. According to his views, true patriotism is formed when a young person realizes their connection to their native land and language and feels pride in their national identity. The highest manifestation of patriotism is selfless love for the Motherland. He viewed the patriotic education of youth as a complex of interconnected qualities and behavioral traits, including love for the Motherland, active work for the benefit of the Ukrainian people, a careful attitude toward historical monuments, and the knowledge,

¹ Czepil M., Karpenko O. Contribution of Ivan Yushchysyn (1883–1960) to the Theory of Ukrainian Education. *Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal*. 2024. №16/2. P. 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.5817/cphpj-2024-008>; Czepil M. The Pedagogical Akhiology of Mykhailo Halushchynsky (1878–1931). *Biografistyka Pedagogiczna*. 2022. N. 7(1). P. 371–386. <https://doi.org/10.36578/BP.2022.07.23>; Чепіль М., Вишнівський Р. «...яка молодь, таке й майбутнє народу»: Іван Франко про освіту та виховання: монографія. Київ: Видавничий дім «Слово», 2016. 420 с.

preservation, and development of national culture, customs, and traditions, as well as respect and love for one's native places. He particularly emphasized the importance of fostering a love for the native language, which he considered a key tool for national education and the unification of the Ukrainian nation. I. Franko linked the achievement of this goal—the upbringing of true Ukrainian patriots—with the deep study of the native language and literature, local history, and the customs and traditions of the Ukrainian people. He believed that knowing the history and culture of one's own people facilitates the formation of respect and interest in the cultural traditions of other nations¹.

Calling upon youth to cultivate patriotism for their own people, I. Franko emphasized: «...Our loud, phraseological, and mostly insincere patriotism, as it is not backed by deeds, must give way to a serious, silent, but deeply felt love for the people that manifests itself not in words, but in work»². This same opinion was shared by P. Kyrchiv, I. Kopach, and I. Yushchyshyn. They, in particular, believed that the foundation of children's education should be respect for and understanding of people of other faiths and nationalities. In the context of modern challenges, these views are especially relevant for Ukrainian students, who not only demonstrate patriotism in the struggle for independence but also build a future society based on respect and tolerance for other cultures.

M. Halushchynskyi (1878–1931) considered the formation of a patriotically minded citizen, capable of active participation in the processes of state-building, to be the primary task of the Ukrainian school as early as the beginning of the 20th century. He defined a patriot as an individual who manifests deep love for the people and the fatherland, feels unity with all its lands and compatriots, strives to serve the interests of the state, and is ready for self-sacrifice³.

¹ Чепіль М., Вишнівський Р., «...яка молодь, таке й майбутнє народу»: Іван Франко про освіту та виховання: монографія. Київ: Видавничий дім «Слово», 2016. С. 218–245.

² Франко І. Одвертий лист до української молоді галицької молодезі. *Зібрання творів: У 50-ти т.* Київ: Наукова думка, 1986. Т. 45. С. 406.

³ Czepil M. The Pedagogical Akhology of Mykhailo Halushchynsky (1878–1931). *Biografistyka Pedagogiczna*. 2022. Vol. 7(1). P. 371–386. <https://doi.org/10.36578/BP.2022.07.23>

M. Halushchynskyi emphasized that patriotism requires not only verbal expression but also concrete actions. Given the absence of Ukrainian statehood at that time, he believed that the unification of efforts for national education should take place through civic organizations. In his opinion, Ukrainian societies should promote the formation of nationally conscious citizens capable of state-building¹.

An important role in the formation of the theoretical and practical foundations of the national education of the younger generation was played by the First Ukrainian Pedagogical Congress (Lviv, 1935), although it was planned to be held in 1914 in honor of the 100th anniversary of Taras Shevchenko's birth. However, the war prevented the realization of this plan. Analysis of the Congress materials showed that Ukrainian educators viewed national education as a dynamic process of the formation and development of the nation². This involves not only the transmission of cultural values, such as customs, morality, art, science, language, and literature, but also active participation in their creation and enrichment. The goal of national education is the comprehensive preparation of youth for active participation in the development of national and universal culture³. An example of the harmonious combination of the national and the universal is the Ukrainian spiritual tradition, represented by such figures as H. Skovoroda, M. Hohol, and P. Yurkevych⁴. Consequently, historically, national education in the Ukrainian context was understood broadly, encompassing not only the formation of patriotism and national consciousness but also the development of cultural identity and active participation in the life of the nation. Educators (Ya. Kuzmiv, V. Pachovskyi, V. Sichynskyi, S. Liudkevych, R. Bilynskyi, V. Kuzmovych, and others) believed that Ukrainian pedagogy should bring national values to the forefront. For the successful formation of national consciousness, it is necessary to

¹ Галушчинський М. Національне виховання. Львів, 1920. С. 16–21.

² Перший Український Педагогічний конгрес (Львів, 1935 р.). Львів: Накладом Тов-ва «Рідна школа», 1938. С. 192.

³ Перший Український Педагогічний конгрес (Львів, 1935 р.). Львів: Накладом Тов-ва «Рідна школа», 1938. С. 234.

⁴ Перший Український Педагогічний конгрес (Львів, 1935 р.). Львів: Накладом Тов-ва «Рідна школа», 1938. С. 99.

use all available means: the native language, history, geography, folk art, and traditions. Historical memory plays a key role in this process, preserving important pages of national history (S. Balei, Ya. Yarema, Ya. Kuzmiv).

One of the conclusions of the Congress was the assertion regarding the impermissibility of bilingualism in the Ukrainian school. Scientists and educators believed that this was not only ineffective from a pedagogical point of view but also harmful to the development of national identity, especially in ethnic Ukrainian lands, where it could lead to denationalization. Historically, the language issue in Ukraine has been extremely sensitive. Ukrainian culture and education often developed in conditions where national interests were expressed in the languages of other peoples, which influenced the psychology of Ukrainians, causing a desire to use different languages but simultaneously—the pain of restrictions on the use of the native language. The systematic restriction of the functioning of the native language in the public space led to destructive consequences. In educational institutions, the leveling of national identity occurred through the imposition of the dominant linguistic paradigm. This caused a decrease in the quality of education, determined by limited access to educational services in the native language and the prohibition of extracurricular education¹. Therefore, it is very important now that every citizen realizes the unifying, state-building role of the state language and understands its significance for the development of the nation.

Constructive Patriotism

Modern patriotism is transforming from a simple emotional attachment to the native land (passive loyalty) to conscious civic responsibility and active participation in the life of the state. Unlike «blind» patriotism, which implies unconditional approval of the actions of the authorities, constructive patriotism is based on the ability to analyze, recognize internal problems, and strive to overcome them. Love for the Motherland is realized not through abstract slogans, but through concrete actions: volunteering,

¹ Огієнко І. *Українська культура: Коротка історія культурного життя українського народу* / репринтне відтворення 1918 р. Київ: Довіра, 1992. С. 123–124.

protection of human rights, environmental initiatives, and participation in local self-government. Raising a true love for the Motherland in youth is an important social task, a component part of the harmonious, comprehensive development of the personality. After all, a person can set various goals in terms of their moral value and scope, for example, personal well-being, towards which they go by breaking the norms of social existence. But these can also be high tasks: service to one's people, scientific research, artistic creativity, etc. Emphasizing the complexity of patriotic education, H. Vashchenko simultaneously stressed that it is one of the most important tasks of Ukrainian pedagogy¹. The methodology of its implementation must be well thought out and developed. Formalism and ignoring the age and individual capabilities of children cannot be allowed in it. V. Sukhomlynskyi's concept of patriotic education, deeply rooted in the moral values of the people, love for the Motherland, and awareness of civic duty, acquires special significance in times of testing national identity and sovereignty². The concepts of «patriotism» and «citizenship» are often used as synonyms, however, they are not identical. The development of patriotism in pedagogical practice is not limited to abstract concepts but is based on the formation of a clear system of values. It is important for young people to be aware of their value orientations, views, and beliefs. Each nation has its own unique system of ethnic values, which reflects its mentality and national consciousness. These moral values are transmitted through language, traditions, customs, art, literature, and folklore. For the effective assimilation of these values, it is necessary for youth to actively participate in communication, learning, and creative activity³.

«Patriotism as an active orientation of consciousness, will, and feelings is largely associated with education, ethical, aesthetic, and emotional culture, worldview stability, creative work, and with the

¹ Ващенко Г. Виховний ідеал. Полтава: Полтавський вісник, 1994. 192 с.

² Сухомлинський В. Як виховати справжню людину. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1976. Т. 2. С. 313.

³ Сухомлинський В. Сто порад учителям. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1976. Т. 2. С. 417–654; Сухомлинський В. Формування комуністичних переконань молодого покоління. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1976. Т. 2. С. 7–146.

mental, moral, labor, ideological-worldview, aesthetic, and emotional formation of the personality, and patriotic education is a sphere of spiritual life that penetrates into everything that the forming person perceives, learns, does, strives for, loves, and hates»¹.

The upbringing of patriotism begins in childhood. It is worthwhile for a child to grow up in love, to understand and adhere to the moral values of their people. Love for the native land, devotion to the Motherland, respect for the history and culture of one's people—these are fundamental values that are not subject to comparison. To form a harmonious and spiritually rich personality, the school should be based on «four pedagogical cults: the cult of the Motherland, the cult of the person, the cult of the book, and the cult of the native word»².

The cult of the Motherland – a deep love for the native land, its history, culture, and traditions; the fostering of patriotism, respect for national symbols, and readiness to serve the interests of one's country. Love for the Motherland begins with love for the small homeland, for native nature, and for the people who live nearby. The cult of the person – this is respect for human dignity, rights, and freedoms of every individual; the fostering of empathy, mercy, kindness, and the capacity for compassion. Sukhomlynskyi emphasized that every student is a unique personality who requires attention, support, and understanding³. The cult of the book – this is a love for reading, respect for knowledge, and a striving for self-education; the fostering of intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and the capacity for analysis. The book is a source of wisdom that helps a person know the world and themselves. The cult of the native word – this is respect for the native language, its beauty and richness; the fostering of love for Ukrainian literature and folklore⁴.

¹ Сухомлинський В. Проблеми виховання всебічно розвиненої особистості. *Вибрані твори: В 5-ти т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1976. Т. 1. С. 131.

² Сухомлинський В. Слово до спадкоємця. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1977. Т. 5. С. 401–410.

³ Сухомлинський В. Слово до спадкоємця. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1977. Т. 5. С. 401–410.

⁴ Сухомлинський В. Слово рідної мови. *Українська мова і література в школі.* 1965. Вип. 5. С. 47–53.

The native word is not only a means of communication but also an important element of national identity.

Sukhomlynskyi's pedagogical system, with its emphasis on the harmonious development of the personality through the «four cults» (Motherland, person, book, native word), can become an important tool for the psychological support and restoration of the younger generation, helping them maintain faith in the future and restore a sense of belonging to their country. Thus, Sukhomlynskyi's ideas on patriotic education, deeply rooted in love for the Motherland, respect for national values, and readiness for defense, are extremely relevant and vitally necessary in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war. His pedagogical heritage can become a powerful tool for forming a resilient national spirit, raising conscious citizens, and preserving the national identity of the Ukrainian people.

The modern interpretation of patriotism in the conditions of Ukraine's state independence increasingly appeals to deep national self-awareness. This process involves the conscious cultivation of internal life orientations and volitional qualities that harmonize with national self-consciousness. It concerns the organic acceptance and development of the spiritual achievements of the people – from language and historical memory to legal culture, worldview, and artistic heritage, which must become an integral part of an individual's internal world¹.

The transformation of concepts of patriotism in the modern world reflects a profound transition from emotional loyalty to conscious civic activity. Traditionally, patriotism was interpreted as an individual's primary attachment to their land, language, and cultural traditions, which often bordered on uncritical loyalty to state institutions. Such «passive» patriotism was based on the principle of gratitude for the past and unconditional approval of the authorities' actions. However, in the conditions of democratic development and the formation of civil society, the understanding of this phenomenon has undergone significant changes: today, patriotism is perceived not only as a feeling but as a dynamic process that combines national identity with political responsibility.

¹ Енциклопедія освіти / Акад. пед. наук України; гол. ред. В. Кремень. Київ: Юрінком Інтер, 2008. С. 633.

Central to this evolution is the transition from «blind» to constructive patriotism. If the first type implies unconditional fidelity, which often ignores the state's internal problems, constructive patriotism is based on the capacity for critical analysis and the striving to improve one's country. It is precisely this critical approach that becomes a bridge to civic activity, where love for the Motherland is realized through concrete actions: from the protection of human rights and environmental initiatives to active participation in self-government and the volunteer movement.

Forms of Manifestation of Patriotism

It is worth noting that the war has become a catalyst for the transition from declarative to active patriotism. This trend is thoroughly analyzed by O. Luchaninova, who introduces the concept of «active patriotism», emphasizing its spiritual component. The author notes that under wartime conditions, «the patriot-person has revealed themselves to spiritual heights», and patriotism itself «through the conscious activity of people, and students in particular, prompts concrete deeds, actions, and affairs»¹. This transformation of consciousness is confirmed by empirical data presented in the study by Ye. Ivashkevych and co-authors. The scholars record a significant increase in the level of military-professional orientation among student youth after the start of the full-scale invasion, linking this to the fact that «society has re-evaluated its social priorities, including greater attention to defense and security»².

Today we observe how patriotism is transforming, acquiring new meanings in the modern world. Understanding what the forms of patriotism are helps to grasp why one chooses the path of volunteering, another – the popularization of language, and someone else – diligent daily work for the welfare of the state. However, at the heart of these modern manifestations lies the deep psychological nature of the feeling, which was thoroughly

¹ Лучанінова О. Патріотизм в умовах воєнного стану: духовне становлення студентства. *Духовність особистості: методологія, теорія і практика*. 2022. Вип. 2. С. 64, 71.

² Івашкевич Є. Чорна В., Подолян В., Хлестова С., Коломієць В. Аналіз патріотичного виховання студентської молоді в умовах надзвичайних станів. *Суспільство та національні інтереси*. 2024. Вип. 4. С. 336.

researched by H. Vashchenko. In particular, he distinguished between spontaneous, conscious, and unconscious patriotism, believing that the awareness of national belonging and active work for the benefit of the Motherland are the highest forms of this feeling. Spontaneous patriotism is an unconscious love for native nature, native language, customs, traditions, compatriots, etc. He claimed that spontaneous love for one's native land is inherent in most people. It becomes the ground for conscious love for the Motherland. Its essential feature is the awareness of belonging to a certain nation, a clear idea of the characteristics of one's people, their history, etc. «A true patriot loves their land and people not passively, but works actively for the benefit of the Motherland, strives to elevate its culture and the well-being of the people, and manifests courage and heroism if necessary. The highest form of patriotism is sacrificial love for the Motherland»¹.

Drawing on Christian philosophy, general European pedagogical concepts, and the rich traditions of Ukrainian folk pedagogy, H. Vashchenko developed the concept of the Ukrainian educational ideal. He believed that the upbringing of Ukrainian youth should be based on universal and national values, which are an integral part of the people's cultural heritage. These values include moral principles of creating good and resisting evil, the striving for truth, and the building of a just society. These universal values have deep roots in the Christian religion, which is an important source for the formation of moral orientations. Vashchenko defined the Christian basis of his educational principles with the formula «Service to God and the Motherland». This ideal covers a wide range of issues in Ukrainian pedagogy and offers ways to solve the tasks of national education².

In the era of globalization and information technologies, when youth face numerous challenges and temptations, it is important to preserve spiritual and moral benchmarks. Education based on Christian values and national traditions helps students form a strong inner core that will allow them to resist negative influences and

¹ Ващенко Г. Виховний ідеал. Полтава: Полтавський вісник, 1994. С. 134–135.

² Czepil M. Hryhoriy Vashchenko's philosophical principles of upbringing. *Biografistyka Pedagogiczna*. 2024. № 9(1). С. 305–326. <https://doi.org/10.36578/BP.2024.09.19>

preserve their identity. Today, when students are actively seeking their place in society, it is important that they not only acquire knowledge but also develop their moral qualities. Upbringing in the spirit of Christian morality and folk virtues contributes to the formation of responsible citizens who are capable of doing good and serving their country. National consciousness, which is an important component of Vashchenko's educational ideal, helps students realize their belonging to the Ukrainian people and feel responsibility for their future.

In the modern world, where spirituality often recedes into the background, it is important for youth to understand that spiritual development is an integral part of their personal growth. Education based on Christian values helps students find the meaning of life and develop empathy and compassion for other people. It is important that students understand that spirituality is not limited to religious rituals but manifests in their daily actions and deeds. The role of the family in the education of students remains invariably important. It is precisely in the family that students receive their first lessons in morality and national consciousness. It is important for parents to be examples of moral behavior for their children and to pass on to them the traditions of the Ukrainian people. In the modern world, when the family faces many challenges, it is important to preserve it as a center of spirituality and national culture. Thus, H. Vashchenko's educational ideal remains relevant for modern youth. It helps youth form a strong moral foundation, develop national consciousness, and preserve spiritual values.

If H. Vashchenko emphasized in his works the formation of a strong-willed, nationally tempered character capable of state-building and struggle, then the further development of Ukrainian pedagogical thought found its humanistic embodiment in the legacy of Sukhomlynskyi. Despite the fact that Sukhomlynskyi worked under the conditions of strict Soviet ideology and the absence of Ukrainian independence, he managed to create a unique pedagogical system where patriotic education occupied a central place, transforming from a political slogan into a deep internal feeling of the child. His approach to patriotism was multifaceted, encompassing state-wide, ethnic, and territorial aspects.

Nationwide patriotism is the formation of a conscious citizen who loves their Motherland. This feeling is the foundation for the

development of the personality, its national self-consciousness, ideological convictions, and active participation in social life. The Motherland, in the educator's opinion, is not an abstract concept, but a native home, a source of happiness, the land where a person was born¹. Territorial patriotism, which Sukhomlynskyi highlighted, begins with the «small» homeland, with the first impressions of the native land. This feeling is formed from childhood when a person discovers the beauty of the surrounding world. The «small» homeland is a native corner that remains in the heart for a lifetime, nourishing the soul and reminding one of their roots. Patriotic education begins with the family, with love for the native home, village, and parents. Nature, language, and history also play an important role in the formation of patriotic feelings. For a child, the Motherland is the bread on the table, a wheat field, a forest glade, and the songs and tales of the mother².

Taking into account modern realities, special attention was paid to the preparation of young men for military duty³. Meetings with veterans were held, as well as stories about the heroism of ancestors, which contributed to the fostering of patriotic feelings and the awareness of involvement in the history of one's country, which help to cultivate «in young souls the moral qualities to which we attach exceptional importance in the establishment of the unity of patriotic feelings and patriotic consciousness – empathy and the awareness of involvement in the heroic past, the majestic present, and the glorious future of the Fatherland»⁴.

Modern forms of the manifestation of patriotism in Ukraine have undergone a radical transformation, turning from declarative adherence to state symbols into a strategy for daily survival and the development of the nation. The main essence of this evolution was the transition to «active patriotism», where the main criterion is the real contribution of the personality to the strengthening of the state.

¹ Сухомлинський В. Як виховати справжню людину. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1976. Т. 2. С. 167.

² Сухомлинський В. Серце віддаю дітям. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1977. Т. 3. С. 219.

³ Сухомлинський В. Як виховати справжню людину. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1976. Т. 2. С. 307.

⁴ Сухомлинський В. Як виховати справжню людину. *Вибрані твори: В 5-и т.* Київ: Рад. школа, 1976. Т. 2. С. 320.

CONCLUSIONS

In the conditions of war, patriotism emerges as a fundamental value orientation of the personality, which exists in dialectical unity with national consciousness. Research into the concepts of patriotism has revealed an evolution in the understanding of this concept—from passive loyalty to an active civic position, which implies readiness for action, responsibility for the fate of the country, and direct participation in its defense. Constructive patriotism involves the deep assimilation of the spiritual heritage of the people (language, history, traditions), which become the person's internal life benchmarks. The ultimate goal of constructive patriotism is the formation of a conscious citizen for whom the welfare of the state is a personal value, and the improvement of society is daily work. Patriotism in modern Ukraine has transformed from an abstract ideological category into a fundamental life-creating value that defines the strategy for the survival and development of the nation under wartime conditions. Patriotic education becomes a tool for psychological support, helping youth maintain faith in the future and tempering the spirit to overcome crisis situations.

ABSTRACT

Patriotism in the Dimension of Pedagogical Theory and Social Practice The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of patriotism as a fundamental value in the context of modern challenges caused by full-scale military aggression against Ukraine. The research acquires particular relevance due to the need to harmonize the theoretical foundations of patriotic education with the real demands of socio-pedagogical practice. A retrospective analysis of the genesis of ideas in the studies of Ukrainian educators allowed for the identification of the continuity of national education traditions and the justification of their adaptation to the challenges of modernity. Patriotism is considered by researchers as an active integrative quality of an individual that transforms theoretical beliefs into real actions: from the active defense of the Motherland to the conscious fulfillment of civic duty. In the context of the evolution of social demands, the transformation of concepts of patriotism is examined: from passive loyalty to a proactive civic

position. It is proven that modern constructive patriotism is based on critical thinking, civic responsibility, and an activity-based approach. On this basis, the necessity of creating a solid value foundation in the personnel training system is justified, where professionalism is inextricably linked with national interests and readiness for the defense of the state. The main forms of the manifestation of patriotism in modern realities are systematized, where it emerges as a vector for the survival of the nation and a strategy for national self-preservation. In conclusion, it is determined that patriotic education today is a multidimensional process of forming psychological resilience and a stable national identity as means of overcoming existential challenges.

АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті здійснено комплексний аналіз феномена патріотизму як фундаментальної цінності в умовах сучасних викликів, зумовлених повномасштабною воєнною агресією проти України. Дослідження набуває особливої актуальності через потребу в гармонізації теоретичних засад патріотичного виховання із реальними запитами суспільно-педагогічної практики. Ретроспективний аналіз генези ідей у студіях українських педагогів дав змогу виокремити тяглість традицій національного виховання та обґрунтувати їх адаптацію до викликів сучасності. Патріотизм розглядається дослідниками як дієва інтегративна якість людини, яка трансформує теоретичні переконання у реальні вчинки: від активного захисту Батьківщини до свідомого виконання громадянського обов'язку. У контексті еволюції суспільних запитів розглянуто трансформацію концепцій патріотизму: від пасивної лояльності до проактивної громадянської позиції. Доведено, що сучасний конструктивний патріотизм базується на критичному мисленні, громадянській відповідальності та діяльнісному підході. На цій основі обґрунтовано необхідність створення міцного ціннісного фундаменту в системі підготовки кадрів, де професіоналізм нерозривно пов'язаний із національними інтересами та готовністю до захисту держави. Систематизовано основні форми прояву патріотизму в сучасних реаліях, де він постає вектором виживання нації та стратегією національного самозбереження. У підсумку визначено, що патріотичне виховання сьогодні є багатовимір-

ним процесом формування психологічної стійкості та стійкої національної ідентичності як засобів подолання екзистенційних викликів.

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THE PROBLEM OF CONSTRUCTING THE IMAGE OF THE «RUSSIAN HERO» IN THE CONTEXT OF RUSSIA'S ARMED AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

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INTRODUCTION

At one time, Pliny the Younger wrote that history must not deviate from the truth: *nec historia debet egredi veritatem* (Plin. Ep. 7.33.10). In conditions of armed confrontation, each of the warring sides very often has its own «truth», and each strives to prove that justice is on its side. In antiquity, there existed a belief that the violation of an international treaty would inevitably bring punishment from the gods, for – allowing ourselves to paraphrase Ovid – justice is stronger than weapons (Ov. *Fast.* 3.281). In our own time, the justification of one's righteousness by the parties to an armed conflict serves, on the one hand, to convince the international community that their actions comply with the norms of international law, and on the other, to secure domestic approval of government policy among their own population. One of the instruments for shaping the desired public opinion in Russia is the effort of Russian propaganda to construct the image of the «Russian hero» in the context of armed aggression against Ukraine. The phenomenon of the «hero» long predates our own era. The etymology of the term «hero» (English hero, German Heros, French héros, etc.) can be traced back to the Latin heroes and the Ancient Greek ἥρωες. In one of Plato's dialogues, speaking through Socrates, it is asserted that heroes are demigods – ἡμίθεοι οἱ ἥρωες (Plat. *Crat.* 398c): all of them were born either of a god who fell in love with a mortal woman, or of a mortal man and a goddess (Plat. *Crat.* 398d). The majority of heroes of Ancient Greece were venerated within a specific locality and were little known beyond its borders. The center of a hero's cult was his tomb – the heroön (Greek ἥρωον, Latin heroum), or a cenotaph (Greek κενοτάφιον, literally «empty grave», Latin cenotaphium). Some «heroes» came to be recognized throughout the entire Greek world and even beyond its borders. One such example is Heracles (Greek Ἡρᾱκλῆς, Latin Hercules), one of the few heroes who attained immortality. He was revered not only by all Greeks but also by the

Romans, who worshipped him both as a hero and as a god. An integral component of the hero cult consisted of narratives about their glorious deeds and heroic exploits. Over time, the conviction emerged that a hero could also be an ordinary person who had performed feats for the sake of the fatherland. For his deeds in the service of Athens, Tellus was counted among the heroes; according to tradition, Solon considered him the happiest of all men (Hdt. 1.30.4–5). The same honors were bestowed upon all those who fell for Athens in the Battle of Marathon (Paus. 1.29.4; Thuc. 2.34.5). In this way, a concept of the «hero» took shape that closely resembles the modern one, in which primary emphasis is placed on courage, bravery, and self-sacrifice in battle for the homeland. «National heroes» function as informal symbols of modern states, alongside formal symbols such as the national anthem, coat of arms, and flag. It is therefore only natural that Russian propaganda, in seeking to persuade Russian society of the «justice» of the armed aggression against Ukraine, requires the construction of an image of the «Russian hero». The formation of this image began long before the full-scale invasion, already taking shape during the period of Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine. Under present-day conditions, this issue is not merely an academic one but also carries significant practical importance, given the urgent need to counter Russian propaganda.

An analysis of recent studies and publications shows that the problem of constructing the image of the «Russian hero» in the context of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine – particularly in the period preceding the full-scale invasion – has not been adequately reflected in contemporary historiography¹. Reflections

¹ Masnenko V., Telvak Vitalii, Yanyshyn B., Telvak Viktoria. Identity transformation of the Ukrainian Donbas: from the “wild field” to Russian occupation. *Analele Universității din Craiova. Istorie*. 2021. Issue 2 (40). P. 101–114; Telvak V., Ilnytskyi V. A Year of Existential War in Analytical Reflections of the Warsaw Centre for Eastern Studies. *Східноєвропейський історичний вісник*. 2023. Issue 27. P. 249–258; Тельвак В., Масненко В. Теоретична модель студій пам'яті: досвід методологічної трансформації в умовах опору російській агресії. *Zaporizhzhia Historical Review*. 2025. Vol. 10(62). С. 82–91; Masnenko V., Telvak V. Reinterpreting the theoretical model and methodological tools of ‘memory studies’ in the context of the russian-ukrainian war. *Наукові записки Вінницького державного педагогічного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського. Серія: Історія*. Вип. 53. 2025. С. 180–190; Yaremchuk V., Telvak

on this issue were offered by Oleg Kashin in his article «Putin's Mythological Heroes», published in The New York Times on November 8, 2016 (the online version appeared a day earlier under the title «The Making of a Modern Russian Hero»). The Russian journalist's conclusion essentially comes down to the claim that new Russian heroes are produced by an absurd fusion of contemporary media culture with the mythology of the Second World War¹.

D. Karanov examines the situation surrounding street art objects dedicated to Russia's new heroes in the settlement of Metallostroy, part of the Kolpinsky District of Saint Petersburg. The author concludes that the so-called «Metallostroy triptych», depicting three individuals killed in Donbas, Dagestan, and Syria, is «the result of a policy of masculinity that has been pursued in the settlement of Metallostroy over the past several years»². In Ukrainian historiography, this problem has not yet been studied.

The purpose of the present study is to analyze the actions of Russian propaganda aimed at constructing the image of the «Russian hero» in the period preceding Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

1. Motorola-«Hero» - Official Discourse

With the onset of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Russian propaganda likewise intensified. Political talk shows began to appear on the broadcasts of leading Russian television channels, where topics related to Ukraine are discussed on a daily basis, ensuring high viewership ratings. These programs are conducted

Vitalii, Masnenko V., Telyak Viktoria. Representation of Ukraine in Russian history textbooks (until 2021). *Danubius*. 2024. Vol. XLII. P. 179–203; Тельяк В., Попов М. Усноісторичні студії історичної пам'яті в умовах російської агресії проти України. *Вісник Черкаського університету: Серія Історичні науки*. 2024. № 2. С. 140–157; Тельяк В., Масненко В. Ukraine Crisis: російсько-українська війна очима кореспондентів «BBC News». *Вісник Черкаського університету: Серія Історичні науки*. 2021. № 2. С. 136–143.

¹ Kashin, O. (08.11.2016). Putin's mythological heroes. *The New York Times*, A. P. 14.

² Каранов Д.П. (Не)осознанная индоктринация: визуализация символа украинского кризиса в пригородном спальном микрорайоне Петербурга. *Медийная индоктринация: антропологические исследования* / Отв. ред. В.К. Малькова, В.А. Тишков. М.: ИЭА РАН, 2018. С. 92.

according to strictly designed scripts, and the hosts do not allow participants to deviate from the predetermined agenda. Despite the appearance of debate and the presence on these talk shows of speakers who ostensibly represent differing viewpoints, both the form and content of the presentation – as well as the course of the discussion itself – lead the viewer to a conclusion determined in advance. The topics selected for discussion are coordinated across talk shows on different channels. As a result, the freedom of choice enjoyed by viewers who select one channel or another, or one program or another, is in fact an illusion.

On October 17, 2016, one of the most widely discussed figures in the Russian media space was Arsen Pavlov, also known as Motorola, a native of the city of Ukhta in the Komi Republic, which is part of the Russian Federation. The trigger for this attention was his death, caused by the detonation of an explosive device planted on the cable of an elevator in the entrance of the building where he lived – at No. 121 Cheliuskintsev Street in Donetsk. For example, this event opened the broadcast of the talk show 60 Minutes on the Russia 1 channel: footage from the scene was shown, and the Ukrainian side was branded as the likely party responsible for the killing, and so on¹.

The newspaper Pravda, the printed organ of Russian communists, responded to this event with an article signed with the initials «V.M.T.», in which the image of Arseniy Pavlov was painted in the brightest colors; twice he was explicitly described as a «hero of the DPR»².

Vitaly Milonov, a deputy of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, proposed establishing a children's club in St. Petersburg and naming it after Arsen Pavlov. It was emphasized that Motorola had «entered eternal immortality through his courageous labor and valor» and that he was «an example on which

¹ 60 минут Новое ток шоу с Ольгой Скабеевой и Евгением Поповым от 17.10.2016 [электронный ресурс] YouTube. Режим доступа: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Yw7h07Z4-s>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 20.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 10.10.2021.

² В.М.Т. (18 19.10.2016). Объявивший войну пусть боится. *Правда*. № 116 (30467). С. 3.

our boys and girls should be raised»¹. The press service of Vitaly Milonov reported that «this could be one of the patriotic youth schools, or simply a secondary general-education school. The name of the deceased could be immortalized in one of the city's toponyms – for example, by naming one of the city's numerous bridges in his honor»². In the Komi Republic, the first gathering of the youth movement Yunarmiya, which began on October 17 and lasted eight days, was dedicated to the memory of Arsen Pavlov. Leonid Krasnoperov, head of the Youth Policy Department of the Komi Ministry of Defense, noted that the decision «to honor the memory of a heroic compatriot» had been made after Motorola's killing: «The decision was taken by colleagues and the leaders of military-patriotic clubs. This is our contemporary hero. We educate our pupils through the heroic experience of our ancestors»³. However, a day later Leonid Krasnoperov retracted his words in a comment to the television channel Dozhd. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Komi Republic distanced itself from dedicating the patriotic youth gathering to the memory of Motorola, describing it as a private initiative of an individual official⁴. In the days that followed, the topic remained a focal point of discussion in the Russian mass media, reaching a kind of apogee on October 20, 2016. On that day, talk shows aired footage of Arsen Pavlov's funeral ceremony, which had taken place in Donetsk the previous day. On the NTV talk show Mesto Vstrechi (Meeting Place), at

¹ Феофанов С. Открыть в Петербурге детский клуб в честь Мотороллы [электронный ресурс] The village. Режим доступа: <https://www.the-village.ru/city/city/247953-motorola-detskiy-klub>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 17.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2021.

² Милонов предлагает назвать школу или мост в Петербурге в честь Моторолы [электронный ресурс] Росбалт. Режим доступа: <https://www.rosbalt.ru/piter/2016/10/17/1559177.html>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 17.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2021.

³ Первый слет «Юнарии» в Коми посвятили памяти Моторолы [электронный ресурс] Медуза. Режим доступа: <https://meduza.io/news/2016/10/18/pervyy-slet-yunarmii-v-komi-posvyatili-rampuyati-motoroly>. Дата публікації: 18.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2021.

⁴ Иванов В. «Официально мы с Украиной не воюем»: в Ухте отказались называть улицу в честь убитого ополченца Моторолы [электронный ресурс] 7x7. Режим доступа: <https://7x7-journal.ru/news/2016/11/09/oficialno-my-s-ukrainoj-ne-voyuem-v-uhte-otkazalis-nazyvat-ulicu-v-chest-ubitogo-opolchenca-motoroly>. Дата публікації: 09.11.2016. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2021.

minutes 26–27 of the broadcast, emphasis was placed on the large crowds attending the farewell ceremony; yet again, accusations were leveled against Ukraine, accompanied by assurances that «Donbas will under no circumstances return to Ukraine»¹. On the ORT talk show *Vremya Pokazhet* (Time Will Tell), at the 14th minute of the broadcast, one of the guests remarked that they were burying «essentially, a murderer», to which the host objected: «I have killed... and for many people I am quite legitimate». It was further asserted that Motorola was a «national hero of Donbas», and that it was unfortunate that «he died treacherously in an elevator»². In the newspaper *Pravda*, Motorola was described as a «combat commander» and a «hero»³. It should be noted that as early as February 2015, the Security Service of Ukraine had formally charged Arsen Pavlov under Article 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, «Violation of the laws and customs of war». This was reported by the head of the SBU's Main Investigative Department, Vasyl Vovk⁴. Consequently, from the perspective of Ukrainian law enforcement agencies, Arsen Pavlov faced arrest followed by criminal prosecution for crimes committed, but by no means extrajudicial execution. It is therefore unsurprising that, subsequently, the version alleging the involvement of Ukrainian security services in Motorola's killing found no confirmation whatsoever.

Thus, within the Russian information space, a process of heroization of the figure of Arsen Pavlov was set in motion. Predictably, in the Ukrainian information space Motorola is an antihero, characterized as a «terrorist», a «war criminal», and so on.

¹ Место встречи от 20.10.2016. Найдено ли решение по Украине? [электронный ресурс] YouTube. Режим доступа: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuH_qSCo8jo. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 20.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 10.10.2021.

² Время покажет от 20.10.2016. [электронный ресурс] YouTube. Режим доступа: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UBvKdLw4VQ&t=0s>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 20.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 10.10.2021.

³ В.М.Т. (21 24.10.2016). «Нормандская четвёрка» вводит полицию в Донбасс. *Правда*, № 118 (30469). С. 7.

⁴ Терористу Моторолі оформили підозру СБУ. [электронный ресурс] Укрінформ. Режим доступа: https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-other_news/1817911-teroristu_motoroli_oformili_pidozru__sbu_2024584.html Дата перегляду: 10.10.2021.

This situation vividly illustrates the state of the information war between Ukraine and Russia. It is therefore hardly surprising that Russian and Ukrainian audiences view Russian aggression and Russian militants in Ukraine from fundamentally different perspectives.

It is evident that within the top leadership of the Russian Federation, the decision to heroize the figure of Motorola did not receive unequivocal support. As a result, the initiatives put forward in this direction did not develop into an organized campaign and, over time, began to fade.

On October 18, 2016, the Russian version of the international online platform Change.org published a petition addressed to the President of the Russian Federation entitled «To Award the Title of Hero of Russia (Posthumously) to Arsen Pavlov, Known by the Call Sign Motorola». In the justificatory section, its author, Khabarovsk resident Valerii Karpov, stated that «young people should be raised on the feats of Motorola»¹. On October 21, a petition was published on the same website addressed to the governor of Sverdlovsk Oblast and the Yekaterinburg City Duma, proposing that one of Yekaterinburg's streets be named after Arsen Pavlov². The first of these petitions elicited no response from the authorities of the Russian Federation, while the initiative expressed in the second petition was not supported by the mayor of Yekaterinburg, Yevgenii Roizman³.

On October 31, 2016, an appeal appeared on the website of the Interregional Public Organization for Civic and Legal Self-Defense

¹ «На подвигах Моторолы необходимо воспитывать молодёжь», россияне просят присвоить боевику «Мотороле» звание Героя России [электронный ресурс] Вчасно. Режим доступа: <https://vchasnoua.com/donbass/45092-na-podvigakh-motoroly-neobkhodimo-voospityvat-molodezh-rossiyane-prosyat-prisvoit-boeviku-motorole-zvanie-geroya-rossii>. Дата публікації: 21.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 18.10.2021.

² «Он же наш, красноармеец. На Донбассе что-то делал». Что думают жители Екатеринбурга об идее назвать улицу в честь Моторолы [электронный ресурс] ZNAK. Режим доступа: https://www.znak.com/2016-10-24/chto_dumayut_zhiteli_ekaterinburga_ob_idee_nazvat_ulicu_v_chest_motoroly. Дата публікації: 24.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 18.10.2021.

³ Власти Екатеринбурга не станут называть улицу в честь «Моторолы» [электронный ресурс] Харьков. Новостное агентство. Режим доступа: <https://nahnews.org/950928-vlasti-ekaterinburga-ne-stanut-nazyvat-ulicu-v-chest-motoroly>. Дата публікації: 25.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 18.10.2021.

of Citizens of the Russian Federation, Grazhdanskii Patrul (Civic Patrol), addressed to M. N. Osmanov, head of the administration of the municipal formation of the urban district of Ukhta (Russian abbreviation: «MOGO Ukhta»), proposing that Pavlov's memory be commemorated in his hometown by naming one of the streets of Ukhta after him¹. On November 7, a meeting took place between Magomed Osmanov, the mayor of Ukhta, and Rostislav Antonov, head of the Novosibirsk-based human rights organization Grazhdanskii Patrul. Representatives of numerous public organizations from Ukhta also participated in the meeting. Opponents of commemorating Motorola's memory, among other things, pointed out that officially Russia is not at war with Ukraine and that the Russian president has repeatedly stated that Russia is not a party to the conflict in Ukraine, and so forth. As a result of the discussion, a consensus position was reached: until a historical assessment of the events in the DPR emerges, the issue of commemorating the memory of Arsen Pavlov should not be considered².

2. Motorola images in public space

Nevertheless, some attempts to incorporate the figure of Motorola into the contemporary pantheon of Russian heroes achieved success at the local level. On October 22, 2016, an idealized image of Arsen Pavlov appeared on one of the transformer substations in the settlement of Metallostroy. This provoked an ambivalent reaction among local residents; however, the head of the local administration rejected proposals to paint over the image, stating in an interview that «this is a portrait of a hero of Donbas, and heroes should be known by sight». This piece of street art was damaged and defaced several times with red and black paint

¹ Увековечить память Арсения Сергеевича Павлова (Моторолы) в г. Ухта [электронный ресурс] Режим доступа: <https://civilpatrol.info/?q=petition/10066/uvekovechit-pamyat-arseniya-sergeevicha-pavlova-motoroly-v-g-uhta>. Дата публікації: 31.10.2016. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2021.

² Улицы имени Моторолы в Ухте пока не будет [электронный ресурс]. КомиОнлайн. Режим доступа: <https://komionline.ru/node/75371>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 08.11.2016. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2021.

and various inscriptions, such as «no to war»¹. Clearly, a significant portion of society did not support the idea of commemorating Arsen Pavlov through street imagery. Despite this, the damaged image was repeatedly restored and was eventually approved by the Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture. On October 1, 2019, the State Administrative and Technical Inspectorate formally legitimized it². Thus, despite the ambiguity surrounding assessments of Arsen Pavlov's activities even within Russia itself, the image of Motorola as a new Russian hero became part of the urban streetscape of a suburb of Saint Petersburg.

On October 11, 2021, a RIF-112 model boat bearing the hull number «RRO-0992» was launched at the port of Rostov-on-Don. The vessel had been modernized at the facilities of the local joint-stock company RIF. According to the website Radio Liberty, a boat with the same hull number had already been photographed in 2015; at that time, its entire side was adorned with a St. George ribbon and the inscription «70 Years of Victory!». Now, however, the name «Arsen Pavlov» is prominently displayed on the side of the vessel³.

Despite these efforts to heroize Arsen Pavlov, it can be stated that his figure remained controversial for Russian society. The recognition of Pavlov as a «Hero of Russia» did not enjoy active support from state institutions. This was due to several factors. In particular, from a legal standpoint, his activities in Ukraine violated Article 359 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, «Mercenarism», paragraph three of which provides for a sentence of three to seven years' imprisonment for a mercenary's participation in an armed conflict or military actions. A mercenary

¹ Каранов Д.П. (Не)осознанная индоктринация: визуализация символа украинского кризиса в пригородном спальном микрорайоне Петербурга. *Медийная индоктринация: антропологические исследования* / Отв. ред. В.К. Малькова, В.А. Тишков. М.: ИЭА РАН, 2018. С. 85.

² ГАТИ одобрило граффити с Моторолой в Металлострое [электронный ресурс] MR7.ru. Режим доступа: <https://mr-7.ru/articles/208669/>. Дата публікації: 01.10.2019. Дата перегляду: 16.10.2021.

³ Як «Моторола» вбив полоненого «кіборга» [електронний ресурс] BBC News. Україна. Режим доступу: https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2015/04/150415_branovytsky_death_witn ess_sova_interview_vs. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 16.04.2015. Дата перегляду: 18.10.2021.

is defined as a person who «acts for the purpose of obtaining material remuneration and is not a citizen of a state participating in an armed conflict or military actions, does not permanently reside on its territory, and is not a person sent to perform official duties»¹. In this case, we are dealing with a citizen of the Russian Federation who was not sent to Ukraine by any authority to perform official duties. Those who attempted to heroize Arsenii Pavlov claimed that he fought in Donbas for an idea. However, numerous data from open sources indicate that he received substantial material compensation, including real estate. In particular, on May 6, 2016, he received, free of charge, an apartment in Donetsk, at 2D Vatutin Avenue, apartment No. 59².

Abstracting from legal reservations, we must acknowledge that the ethical dimension of the matter likewise offered no grounds for presenting Arsen Pavlov as a role model for Russian – or any other – youth. Of course, war is not a place where people act with kid gloves. Yet there are acts that are fundamentally unacceptable and for which no justification exists under any circumstances. There is credible evidence of Motorola's violations of the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war. In particular, there are witnesses to his killing of the captive Ihor Branovytskyi³. Motorola himself admitted, in a comment to the Kyiv Post, to executing fifteen prisoners: «I shot fifteen prisoners... No comments... If I want to kill, I kill; if I don't want to, I don't»⁴.

¹ Уголовный кодекс Российской Федерации. URL: <https://rulaws.ru/uk/Razdel-XII/Glava-34/Statya-359/> - Дата перегляду: 17.10.2021.

² Кому Захарченко подарил квартиры в Донецке [электронный ресурс] // Новости Донбасса. Режим доступа: <https://novosti.dn.ua/article/6187-komu-zakharchenko-podaryl-kvartiry-v-donecke>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 07.05.2016. Дата перегляду: 17.10.2021.

³ «Я 15 пленных расстрелял»: в России именем участника захвата Донбасса назвали катер [электронный ресурс] Радіо Свобода. Режим доступа: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/arsen-pavlov-motorola-kater/31505485.html>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 12.10.2021. Дата перегляду: 16.10.2021.

⁴ Motorola confesses he murdered 15 prisoners. Признание Моторолы в убийстве 15 пленных [электронный ресурс]. YouTube. Режим доступа: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXSctfYItaM>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 06.04.2015. Дата перегляду: 18.10.2021.

CONCLUSIONS

Having examined the problem of constructing the image of the «Russian hero» in the period preceding Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, we may speak of certain difficulties – both legal and ethical – that Russian propaganda encountered. In October 2016, a process of heroization of the figure of Arsen Pavlov was launched in the Russian information space, while in the Ukrainian information space he is characterized as a «terrorist», a «war criminal», and so forth. Within the top leadership of the Russian Federation, the decision to heroize the figure of Motorola failed to gain unequivocal support. As a result, initiatives in this direction did not develop into an organized campaign and gradually began to fade. Although in practice Russian state structures initiated, organized, and conducted the war against Ukraine, until 2022 Russia officially denied its involvement in hostilities in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In this context, Russian citizens who fought on the territory of Ukraine formally violated Article 359 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, «Mercenarism», paragraph three of which provides for up to seven years' imprisonment for a mercenary's participation in an armed conflict or military actions. To recognize a figure such as Motorola as a «Russian hero» would have meant officially endorsing all of his actions, including the war crimes he committed. Evidently, at that time the Russian leadership was not prepared to take such a step. Nevertheless, some attempts to incorporate the figure of Motorola into the pantheon of Russian heroes did succeed at the local level. Russian propaganda, for its part, continued to keep its audience in a sustained anti-Ukrainian mobilization.

ABSTRACT

Having examined the problem of constructing the image of the «Russian hero» in the period preceding Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, we may speak of certain difficulties – both legal and ethical – that Russian propaganda encountered. In October 2016, a process of heroization of the figure of Arsen Pavlov was launched in the Russian information space, while in the Ukrainian information space he is characterized as a «terrorist», a «war criminal», and so forth. Within the top leadership of the Russian

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Розглянувши проблему формування образу «російського героя» напередодні широкомасштабного вторгнення Росії в Україну можемо говорити про певні труднощі, юридичного та етичного характеру, з якими зустрічалася російська пропаганда. У жовтні 2016 року у російському інформаційному просторі було започатковано процес героїзації постаті Арсена Павлова, який в українському інформаційному просторі характеризується як «терорист», «військовий злочинець» *etc.* У вищому керівництві Російської Федерації рішення щодо героїзації постаті Мотороли не знайшло однозначної підтримки. Тому ініціативи у цьому напрямку не вилилися у організовану кампанію і з часом почали згасати. Хоча фактично російські владні структури ініціювали, організували і вели війну проти України, до 2022 року Росія офіційно не визнавала свою причетність до бойових дій у Донецькій та Луганській областях. Визнати «російським героєм» особу на кшталт Мотороли – означало офіційно схвалити всі його діяння, в тому числі і вчинені ним воєнні злочини. Очевидно, вище російське керівництво, на той час, до цього не було готове. Все ж деякі спроби ввести постать Мотороли до пантеону російських героїв мали успіх на місцевому рівні. Російська ж пропаганда продовжувала тримати свою аудиторію в антиукраїнському тонусі.

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LAUGHTER UNDER FIRE: POLITICAL HUMOR AS SYMBOLIC RESISTANCE DURING RUSSIA'S FULL-SCALE INVASION OF UKRAINE

Syrko I. M.

INTRODUCTION

On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, initiating the most extensive military conflict in Europe since the Second World War. From the very first hours of the invasion, alongside military confrontation, an extraordinary wave of digital cultural production emerged. Among its most visible manifestations was the rapid proliferation of political humor – memes, cartoons, slogans, graphic art, and viral textual fragments – that circulated widely across social media platforms, both domestically and internationally. These humorous forms quickly became an essential lens through which the war was interpreted, narrated, and emotionally processed.

Two statements quickly crystallized into symbolic anchors of this humorous discourse. During the attack on Snake Island, Ukrainian border guards were ordered by a Russian warship to surrender. The response – «*Russian warship, go fuck yourself*» – immediately became emblematic of defiance and moral resilience. Around the same time, when offered evacuation assistance, President Volodymyr Zelensky famously replied: «*I need ammunition, not a ride*». Both utterances transcended their immediate circumstances. They were transformed into digital artifacts, reproduced, remixed, and disseminated across platforms, becoming foundational memes in wartime Ukraine.

These phrases were not isolated rhetorical moments. They functioned as narrative templates, shaping subsequent humorous and symbolic production. Within hours, they appeared in visual adaptations, typographic posters, cartoons, and commercial merchandise. They were printed on billboards and later commemorated on postage stamps. Their repetition marked the emergence of a symbolic battlefield parallel to the physical one, where meaning, morale, and cultural identity were contested and affirmed through humor.

This article examines Ukrainian wartime humor that emerged after the full-scale Russian invasion of February 2022 and argues

that it should be understood not merely as emotional coping or state propaganda but as a form of civic activism operating within a digitally networked public sphere. Through humorous production, circulation, and engagement, citizens, artists, institutions, and businesses collectively participate in constructing a moral, political, and emotional framework for understanding the war. Humor becomes a tool for resistance, solidarity, vigilance, and the reinforcement of national identity, functioning simultaneously as commentary, documentation, and mobilization.

This framework allows us to move beyond the traditional binary of humor as either «subversive resistance»¹ or «state propaganda»², recognizing the «networked, participatory, and semiotic dimensions of meme culture»³. Ukrainian war humor represents a hybrid space in which digital creativity, civic engagement, and ethical reflection intersect. It performs multiple functions: shaping domestic morale, signaling solidarity, exposing disinformation, and communicating resilience to international audiences.

Building on this perspective, the present study examines four interrelated dimensions through which Ukrainian wartime humor operates: resistance, solidarity, vigilance, and commitment to victory. Each dimension is explored through «recurring motifs, linguistic strategies, and material circulation, demonstrating how humor serves as both a cultural and civic practice»⁴. In the sections that follow, the analysis traces how specific phrases, visual tropes, and viral narratives emerge, circulate, and solidify into shared symbolic resources, revealing the ways in which humor mediates experience, constructs social meaning, and participates in the broader struggle for national survival.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative interpretive approach to examine Ukrainian wartime humor as a form of civic activism within a

¹ Scott J.C. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*: Yale University Press. 1985. P. 99.

² Kuipers G. *Good Humor, Bad Taste: A Sociology of the Joke*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. 2015. P. 135.

³ Milner R.M. *The World Made Meme: Public Conversations and Participatory Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2016. P. 70 p.

⁴ Siuta G.M. Transformation of lingual and mental profiles of the Ukrainian language picture of the world during the war. *Man and law in the language of modern mass media*. Vol. 1. Riga, Latvia: Baltija Publishing. 2025. P. 57.

digitally networked public sphere. The analysis focuses on widely circulated memes, humorous slogans, visual motifs, and viral narratives that emerged during the first year of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The empirical material consists of a purposive corpus of digital artifacts collected from major online platforms where wartime humor circulated most actively, including Twitter (X), Telegram, Facebook, Instagram, and widely shared media reports documenting viral memes. The selection of examples followed three primary criteria: high visibility and widespread circulation across multiple platforms, recurrence of specific motifs or phrases within meme culture, and cultural or political relevance to key wartime events. Rather than aiming for exhaustive quantitative representation, the corpus was constructed to capture culturally significant and widely recognized instances of humor that shaped public discourse.

The analysis draws on approaches from discourse analysis and digital culture studies, particularly meme analysis as conceptualized by Limor Shifman. Memes are treated not as isolated artifacts but as groups of related cultural items that share thematic, visual, or linguistic features and evolve through processes of imitation, variation, and remixing. Accordingly, the study focuses on recurring symbolic patterns – such as *tractors towing tanks*, the term «*bavovna*», or references to *Chornobayivka* – that function as shared narrative templates within Ukrainian wartime communication.

Interpretation proceeds through qualitative thematic analysis. Individual memes and humorous narratives were examined in relation to the social and political contexts in which they appeared, with attention to their symbolic structure, rhetorical strategies, and patterns of circulation. Particular emphasis is placed on how humor frames wartime events, constructs moral interpretations, and fosters participatory engagement across diverse actors, including state institutions, civil society, private companies, and individual users.

The analytical framework is organized around four interrelated dimensions identified inductively during the analysis: resistance, solidarity, vigilance, and commitment to victory. These categories reflect recurring communicative functions through which humor contributed to symbolic resistance, collective identity formation,

informational awareness, and future-oriented narratives of national resilience.

The study does not attempt to measure audience reception quantitatively; rather, it investigates humor as a cultural and communicative practice embedded within digital networks. By examining how specific motifs and phrases emerge, circulate, and stabilize within meme culture, the analysis seeks to illuminate the role of humor in shaping collective interpretation of wartime experience and in sustaining civic engagement under conditions of military conflict.

1. Theoretical Context: Between Resistance and Propaganda

Academic literature on political humor traditionally operates within a binary framework. On the one hand, humor is frequently conceptualized as a subversive practice employed by socially or politically subordinate groups to challenge dominant authority structures. This interpretation is closely associated with the work of James C. Scott, whose «concept of *hidden transcripts* describes the informal, often disguised forms of resistance that emerge in contexts where open opposition may be dangerous»¹. Within this perspective, jokes, satire, and ironic commentary provide relatively safe channels through which criticism of power can circulate. Humor thus becomes a *weapon of the weak*, enabling individuals to symbolically undermine authority without engaging in direct confrontation.

At the same time, historical analyses of wartime satire demonstrate that humor can function in a very different way. Studies of propaganda during the world wars have shown how states actively employed caricatures and satirical imagery to mobilize populations, reinforce national cohesion, and demonize the enemy. In such contexts, humor did not challenge power structures but rather supported them. Ridicule directed at the enemy served to simplify complex geopolitical conflicts into morally legible narratives, strengthening public commitment to the war effort. In such contexts, humor frequently operated not as resistance but as a persuasive instrument embedded within official communication strategies.

¹ Scott J.C. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*: Yale University Press. 1985. P. 94.

The coexistence of these two traditions – humor as resistance and humor as propaganda – has structured much of the scholarly debate surrounding political satire. Yet the emergence of digital communication environments has complicated this binary distinction. The participatory architecture of social media enables large numbers of users to produce, remix, and circulate humorous content at high speed, creating communication flows that are neither purely grassroots nor strictly institutional.

Research on digital memes by L. Shifman provides an important framework for understanding this transformation. The author conceptualizes memes not simply «as individual jokes but as groups of digital items that share common characteristics and are created through processes of imitation and variation»¹. Memes function as participatory cultural units whose meaning emerges through collective reproduction and modification. In this sense, they represent a form of distributed cultural production rather than a singular authored message.

The Ukrainian case following the full-scale invasion in February 2022 illustrates precisely such a participatory dynamic. Wartime humor in Ukraine has been produced not only by anonymous social media users but also by state institutions, journalists, artists, volunteers, and commercial actors. Government agencies frequently adopt meme formats in their official communication, while grassroots creators reinterpret official statements or slogans in humorous ways. Instead of a linear model in which propaganda flows downward from institutions to the public, the communication structure more closely resembles a networked ecosystem of symbolic co-production.

This participatory dimension also resonates with sociological analyses of humor as a mechanism of social boundary formation. According to Giseline Kuipers, «humor frequently operates as a marker of group membership: understanding a joke signals familiarity with shared cultural references, values, and experiences»². In wartime contexts, this boundary-making function can become particularly pronounced. Jokes may simultaneously reinforce internal

¹ Shifman L. *Memes in Digital Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2013. P. 68.

² Kuipers G. *Good Humor, Bad Taste: A Sociology of the Joke*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. 2015. P. 158.

cohesion within a community while excluding or ridiculing perceived outsiders.

Ukrainian wartime memes demonstrate this dynamic clearly. The ability to recognize certain references – such as linguistic jokes, recurring symbolic motifs, or specific wartime events – signals participation in a shared interpretive community. Humor therefore contributes not only to emotional coping or political commentary but also to the ongoing construction of collective identity. Taken together, these theoretical perspectives suggest that wartime humor cannot be fully understood within the traditional binary of resistance versus propaganda. Instead, humor in contemporary digital environments emerges from the interaction between participatory media structures, cultural memory, and political conflict. It simultaneously challenges, reinforces, and reconfigures existing power relations.

Consequently, this article proposes an alternative analytical lens: *civic activism*. *Civic activism* here refers to «collective practices oriented toward public concerns and enacted outside formal political institutions, yet often intersecting with them»¹. In the Ukrainian context, humorous expression became one such practice. Through memes and cartoons, participants documented events, articulated moral judgments, countered disinformation, and mobilized resources. Humor in this sense functions not merely as entertainment or commentary but as a form of participatory civic engagement embedded within digital culture. By circulating symbolic interpretations of wartime events, meme creators contribute to the formation of a shared narrative framework through which the conflict is publicly understood.

2. Resistance as Symbolic Practice

At the outset of the invasion, numerous Russian political commentators and media figures publicly predicted that Kyiv would fall within three days. The expectation of swift capitulation shaped the early Russian narrative of inevitability and superiority. However, the anticipated scenario failed to materialize: Ukrainian state institutions did not collapse, the capital did not surrender, and the gov-

¹ Angus J. The role of laughter in establishing solidarity and status. *The European Journal of Humour Research*. 2022. Issue 10 (2). P. 39.

ernment remained operational. In this context, humor emerged as a mechanism for publicly dismantling the myth of rapid conquest, transforming expectations of inevitability into opportunities for symbolic contestation.

Mememes mocking the «*three-day*» forecast depicted Russian troops as lost, exhausted, or stranded. The gap between prediction and reality became fertile ground for satire, illustrating the broader principle identified by James C. Scott in *Weapons of the Weak*: «humor can function as a public articulation of resistance, exposing the overconfidence of dominant powers while affirming the agency of the subordinated»¹. Ukrainian humor did not merely celebrate military resistance; it emphasized narrative failure, making visible the discrepancy between propaganda and lived experience.

President Volodymyr Zelensky's early wartime address framed the conflict in explicitly moral terms. The formulation «*We will be defending our country, because our weapon is truth, and our truth is that this is our land, our country, our children*» positioned the war not only as territorial defense but as an ethical struggle. Humor circulated within this moral and discursive framework. It did not trivialize the conflict; rather, it reinforced the legitimacy of resistance, embedding laughter and satire within a broader narrative of sovereignty, dignity, and truth.

The encounter at Snake Island quickly became a defining symbolic episode of the early war. When Russian forces demanded surrender, the response – «*Russian warship, go fuck yourself*» – transformed a coercive military ultimatum into a moment of rhetorical reversal. The phrase circulated almost instantly across social media, banners, protest signs, graphic designs, and digital posters. It was translated, stylized, and incorporated into artistic formats. The obscenity of the phrase amplified its authenticity, emotional intensity, and cultural resonance, aligning with notions of the carnivalesque: «subversion through humor inverts hierarchical authority, turning Russian military coercion into public mockery»².

¹ Scott J.C. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*: Yale University Press. 1985. P. 82.

² Pavlenko V. The emotional and behavioral consequences after the Russian invasion of Ukraine for the civilian population of Ukraine. *Dispossession: Anthropological Perspectives on Russia's War Against Ukraine*. New York and London: Routledge. 2024. P. 55.

The sinking of the cruiser *Moskva* on April 14, 2022, was narrativized through humor as poetic justice. Social media users joked that the vessel had been «*promoted to submarine*», or parodied Russian terminology by labeling it a «*special underwater operation*». A widespread meme framed the event through the lens of «The five stages of grief in Russia»:

- Denial: «The cruiser Moskva didn't sink».
- Anger: «The cruiser is on fire after the detonation of ammunition».
- Bargaining: «The cruiser is all right, we've [evacuated] her».
- Depression: «The cruiser continues to be on fire».
- Acceptance: «The cruiser sank».

This structure transformed military news into a staged emotional drama, exposing inconsistencies in official statements and producing a collective interpretive framework in which humor reinforced informational vigilance. Recurrent visual motifs, such as cigarettes, parodied Russian explanations of accidental explosions, demonstrating how meme culture recycles and amplifies tropes of official absurdity. These patterns illustrate Giseline Kuipers' argument that «humor operates as a marker of social knowledge, enabling insiders to identify truth from falsehood and collectively negotiate meaning»¹.

The phrase from Snake Island was institutionalized through material culture. The Ukrainian Postal Service issued a stamp featuring a soldier gesturing toward a warship with the caption «*Russian warship, go fuck yourself*». Following the sinking, a subsequent stamp carried the word «*Done*». These items «generated public enthusiasm and international media coverage»². The slogan also appeared on billboards, T-shirts, mugs, and other merchandise, often channeling profits toward military support initiatives. The warship episode exemplifies how a single moment of verbal defiance can be transformed into a durable symbolic resource, circulating simultaneously in digital, physical, and commercial spaces.

¹ Kuipers G. *Good Humor, Bad Taste: A Sociology of the Joke*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. 2015. P. 202.

² Lutska V. *Ukrainian meme forces: What makes us laugh in the times of Russia's invasion*. 2022.

URL: <https://war.ukraine.ua/articles/ukrainian-meme-forces-what-makes-us-laugh-in-the-times-of-russia-s-invasion/>

Another prominent motif of early wartime humor centered on Ukrainian farmers towing abandoned Russian tanks with *tractors*. Videos of such incidents spread widely online, forming the basis for extensive meme production. Within this cultural logic, the reasons for tank abandonment – fuel shortages, logistical breakdown or tactical withdrawal – were largely irrelevant; memes framed these events as deliberate civilian appropriation, humorously recasting ordinary citizens as agents of asymmetrical power reversal. One viral joke suggested that Ukrainian farmers now possessed the fifth-largest army in Europe, while others exaggerated the motif by depicting tractors towing fighter jets or naval vessels. Agricultural machinery thus became a symbolic instrument of resistance, demonstrating the capacity of humor to invert power hierarchies through exaggeration and imaginative reconstruction. The tractor motif also extended into physical merchandise and fundraising campaigns, appearing on stamps, clothing, and other items that often supported the Ukrainian armed forces. These productions affirmed civilian participation in national defense, constructing ordinary citizens as active agents rather than passive victims.

Botanical imagery, particularly the *sunflower*, also acquired heightened significance in wartime humor. A viral video showed a Ukrainian woman confronting Russian soldiers, instructing them to carry sunflower seeds «*so sunflowers grow when you die*». Cartoonists expanded the motif by depicting seeds sprouting from fallen soldiers' pockets, transforming botanical imagery into a symbolic representation of historical inevitability. The motif soon transcended digital space, appearing in protests and demonstrations across Europe. Unlike grotesque caricatures, sunflower imagery operated through quiet certainty, conveying moral inevitability rather than immediate triumph»¹.

When Russia intensified attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure, humor adapted to everyday hardship. Memes depicted families rushing to charge devices, joking about which appliance to prioritize during power outages. «*Blackout bingo*» templates invit-

¹ Bilaniuk L. Memes as antibodies: Creativity and resilience in the face of Russia's war. *Dispossession: Anthropological Perspectives on Russia's War Against Ukraine*, New York and London: Routledge, 2024. P. 151.

ed users to mark failed utilities: electricity, water, internet, heating. President's Telegram message circulated widely in meme culture:

Without gas or without you? Without you.

Without light or without you? Without you.

Without water or without you? Without you.

Without food or without you? Without you.

Cold, hunger, darkness and thirst are not as terrible and deadly for us as your friendship and brotherhood.

But history will put everything in its place.

*And we will be with gas, light, water and food ... and without you!*¹

Humor echoed this sentiment, repositioning deprivation within a hierarchy of values: material hardship was contrasted with political independence, reinforcing collective resilience. In this way, «resistance as symbolic practice encompassed not only verbal defiance and ridicule but also imaginative reconstruction of reality, transforming vulnerability into agency while fostering solidarity and moral coherence»².

3. Solidarity and Collective Co-Production

If resistance in Ukrainian wartime humor manifested as defiance, solidarity emerged as its social infrastructure, providing the relational and participatory networks that allowed humor to function collectively. One of the most striking features of humor production after February 24, 2022, was the convergence of actors across traditionally distinct communicative domains: state institutions, private companies, cultural figures, volunteer networks, and ordinary social media users. Unlike earlier protest movements – most notably the 2013–2014 Euromaidan period – when satire frequently targeted state authorities, the full-scale invasion generated a different communicative configuration. Governmental actors were no longer perceived primarily as objects of ridicule but as participants in a shared symbolic struggle. Humor thus became a space of horizontal alignment rather than vertical confrontation, fostering collective participation in shaping the national narrative.

¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2022/09/11/7367041/>.

² Siuta G.M. Transformation of lingual and mental profiles of the Ukrainian language picture of the world during the war. *Man and law in the language of modern mass media*. Vol. 1. Riga, Latvia: Baltija Publishing. 2025. P. 61.

Digital platforms functioned as accelerators of this alignment. Memes and humorous posts were not merely consumed; they were actively remixed, reposted, and circulated, exemplifying what Lior Shifman describes as the *participatory logic of digital memes*. Shifman emphasizes that «memes operate as replicable cultural units whose meaning emerges through iterative reproduction, adaptation, and variation»¹. In the Ukrainian case, a meme created by an anonymous user could quickly be appropriated by government agencies, commercial brands, volunteer networks, or journalists, producing a networked ecosystem of symbolic co-production. This ecosystem blurred the boundaries between grassroots expression, institutional messaging, and commercial culture, reflecting a distributed participatory model of civic communication.

Civic participation through humor encompassed both material engagement – volunteering, donating, organizing logistics – and symbolic engagement – producing, sharing, and interpreting humorous content. Humor, in this sense, functioned as a form of digital civic activism, reinforcing social cohesion while mediating the emotional and moral challenges of wartime life. It provided a platform for communal witnessing, narrative framing, and collective sense-making. Through repetition and remixing, memes codified shared experiences, transforming individual observations into publicly intelligible cultural memory, which aligns with theories of social memory in conflict contexts: humor became a medium for documenting, interpreting, and transmitting wartime events.

Public opinion data during the first months of the invasion illustrate the social effects of this alignment. If in 2021 only 55% of respondents considered Ukrainians and Russians to be distinct peoples, by March 2022 this figure rose to 77%, and by April to 91%. Humor both reflected and reinforced this redefined boundary, solidifying distinctions between «we» and «they» within comedic narratives. Such symbolic differentiation was reinforced through repeated exposure to memes depicting Russian soldiers as incompetent, absurd, or morally degraded, and Ukrainians as resilient, clever, and justified.

The explosion on the Kerch Strait (Crimean) Bridge on October 8, 2022, provides a particularly illustrative example of multi-actor

¹ Shifman L. *Memes in Digital Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2013. P. 88.

humorous convergence. Within hours, the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine posted an image of the burning bridge with the caption «*Good morning, Ukraine!*» In another post, footage of the explosion was juxtaposed with Marilyn Monroe singing «*Happy Birthday, Mr. President*», referencing Vladimir Putin's birthday. The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) followed with a poetic adaptation echoing Taras Shevchenko: «*Світає, міст красиво палає, соловейко СБУ в Криму зустрічає*». This playful intertextuality merged national literary heritage with contemporary military events, demonstrating how «humor can mediate cultural memory while interpreting current crises»¹.

Private companies similarly participated in this process. Monobank released a bank card design featuring the burning bridge, which hundreds of thousands downloaded within hours. Brands including Nova Poshta, Ukrposhta, Rozetka, and Kyivstar created their own variations, competing in wit and speed of response. Humor thus became a communicative currency, allowing institutions to position themselves within the national narrative, reinforce solidarity, and contribute to collective moral and civic engagement. The bridge explosion, therefore, was not only a military event but a performative moment of participatory humor, exemplifying Milner's observation that «digital meme culture functions as a form of networked civic interaction, where content circulates across communities to produce shared meaning»².

One of the most significant linguistic phenomena of wartime humor was the emergence of «*bavovna*». Russian officials frequently described explosions as «*хлопки*» (*claps or pops*). In Ukrainian, however, «*хлопок*» translates as «*бавовна*»— *cotton*. This semantic slippage generated a powerful meme. *Bavovna* became an ironic euphemism for successful strikes against Russian military targets. Images of *cotton plants* accompanied news reports, maps marking incidents were decorated with stylized cotton icons, and a diminutive fictional character, «*Bavovnyatko*», was imagined as a mischievous being visiting Russian bases. This multi-layered

¹ Siuta G.M. Transformation of lingual and mental profiles of the Ukrainian language picture of the world during the war. *Man and law in the language of modern mass media*. Vol. 1. Riga, Latvia: Baltija Publishing. 2025. P. 71.

² Milner R.M. *The World Made Meme: Public Conversations and Participatory Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2016. P. 97.

symbol softened violent imagery while maintaining celebratory undertones, creating a shared internal code that reinforced informational vigilance. The meme's adoption by British Ambassador Melinda Simmons illustrates how such humor transcends national boundaries, converting propaganda language into a tool of counter-narrative power.

Similarly, social media users responded to renewed nuclear threats with ironic exaggeration. Posts joking about organizing an «*orgy on Mount Shchekavytsia*» in Kyiv during a potential nuclear apocalypse quickly escalated into a global meme. The absurdity served as a psychological inversion of fear: rather than succumbing to panic, participants exaggerated the threat to ridicule it. Beyond humor, the meme produced tangible outcomes: a charitable foundation organized first-aid and emergency-response training sessions at Mount Shchekavytsia, attended by thousands. This episode demonstrates how collective humor functions as an adaptive, community-oriented mechanism, reframing vulnerability as agency while documenting social and civic engagement.

Ukrainian wartime humor also expanded internationally. Memes were translated into English and other languages, spreading slogans such as «*Russian warship, go fuck yourself*». Visual motifs appeared at protests across Europe and North America, with diaspora communities amplifying content. International media, politicians, and celebrities occasionally referenced viral phrases. The circulation of humor thus contributed to shaping global perception, humanizing Ukrainians, portraying resilience, and countering narratives of inevitable defeat. In line with Milner, these examples illustrate how «digital humor operates as both civic participation and soft power, producing shared cultural meaning across borders while reinforcing local solidarity and national identity»¹.

4. Vigilance and Commitment to Victory

Alongside physical and symbolic resistance, Ukrainian wartime humor developed a pronounced function of informational vigilance. In the context of the full-scale invasion, the informational environment itself became a battlefield. Russian disinformation campaigns

¹ Milner R.M. *The World Made Meme: Public Conversations and Participatory Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2016. P. 77.

– ranging from fabricated narratives about alleged «*biolaboratories*» in Ukraine to accusations that Kyiv was preparing a so-called «*dirty bomb*» – circulated widely through official statements, state media, and online networks. These narratives were designed not only to influence international audiences but also to create confusion and distrust within the information space. In response, «Ukrainian digital communities frequently turned to humor as a method of rapid and collective counter-interpretation»¹.

Rather than merely refuting falsehoods through traditional fact-checking, meme culture often adopted a strategy of literalization. Instead of directly arguing against propaganda claims, meme creators exaggerated them to the point of absurdity. By interpreting disinformation in an overly concrete and literal way, humor exposed the internal incoherence of the narratives themselves. The approach transformed propaganda into a self-defeating spectacle. For example, memes about the alleged «*dirty bomb*» depicted a bomb being vigorously scrubbed with soap, detergent, or household cleaning products. In some versions, characters anxiously tried to «*wash*» the device before detonation. This visual reinterpretation reduced a dramatic geopolitical accusation to the level of domestic farce, undermining its intended seriousness.

The same mechanism appeared in responses to linguistic censorship within Russia. When Russian legislation criminalized the use of the word «*war*», mandating the phrase «*special military operation*» instead, Ukrainian meme culture quickly appropriated the euphemism for parody. One widely circulated example involved renaming the novel by Leo Tolstoy as «*Special Military Operation and Peace*». The joke targeted not only censorship itself but also the broader attempt to regulate reality through bureaucratic language. By inserting the official euphemism into obviously inappropriate contexts, meme creators highlighted the artificiality of the terminology. «The humor suggested that language manipulation could not ultimately obscure observable events»².

¹ Запорожець О., Белоусова Н. Вербальні інтернет-меми під час повномасштабної війни рф проти України. *Вісник Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка*. 2022. Вип. 2(56). С. 22.

² Бондаренко А.І. Сміховий дискурс воєнного періоду в Україні. *Мовознавчий вісник: зб. наук. праць*. Вип. 35. С. 78.

Through exaggeration and parody, humor therefore functioned as a cognitive filter. Memes did more than entertain; they trained audiences to recognize patterns of manipulation. When propaganda claims appeared, the immediate emergence of satirical reinterpretations signaled to users that the information should be approached with skepticism. In this sense, humor served an educational role within the information ecosystem. It provided a shared interpretive framework through which audiences could collectively process dubious narratives.

Language itself became a site of vigilance. Pronunciation tests – most famously involving the Ukrainian word «*palyanytsia*», a type of bread – were widely discussed as informal methods for identifying Russian infiltrators who struggled to reproduce certain Ukrainian phonetic patterns. The word's distinctive combination of sounds made it difficult for many native Russian speakers to pronounce convincingly. Other commonly referenced examples included «*zaliznytsia*» (railway) and «*polunytsia*» (strawberry). These «linguistic markers quickly entered meme culture, where exaggerated scenes depicted suspicious individuals failing the pronunciation test»¹.

Memes amplified this practice by turning it into a recurring comedic motif. Characters attempting to say «*palyanytsia*» would produce increasingly distorted versions of the word, often with exaggerated confusion. The punchline typically rested on the contrast between fluent Ukrainian pronunciation and the clumsy attempts of outsiders. Humor simultaneously marked linguistic difference and reinforced national distinctiveness. Mastery of pronunciation functioned as a symbolic boundary marker: understanding the joke required familiarity with the phonetic nuances being referenced.

Diminutive forms in personal names carried similar symbolic significance. Ukrainian and Russian naming traditions share many common roots, yet their affectionate or diminutive variants often differ. Memes contrasting «*Mashen'ka*» with «*Marichka*», for example, highlighted subtle divergences embedded within everyday speech. Although the names appear superficially similar, they evoke distinct cultural associations and linguistic traditions. By emphasizing these differences, humor drew attention to the everyday ways in which language reflects identity.

¹ Сютя Г.М. Лінгвософія опозицій «свій – чужий» у текстах періоду російсько-української війни. «Українська мова». 2023. Вип. 2 (86). С. 31.

Orthographic gestures functioned in a comparable manner. Writing «russia» with a lowercase initial letter became a deliberate act of symbolic downgrading in Ukrainian online discourse. This seemingly minor stylistic choice conveyed disapproval and rejection of the authority normally implied by proper capitalization. Similarly, the prepositional choice used in reference to the country carried symbolic implications. Employing the preposition «na» rather than the more conventional «v» subtly repositioned Russia linguistically, implying distance or altered status within the grammatical structure of the sentence.

These practices demonstrate how humor can consolidate boundaries without formal institutional enforcement. They emerged organically within digital communities rather than through official directives. Participation in the joke required familiarity with linguistic conventions, cultural references, and the broader wartime context. As a result, comprehension itself became a marker of belonging: «those who understood the humor signaled membership within a shared interpretive community»¹.

Within the broader category of commitment to victory, representations of the enemy frequently adopted grotesque aesthetics. Russian soldiers were commonly portrayed as orcs, zombies, alcoholics, marauders, or technologically incompetent figures. These depictions drew on visual traditions familiar from fantasy literature, video games, and internet culture. By transforming soldiers into monstrous or degraded caricatures, meme creators visually reinforced the idea that the invading force represented something alien and destructive.

President Vladimir Putin appeared in caricatures as skeletal, rodent-like, or mythologically cursed figures. Some images exaggerated physical features into grotesque proportions, while others portrayed him as an aging villain surrounded by symbols of decay. Such imagery echoed broader traditions of wartime propaganda, in which exaggeration and dehumanization serve mobilizing functions. By distorting the physical appearance of leaders or soldiers, visual satire intensifies emotional distance between opposing sides.

¹ Мартинова Г.І. Трансформації в українському етносоціумі та його мові як наслідок російсько-української війни. *Мовознавчий вісник*. Вип. 35. С. 49.

In the Ukrainian case, however, these representations did not circulate solely through centralized propaganda channels. Instead, they spread widely through decentralized meme culture, emerging from countless anonymous creators across social media platforms. The absence of a single authoritative source contributed to the impression of spontaneous collective expression. Grotesque portrayals were reproduced, remixed, and adapted across formats, reinforcing a consistent visual language through repetition.

The cumulative effect of such depictions contributed to moral polarization. The enemy was framed not simply as a geopolitical adversary but as ethically degraded and fundamentally incompatible with the values attributed to Ukrainian society. Within this narrative structure, humor played a significant role in simplifying complex realities. Grotesque exaggeration transformed the conflict into a moral drama populated by clearly differentiated figures.

Humor thus reinforced a binary moral universe structured around innocence and aggression. Ukrainian civilians and defenders were typically portrayed as resilient, clever, and morally justified, while the opposing side appeared irrational, corrupt, or monstrous. This contrast did not merely entertain; it shaped collective interpretation of the war itself. By repeatedly presenting the conflict through these symbolic oppositions, meme culture contributed to a shared narrative in which resistance appeared both necessary and inevitable.

The airfield in *Chornobayivka*, repeatedly struck by Ukrainian forces despite continued Russian attempts to use it, became an emblem of stubborn futility. Each new reported strike generated another wave of jokes, spreading rapidly through Ukrainian social media and messaging platforms. Memes portrayed *Chornobayivka* as a cursed location that Russian troops inexplicably returned to despite inevitable destruction. In many versions, the airfield appeared almost mythologized – as if it possessed its own gravitational pull, drawing Russian units back into the same disastrous situation again and again.

The humor relied on repetition: the same scenario replayed with predictable outcome. A typical meme would present a familiar sequence – Russian forces arrive, equipment is positioned, and then Ukrainian artillery or drones strike once more. The punchline lay not in surprise but in the certainty of what would happen next. This

cyclical structure mirrored the perceived irrationality of Russian command decisions. By presenting the events as a loop that endlessly resets, meme creators emphasized how little appeared to change despite repeated losses. Visual formats amplified this pattern. Some memes used templates based on popular films or television scenes in which characters repeatedly fall into the same trap. Others displayed simple countdown graphics or «*attempt numbers*», implying that *Chornobayivka* had already passed an absurd number of strikes. With each new report from the front, the count increased, reinforcing the idea that the pattern was continuing without interruption.

By exaggerating the persistence of failure, memes highlighted strategic incompetence. They suggested that Russian commanders were either unable or unwilling to learn from experience. Humor thus became a form of criticism, transforming battlefield reports into commentary on military leadership. At the same time, the jokes offered psychological relief to Ukrainian audiences following the war closely. Repetition created a shared expectation: each new strike confirmed what people had already come to anticipate.

Over time, *Chornobayivka* evolved into a symbolic shorthand. Mentioning the location alone sufficed to evoke an entire narrative of repeated defeat, failed adaptation, and the stubborn continuation of flawed decisions. The airfield ceased to be merely a geographic point on the map. Instead, «it became a cultural reference embedded in the digital language of wartime humor – a concise metaphor for the spectacle of returning, again and again, to the same avoidable disaster»¹.

The Russian occupation of the *Chornobyl* exclusion zone during the early phase of the invasion revived memories of the 1986 nuclear disaster. For many Ukrainians, the name *Chornobyl* already carried a powerful symbolic weight, associated not only with the catastrophic explosion at the nuclear power plant but also with decades of stories about contamination, abandoned towns, and the lingering effects of radiation. When news emerged that Russian forces had entered and temporarily occupied the area, the event

¹ Otrishchenko N. The time that was taken from us: Temporal Experiences after the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. *Dispossession: Anthropological Perspectives on Russia's War Against Ukraine*. New York and London: Routledge. 2024. P. 34.

immediately resonated with this historical memory. Reports that Russian soldiers had dug trenches in contaminated soil prompted waves of dark humor across Ukrainian social media.

Memes depicted invaders as unaware of radiation risks, sometimes portraying them glowing, mutating, or developing exaggerated symptoms associated with popular culture depictions of radiation exposure. In some versions, Russian soldiers appeared as characters from post-apocalyptic fiction, while others compared them to figures wandering unknowingly through toxic environments. The humor often relied on exaggeration: the soldiers were imagined leaving the zone with supernatural abilities or gradually transforming into grotesque caricatures. Although these depictions were obviously fictional, they reflected a widespread perception that the occupiers had underestimated the dangers of the area.

The jokes drew upon long-standing cultural associations with *Chornobyl* as a site of invisible danger. Radiation, unlike conventional threats, cannot be seen or immediately felt, which has historically made it a powerful metaphor for hidden risk. Ukrainian audiences were already familiar with narratives about contaminated forests, abandoned infrastructure, and lingering radioactive «*hot spots*». As a result, the idea that troops unfamiliar with local history might casually disturb radioactive soil seemed both alarming and absurd. Memes exploited this tension by emphasizing the contrast between the seriousness of the hazard and the perceived ignorance of those encountering it.

While the subject matter was *grave*, humor reframed it through irony. Rather than addressing the danger in strictly technical or scientific terms, meme creators highlighted the apparent recklessness of the situation. The implication was that ignorance of local history could have tangible consequences. Digging trenches in the exclusion zone became a symbol of careless decision-making, suggesting that the occupying forces had entered a place whose historical meaning they did not fully understand.

In this way, the *Chornobyl* motif connected contemporary conflict to Soviet legacy, embedding present events within a broader historical arc. The 1986 disaster itself had been shaped by secrecy, bureaucratic failure, and the long-term consequences of technological mismanagement within the Soviet system. By invoking *Chornobyl* in memes about the current war, Ukrainian users implic-

itly linked those earlier patterns to present-day actions. The exclusion zone thus became more than a battlefield location – «it functioned as a reminder of historical continuity»¹. References to radiation, contamination, and abandoned landscapes framed the invasion within a narrative that stretched back decades, reinforcing the sense that current events were unfolding in the shadow of unresolved past catastrophes.

Reports and intercepted communications suggesting widespread *looting* by Russian soldiers generated a significant body of meme content. As accounts emerged describing stolen household goods being shipped from occupied territories to Russia, everyday objects quickly became recurring visual elements in online humor. Washing machines, microwaves, carpets, and underwear appeared repeatedly across meme formats, often exaggerated to absurd proportions. These items, normally mundane, acquired symbolic significance within the emerging narrative.

One widely circulated theme depicted Russian troops prioritizing household appliances over military objectives. Memes portrayed soldiers abandoning armored vehicles in favor of loading washing machines into trucks or proudly transporting microwaves as trophies. In some variations, military convoys were reimagined as moving vans filled with domestic goods. The comedic effect relied on the contrast between the expectations associated with a modern army and the image of soldiers behaving like opportunistic scavengers. The humor portrayed looting as evidence of backwardness and material deprivation, suggesting that the invading forces were less motivated by strategic goals than by the chance to acquire basic consumer goods.

This framing also reflected broader cultural contrasts. Ukrainian meme creators frequently juxtaposed images of looted appliances with references to everyday life in modern households, implying that such items were unremarkable in Ukraine but treated as valuable prizes by the occupiers. «Through exaggeration, the memes transformed isolated reports of theft into a wider commentary on

¹ Siuta G.M. Transformation of lingual and mental profiles of the Ukrainian language picture of the world during the war. *Man and law in the language of modern mass media*. Vol. 1. Riga, Latvia: Baltija Publishing. 2025. P. 70.

economic disparity and social development»¹. The recurring presence of washing machines or carpets became shorthand for a perceived gap between two worlds: one associated with ordinary consumer comfort, the other with scarcity and outdated infrastructure.

The image of the «*white Lada*» – associated with compensation reportedly given to families of deceased soldiers – became a particularly potent symbol within this narrative. The inexpensive car, already culturally associated with Soviet-era simplicity, appeared in memes as a stark visual metaphor. Memes juxtaposed the value of a life with the price of a car, underscoring perceived moral absurdity. In some formats, grieving families were depicted receiving keys to a white Lada as if it were a solemn state honor; in others, the car appeared parked beside military graves. The humor was intentionally uncomfortable, drawing attention to the perceived imbalance between sacrifice and reward.

Through these motifs, humor framed the conflict not only as territorial but civilizational. The recurring imagery of looted appliances and symbolic compensation suggested a broader narrative about values, priorities, and social systems. By reducing complex political dynamics to simple visual contrasts, meme culture presented the war as a clash between different models of society. Everyday consumer objects became rhetorical tools, used to imply that the motivations and expectations of the invading forces belonged to a different historical and economic context.

When Russia announced partial mobilization in September 2022, Ukrainian meme culture quickly rebranded it as «*mogilization*», blending «*mobilization*» with the word «*grave*» (*mohyla*). The neologism spread rapidly across social media, demonstrating the speed with which meme communities could reshape official language. By altering a single syllable, the new term inverted the intended meaning of the policy announcement. Instead of conveying patriotic duty or national defense, the word suggested an inevitable path toward death.

Images accompanying the term depicted reluctant recruits, overcrowded enlistment offices, and chaotic logistics. Photographs and video clips circulating online were often reframed with captions

¹ Кислюк Л. П., Мельник С. Є. Війна в мові та мовній діяльності українців. *Мовознавчий вісник*. Вип. 35. С. 16.

emphasizing confusion, disorganization, or reluctance among those being mobilized. Some memes portrayed men attempting to avoid conscription by fleeing the country, while others depicted outdated equipment and poorly prepared training facilities. The humor emphasized disorder and inevitability of loss, reinforcing the idea that the mobilization campaign was both chaotic and futile.

By renaming the policy, «memes transformed official language into a vehicle of criticism. State terminology, typically designed to project authority and control, was reinterpreted through a single ironic modification»¹. The word itself became an argument. Simply repeating «*mogilization*» allowed users to communicate skepticism about the policy without requiring further explanation. In this way, linguistic creativity functioned as a concise form of political commentary, compressing complex criticism into a memorable phrase.

Among the most emotionally charged motifs was the recurring image of *Moscow in flames*. Visual depictions of the Kremlin engulfed in fire circulated widely, accompanied by captions envisioning future justice or historical reversal. The imagery was dramatic and often stylized, drawing on visual traditions associated with revolution, apocalypse, or the fall of empires. Within these memes, *fire* did not necessarily represent a literal prediction but rather a symbolic culmination of accumulated grievances.

The phrase «*Moscow's burning in my dreams*» encapsulated this imagery. It expressed a mixture of anger, frustration, and hope for accountability. The burning city functioned not necessarily as a literal forecast but as a symbolic inversion of imperial dominance. For centuries, Moscow had been associated with centralized authority over territories that included Ukraine. In meme form, however, the center of power appeared vulnerable, consumed by flames that suggested the collapse of that authority. In these memes «*fire* signified historical reckoning. It evoked the idea that aggression would eventually provoke consequences, even if those consequences were imagined in symbolic terms»². The fantasy of destruction expressed

¹ Хар М.Є. Воєнний дискурс: процеси неологізації. *Закарпатські філологічні студії*. Вип. 24. Том 1. С. 161.

² Завальнюк І. Синтаксичні одиниці в мові вітчизняних масмедіа періоду російсько-української війни: оновлення змісту й структури. *Наукові записки Вінницького державного педагогічного університету*. Серія: Філологія (мовознавство). Вінниця, 2010. Вип. 37. С. 124.

longing for an end to aggression and for a reversal of the hierarchies that had shaped regional history. By circulating such imagery, meme creators articulated emotions that ranged from anger to catharsis, using visual exaggeration to convey the intensity of wartime sentiment.

Taken together, «these motifs illustrate how Ukrainian meme culture transformed fragments of wartime information into coherent symbolic narratives»¹. Everyday objects, altered words, and dramatic visual metaphors functioned as condensed expressions of broader interpretations of the conflict. Humor, even when dark or ironic, allowed participants to interpret events collectively, shaping a shared language through which the realities of war could be discussed, criticized, and emotionally processed.

CONCLUSION

Across the four interrelated dimensions of resistance, solidarity, vigilance, and commitment to victory, Ukrainian wartime humor demonstrates that it is far more than spontaneous emotional expression. It constitutes an ongoing civic practice, embedded within digitally mediated networks, public discourse, and material culture. Memes, cartoons, slogans, and visual motifs document events in real time, articulate ethical and moral judgments, counter disinformation, mobilize resources, reinforce collective identity, and project visions of the future. Humor functions as a multi-layered instrument of civic engagement, linking everyday digital participation to national resilience.

Crucially, humor coexists with tragedy rather than negating it. Air raid sirens, blackouts, battlefield losses, and attacks on civilian infrastructure form the backdrop against which laughter emerges. The persistence of humor signals endurance, agency, and strategic reframing of vulnerability. Through phrases like «*Russian warship, go fuck yourself*» or Zelensky's «*I need ammunition, not a ride*», isolated acts of defiance became symbolic templates, widely circulated, visually adapted, and materially commemorated through stamps, billboards, and merchandise. Similarly, the sinking of the

¹ Бровко Є. Меметика у війні: як мему стають зброєю. *Press Association UA*.
URL: <https://pressassociation.org.ua/ua/memetika-u-vijni-yak-memi-stayut-zbro%D1%94yu/>

cruiser *Moskva*, Ukrainian farmers towing abandoned Russian tanks, and the emergence of «*bavovna*» as an ironic euphemism for explosions exemplify how humor translates military events into shared symbolic narratives, reinforcing collective understanding and moral clarity.

Humor also operates as a vehicle for solidarity. Participation is not limited to soldiers or state institutions: volunteers, cultural figures, private companies, and ordinary citizens actively co-produce, circulate, and adapt humorous content. Memes about sunflowers growing from fallen Russian soldiers or blackout bingo templates during energy outages illustrate how humor mediates collective experience, bridges social divides, and sustains a sense of community agency in times of hardship. These practices highlight the horizontal, networked nature of Ukrainian civic engagement, where digital creativity and everyday action reinforce national cohesion.

Ukrainian wartime humor further functions as a tool of vigilance and critical awareness. By literalizing Russian propaganda, exaggerating official explanations, or creating internal linguistic codes such as «*palyanytsia*» or «*bavovna*», humor cultivates informational literacy, training audiences to recognize manipulation while simultaneously fostering shared cultural memory. In this way, memes become not only entertainment but mechanisms of cognitive resilience, translating complex social and military realities into widely intelligible forms.

Finally, humor demonstrates the dimension of commitment to victory. By transforming adversity into symbolic triumph – through tractors pulling tanks, playful exaggeration of threats, or absurdist visions of nuclear apocalypse – Ukrainian memes frame conflict within a narrative of moral and historical inevitability. Humor projects resilience and eventual success, sustaining hope and reinforcing the ethical and strategic legitimacy of defense efforts. Its circulation beyond Ukraine, through diaspora networks, international media, and protest movements, further amplifies its impact, functioning as a form of soft power that communicates national identity, resilience, and ethical clarity to global audiences.

In conclusion, Ukrainian political humor during the full-scale invasion exemplifies the intersection of cultural creativity, civic activism, and ethical assertion. It operates simultaneously as a psychological coping mechanism, participatory practice, and strategic

communication tool, demonstrating how laughter and satire can actively shape social, moral, and political meaning in conditions of extreme adversity. Through memes, cartoons, slogans, and viral narratives, Ukrainians not only document and interpret wartime experience but also actively shape a symbolic language of resistance, transforming humor into a vital instrument of national resilience, civic solidarity, and cultural memory.

ABSTRACT

This article examines Ukrainian political humor that emerged during the Russia's full-scale invasion, conceptualizing it as a form of civic activism within a digitally networked public sphere. The study addresses the problem of how humor functions under conditions of existential military threat, moving beyond the conventional binary that frames satire either as resistance to power or as an instrument of propaganda. Drawing on a corpus of widely circulated memes, cartoons, slogans, and institutional communications, the analysis identifies four interrelated dimensions of wartime humor: resistance, solidarity, vigilance, and commitment to victory. The findings demonstrate that Ukrainian war humor operates as a mechanism of symbolic defiance, transforming episodes such as the Snake Island response and the sinking of the «*Moskva*» into durable cultural artifacts. It also facilitates horizontal alignment among state institutions, private companies, civil society actors, and international audiences, producing a shared emotional and moral framework. Furthermore, humor serves as a tool of informational defense by exposing propaganda through parody, linguistic play, and literalization. Grotesque depictions of the enemy and recurring motifs such as looting, mobilization, and «*burning Moscow*» reinforce moral polarization and future-oriented narratives of justice. Overall, the study concludes that Ukrainian wartime humor constitutes not merely a coping strategy but an active political practice that documents events, sustains collective resilience, and symbolically affirms sovereignty and anticipated victory.

АНОТАЦІЯ

У цій статті досліджується український політичний гумор, що виник під час повномасштабного вторгнення Росії та осмислюється як форма громадянського активізму в умовах цифро-

во-мережевої публічної сфери. Дослідження порушує проблему функціонування гумору в умовах екзистенційної воєнної загрози, виходячи за межі традиційної бінарної опозиції, яка розглядає сатиру або як форму опору владі, або як інструмент пропаганди. Спираючись на корпус широко поширених мемів, карикатур, слоганів та інституційних комунікацій, у дослідженні виокремлено чотири взаємопов'язані виміри воєнного гумору: *спротив, солідарність, пильність і відданість перемозі*. Результати демонструють, що український воєнний гумор функціонує як механізм символічного спротиву, перетворюючи такі події, як відповідь з острова Зміїний та потоплення «Москви», на стійкі культурні артефакти. Він також сприяє горизонтальній взаємодії між державними інституціями, приватними компаніями, представниками громадянського суспільства та міжнародною аудиторією, формуючи спільну емоційну та моральну рамку. Крім того, гумор слугує інструментом інформаційної оборони, викриваючи пропаганду через пародію, мовну гру та буквалізацію. Гротескні зображення ворога та повторювані мотиви, такі як мародерство, мобілізація та «палаюча Москва», підсилюють моральну поляризацію й формують орієнтовані на майбутнє наративи справедливості. Загалом дослідження робить висновок про те, що український воєнний гумор є не лише стратегією психологічного подолання, а й активною політичною практикою, яка документує події, підтримує колективну стійкість і символічно утворює суверенітет та очікувану перемогу.

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HISTORICAL MEMORY OF THE SETTLEMENT OF THE NORTH-WESTERN AZOV REGION (18th–19th CENTURIES) AS A FACTOR IN THE FORMATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR

Horbova O. A., Sytnyk O. M.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the North-Western Azov region stands at the epicenter of not only military operations but also an acute ideological confrontation. Russian armed aggression is accompanied by large-scale attempts at historical revisionism, where the past of the 18th and 19th centuries is utilized as a primary argument to legitimize the occupation. Central to this strategy is the myth of the region's «emptiness» prior to the arrival of the Russian Empire and its supposedly exclusive «Russian» reclamation.

For modern Ukrainian science and society, the conceptualization of the formation of the ethno-cultural composition of the Azov region is not merely a matter of academic interest, but a fundamental factor in the decolonization of consciousness. Historical memory of how the «wild steppe» was transformed into a flourishing agricultural and industrial land contains answers to the question of the true identity of Melitopol, Berdyansk, and other territories of Southern Ukraine.

The relevance of the topic is dictated by the need to counter the imperial «conquest» narrative with the concept of «frontier settlement», where a decisive role was played by Ukrainian Cossacks, state peasants, as well as numerous communities of Greeks, Bulgarians, and Mennonite Germans. It is this diversity of identities, united by a shared living space and economic ties, that laid the foundations of the socio-cultural environment currently resisting the aggressor's assimilation practices. Awareness of this diversity as an organic part of Ukrainian nation-building is the key to understanding the region's resilience.

1. Deconstruction of the «Novorossiya» Myth in the Context of Ukrainian Frontier Theory

Modern scientific discourse regarding the history of Southern Ukraine is in a state of intensive decolonization. For a long period, domestic historiography, remaining under the influence of imperial and Soviet paradigms, involuntarily reproduced the narrative of the Russian Empire's «civilizing mission» in the «wild steppe». The central construct of this system is the «Novorossiya» mythologeme – an ideological project aimed at erasing historical memory of the pre-imperial period and neutralizing the agency of the ethnic groups who actually reclaimed this space.

The «Novorossiya» myth is based on several interconnected postulates. First, the thesis of the «emptiness» of the North-Western Azov territories until their annexation by the Russian Empire in the late 18th century. The image of a *tabula rasa* was promoted, upon which monarchical will began to write history «from scratch». Second, the assertion of an exclusively state-driven (imperial) character of colonization, where the administration, army, and nobility acted as the primary and almost sole drivers of progress.

Such an approach deliberately ignored centuries of existence of Cossack *zymivnyky* (winter quarters), industries, and trade routes. Even in cases where the presence of the Ukrainian population was acknowledged, it was reduced to the status of «ethnographic material», devoid of political or historical weight. In the context of modern war, this myth has been resuscitated by the aggressor as a justification for territorial claims, making its scientific deconstruction a matter not only of truth but of national security.

Important steps in refuting colonial narratives were taken in the works of F. Turchenko and G. Turchenko, who focused attention on the real historical state of Southern Ukraine prior to the 19th century. Researchers resolutely reject the claim of «civilizational emptiness» in the region, demonstrating that imperial settlement policies were superimposed on an already existing socio-economic structure¹. The authors identify the Nogais and Ukrainian Cossacks as the true subjects of economic and cultural development in the Azov region. G. Turchenko emphasizes that it was this pre-imperial

¹ Турченко Г., Турченко Ф. Проект «Новоросія»: 1764–2014. Ювілей на крові. Запоріжжя: ЗНУ, 2014. 116 с.

multi-layeredness and economic heritage that became the foundation for the formation of a specific regional identity, which subsequently integrated into the pan-Ukrainian context despite the imperial center's attempts to neutralize the role of local factors¹.

The alternative to the imperial vision is Frontier Theory, adapted to Ukrainian realities. A frontier is not merely a border, but a mobile zone of interaction between different cultures, ethnicities, and political systems. In the context of the North-Western Azov region, Frontier Theory allows for a shift in focus from «conquest» to «reclamation/settlement».

The Ukrainian frontier in the 18th and 19th centuries had its own specifics. Unlike the American frontier, where colonization was often accompanied by the displacement of indigenous peoples, the Azov borderland was formed as a space of intensive interaction. Here, state colonization, manifested in the founding of cities and the distribution of land to the nobility, always followed folk colonization². Deconstructing the «Novorossiya» myth through the lens of the frontier reveals that the Azov territory was not empty; it was integrated into the economic system of the South through the activities of Cossack society, even if official borders, as in the case of the Kalmius Palanka, lay further east. The influence of the Cossack way of life was the dominant cultural marker of the region, and the economic survival and prosperity of the North-Western Azov were ensured by the initiative of free settlers, state peasants, and foreign colonists, who often acted despite, rather than because of, imperial bureaucracy.

Under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian war, the «Novorossiya» myth has transformed into an aggressive political technology. The occupiers' attempts to present Azov cities (Melitopol, Berdyansk, Henichesk) as «ancient Russian» are based precisely on ignoring the frontier nature of their origin. Deconstructing this myth in academic and public spaces allows the region to reclaim its true essence. The North-Western Azov region

¹ Турченко Г. Ф. Історичний вибір: Південна Україна чи Новоросія. *Наукові праці історичного факультету Запорізького національного університету*. 2010. Вип. XXIX. С. 77–87.

² Верменич Я. Південноукраїнські фронтири у XVIII–XIX ст. *Український Мультифронтир: нова схема історії України* (неоліт – початок XX століття) / Упор. С. Громенко. Харків: ВД «Фабула», 2024. С. 295–332.

of the 18th and 19th centuries appears not as the «South of Russia», but as a dynamic southern borderland of Ukraine, where a special type of personality was forged – free, enterprising, and capable of self-organization. These are precisely the traits that today constitute the basis of civil resistance in occupied and frontline territories.

Instead of a hierarchical and stagnant «Novorossiya», we see a living Ukrainian frontier where every social group – from Cossack descendants to Mennonite farmers – contributed to the creation of a shared home. This vision of history leaves no room for imperial manipulation, as it is based on the real experience of millions of people whose labor and blood made this steppe part of Ukraine.

Thus, the application of Frontier Theory to the study of the Azov region's settlement allows not only for the refutation of propaganda clichés but also for the formation of a coherent narrative of national history, where the South is an organic, inseparable, and agentic part of the Ukrainian geopolitical space. The first step in forming a stable national identity is a critical review of the terminological apparatus imposed by imperial historiography. The concept of «Novorossiya», which is actively exploited by Russian propaganda today, was in the 18th and 19th centuries merely an administrative name that did not reflect the actual ethnic composition of the region.

2. Ethno-Cultural Diversity as a Factor of European Identity in the Azov Region

The formation of the ethno-cultural composition of the North-Western Azov region in the 19th century was a complex, multi-vector process that went far beyond mere imperial administration. The region developed as a unique space where the diversity of identities became not a source of social tension, but a driver of economic, technological, and cultural progress. This experience is critically important today for scientific counter-action against Russian propaganda, which seeks to simplify the history of the region into a linear scheme of «Russian conquest».

The uniqueness of the North-Western Azov region lies in its multi-ethnic space of interaction between peoples, which began to form intensively after the liquidation of the Crimean Khanate and the final establishment of new borders. Unlike the central provinces of the empire with their serfdom system, the Azov region

transformed into a space of accelerated modernization. Here, state colonization always followed folk colonization and the targeted attraction of foreign settlers. For a long time, the imperial model of memory sought to unify these groups within the construct of «All-Russian culture». However, the reality was much more complex, because Mennonites, Germans, Bulgarians, Greeks, and Jews did not simply «coexist» with the Ukrainian majority, but created a complex system of interdependencies. Each of these groups brought its own social practices, religious values, and economic models, which collectively formed a unique regional society oriented toward development and integration into global processes.

The understanding of the ethno-cultural composition of the North-Western Azov region at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century is impossible without considering the Nogai factor. The Nogais did not merely belong to local ethnic groups – they embodied a centuries-old nomadic civilization that for a long time determined the way of life in the region. Their fate during this period became a classic example of how imperial expansion gradually narrows the living space of autochthonous communities, forcing them into painful adaptation or emigration. Before the start of the active phase of the Russian offensive, the Azov region was an organic part of the nomadic *oikumene*. The Nogai Hordes, migrating here in the 16th–18th centuries, formed a complex social structure at the epicenter of a geopolitical triangle. On one hand, they served as a military-demographic reserve for the Crimean Khanate; on the other, they constantly interacted with the Zaporozhian Cossacks and the Russian Empire. This territory functioned as a classic frontier space – a zone without clear state boundaries where traditional nomadic routes dominated. The annexation of Crimea radically changed the status of the Nogais. The Russian administration, seeking the unification of subject territories, quickly shifted from tactics of declarative «partnership» to direct pressure. A key moment was the liquidation of the autonomy of the Azov Nogais in 1804.

The empire began a large-scale experiment in resource redistribution, as a result of which the heart of the Nogai nomad camps, particularly lands along the Molochna River, were seized for the needs of foreign colonists and state peasants. This not only undermined the economic base of the Nogais but also created

conditions for forced sedentarization. The transition to a settled life proved traumatic for the Nogai community. This is clearly traced in the evolution of housing, where instead of mobile yurts, stationary settlements of adobe and raw brick appeared. The absence of solid foundations and primitive construction technologies made these *auls* visually «temporary» and poor against the backdrop of the stone buildings of German Mennonites or Greeks. Such a contrast became a visible marker of the social hierarchy built by the empire. The Russo-Turkish wars of the 19th century finally turned the Muslim population of the Azov region into a category of the «disloyal». The creation of unbearable economic conditions and ideological pressure provoked mass emigration to the Ottoman Empire¹. This process, though it had formal signs of voluntariness, was essentially a masqueraded deportation.

The disappearance of the Nogais from the ethnic map of the region opened the way for a new wave of colonization. The emptied steppes became a field for the deployment of Ukrainian peasant reclamation, which, unlike state projects, had a powerful spontaneous character and subsequently transformed the Azov region into an organic part of the Ukrainian national space.

In the social architecture of the North-Western Azov region in the first half of the 19th century, a key role belonged to the stratum of state (crown) peasants². This category of the population was not only the most numerous but also the most dynamic, acting as the primary subject of the economic reclamation of the steppe. State peasants combined a status of personal freedom with fiscal dependence on the treasury through the system of poll tax and *obrok* (quitrent). The process of filling the region with state settlers was multi-vector and based on a combination of forced and spontaneous migration flows. A significant portion of the crown population consisted of descendants of the Zaporozhians. After the liquidation of the Sich, a painful period began for the former Cossackhood – transfer to the taxable peasant estate. This loss of privileged status was a deep social trauma, yet at

¹ Скальковский А. А. Хронологическое обозрение истории Новороссийского края. 1730–1823. Ч. 2. Одесса, 1838. С. 71.

² Васильчук Г. М., Ликова В. В. Чисельність державних селян Південної України в першій половині XIX ст.: джерелознавчий аналіз. Наукові праці історичного факультету Запорізького національного університету. Вип. XXIX. 2010. С. 272.

the same time, it laid a Cossack cultural identity at the foundation of the local peasantry, oriented toward autonomy and a love of freedom. The state also actively utilized the demographic resource of the overpopulated Left-Bank and Sloboda Ukraine¹. Flows of colonists from the Poltava and Chernihiv provinces were part of a purposeful policy of «unburdening» the center and rapid agrarian exploitation of the South. An important component of the settlement of the South was fugitives from the Right Bank. The mass movement of serf peasants fleeing from Polish and Russian landlords created a dilemma for the authorities. On one hand, the law required the return of fugitives; on the other, the region desperately needed labor. As a result, a practice of «clandestine connivance» emerged, according to which, under confidential orders (such as P. Zubov's instructions to the Yekaterinoslav governor²), fugitives were often legalized through registration in crown communities, effectively recognizing their right to a new life in exchange for loyalty and taxes.

Despite the significant share of spontaneous processes, the colonization of the Azov region in the first half of the 19th century was not chaotic. On the contrary, it unfolded within a framework of strict regulatory control. Even internal movements between neighboring provinces required official sanction. A special instrument of control became «secret police supervision»³. The introduction of special filtration mechanisms regarding settlers was dictated by the deep distrust of the imperial apparatus toward the mobile population. This «police supervision» aimed to weed out politically dangerous elements: not only fugitive serfs but also participants in Polish liberation uprisings. The presence of the latter on southern lands was viewed as a potential threat to regional stability, requiring constant monitoring by punitive organs.

A central element of the European identity of the Azov region became the experience of foreign colonists. The expansion of the

¹ Державний архів Херсонської області. Ф. 324. Оп. 1. Спр. 35. Доповідні записки (рапорти) малоросійського генерал-губернатора міністру внутрішніх справ про переселення козаків і державних селян Полтавської та Чернігівської губерній в Херсонську та Таврійську губернії. 1806–1810 рр. Арк. 10–14.

² Багалій Д. І. Заселення Південної України. Харків: «СОЮЗ», 1920. С. 69.

³ Державний архів Херсонської області. Ф. 1. Оп. 1. Спр. 11. Рапорти поміщиків й листування з Київським, Подільським й іншими губерньськими правліннями про встановлення таємного поліцейського нагляду за особами, що отримали дозвіл на в'їзд в Херсонську губернію. 1842 р. Арк. 81–83.

ethno-cultural composition of the North-Western Azov region at the beginning of the 19th century was closely linked to a new wave of settlers, among whom Balkan communities and representatives of the empire's religious minorities held a special place.

Bulgarian presence in the region began to form somewhat later than the Ukrainian one, acquiring a mass character following a series of Russo-Turkish wars. For thousands of Bulgarian families, the Azov region became a sanctuary from Ottoman pressure, which determined the predominantly refugee character of this migration. The primary area of their settlement became the Berdyansk district and the Taurida Governorate as a whole¹. The economic adaptation of Bulgarian settlers led to the formation of a distinct economy. Being in spatial proximity to Nogai nomad camps, Bulgarian communities managed to integrate elements of transhumance livestock farming into their own agrarian system. The combination of a high level of internal solidarity and a patriarchal structure became the mechanism that allowed Bulgarian colonies to preserve their linguistic and customary authenticity for centuries, despite all assimilation challenges. In the conditions of the modern struggle for historical memory, the experience of the Bulgarian community is quite important for deconstructing the myth of a «monolithic Russian world» in Southern Ukraine.

A separate vector of the imperial colonization strategy was the reliance on religious communities of Old Believers and Molokans. Despite their opposition to the official church, the authorities saw powerful economic potential in these groups. By stimulating their migration to the Steppe Taurida, the government attempted to create «showcase» models of successful farming that would demonstrate the region's advantages to fellow believers abroad. A striking example of such a protectionist policy was the settlement of the banks of the Kinski Vody River by people from Znamyanka in 1784. The state consciously granted the Old Believers exclusive preferences: long-term tax holidays, exemption from billeting and mandatory duties, and maximum simplification of administrative procedures. Such support

¹ Ситник О. М. Проблема збереження національної ідентичності болгар Північного Приазов'я у XIX – на початку XXI століття. *Етносоціальні аспекти вивчення історії Південної України 18-20 ст.*: монографія / Крилова А. М. (відп. ред.), Гудзь В. В. (редагування та передмова), Полякова Л. І., Пачев С. І., Ситник О. М., Шкода Н. А. Запоріжжя, 2024. С. 34.

triggered a chain reaction, activating migration movements toward the modern Melitopol region. Parallel to this, within the framework of a systemic policy of replacing the nomadic population with a settled one, the creation of Molokan colonies was authorized on former Nogai lands near the Molochna River¹. This marked a transition to a new stage of regional reclamation, where the religious identity of the settlers became an additional stimulus for their economic and social stability in a new place.

Mennonite settlements on the Molochna River (Halbstadt, Gnadenfeld) effectively became outposts of European agrarian culture. They introduced advanced farming methods, created model farmsteads, and developed export-oriented industry. For the Mennonite community, the Azov region was not a periphery of Russia, but part of a global network of like-minded people stretching from Prussia to North America.

No less important was the role of the Greek community. Although the main body of Mariupol Greeks was localized further east, their influence on the trade infrastructure of the entire North-Western Azov region was decisive. Through the Greek and Italian trading houses of Berdyansk, the region was directly connected to the Mediterranean civilizational space.

Thus, the economic agency of the region was based on private initiative and free enterprise – values that fundamentally contradicted the imperial vertical. The identity of a resident of Berdyansk or Melitopol in the 18th and 19th centuries was formed through maritime trade, international contacts, and a multilingual environment. It was this diversity of identities, integrated into the Ukrainian socio-cultural space, that laid the foundations of the regional community that proved capable of long-term resistance to assimilation. When the empire tried to impose a unified model of a subject, the inhabitants of the Azov region preserved the memory of their special rights, privileges, and autonomy. Today, this memory is actualized as a «European alternative» to occupation practices.

Under the conditions of the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation, the theme of ethno-cultural diversity acquires a

¹ Шандра В., Аркуша О. Україна в ХІХ столітті: людність та імперії / НАН України, Ін-т історії України. Київ: Академперіодика, 2022. С. 86.

distinctly political resonance. Russian propaganda seeks to present the multi-ethnicity of the region as proof of its «non-Ukrainianness». However, scientific analysis proves the opposite: Ukrainian nation-building in the South occurred not through the displacement of other cultures, but through their integration into a single civic space, where the Ukrainian language and culture acted as a natural basis for interaction. Returning the region to its true essence as an open, multicultural, and European space is a key task for the decolonization of history. This allows the residents of the Azov region to identify themselves not as objects of an imperial experiment, but as heirs to a complex and majestic European history, where every ethnic group contributed to the building of a common home.

Thus, the ethno-cultural diversity of the 18th and 19th centuries is not merely a fact of the past, but a living factor of modern national identity. It marks the Azov region as a space of freedom and variety, making it organically incompatible with modern totalitarian ideologies. The knowledge that the ancestors of modern Azov residents built this land as part of the civilized world strengthens national identity, marking the territory as an integral part of Ukraine and Europe. This diversity does not divide, but on the contrary – creates a strong foundation for a civic nation, where Ukrainian statehood is the guarantor of preserving the cultural identity of all ethnic groups.

3. Transformation of Historical Memory under Conditions of Occupation and War

During the period of the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation, historical memory regarding the settlement of the North-Western Azov region in the 18th and 19th centuries ceased to be an exclusive object of academic study. It has transformed into a dynamic factor of national security and one of the key markers of the civilizational affiliation of the region's inhabitants. Under conditions of occupation and active combat, knowledge of the past has transformed from theoretical baggage into an instrument of intellectual resistance.

The Russian occupation authorities view history as «soft power» meant to legitimize the armed seizure of territories. The main vector of this strategy is the attempt to completely displace

Ukrainian and European components from the memory of the Azov region's development, replacing them with the imperial myth of «historically Russian lands». In practice, this manifests as the targeted destruction of monuments that marked the Ukrainian agency of the region, and the mass return of Soviet and imperial names to streets and city squares (Berdyansk, Melitopol), which aims to create an illusion of «historical continuity» of Russian presence. Textbooks are being introduced where the settlement of the land is presented exclusively as an act of monarchical will, and the diversity of identities is neutralized in favor of the «one people» ideologeme. Such actions by the occupiers are aimed at stripping the region of its true essence as a free frontier space, turning it into an ideological appendage of the «Russian World».

Yet, despite colossal pressure, the socio-cultural environment of the North-Western Azov region demonstrates a high degree of resilience. This is explained by the fact that memory of the region's past in the Ukrainian tradition is based on the principles of freedom, private property, and entrepreneurship – values that were the foundation of the space of accelerated modernization in the 19th century. For residents of occupied territories and internally displaced persons, the awareness that their ancestors – Cossacks, state peasants, or foreign colonists – built this land with their own labor, rather than by decree from Moscow, becomes a form of «internal de-occupation». Historical memory of how Ukrainian colonization always followed the needs of a free person, and not just state interest, creates immunity to propaganda. In this context, Cossack heritage acts not just as a folklore element, but as a deep cultural bedrock that determines models of behavior. The tradition of self-organization, inherent to the frontier communities of the Azov region in the 18th century, manifests today in the volunteer movement, partisan resistance, and the community's ability to hold together even in the direst circumstances.

An important feature of the transformation of memory during the war is its transition into the digital space. Social networks, electronic archives, and virtual museums have become repositories of the region's true image. When physical museums under occupation are looted or turned into centers of propaganda, the digital recording of family histories, documents about Mennonite colonies, or Cossack industries becomes an act of preserving the

national genetic code. The modern historian in this process fulfills the role not only of a scientist but also of a mediator of memory. Providing the community with scientifically grounded facts about the true history of the region's settlement allows for the refutation of theses about the «artificiality» of Ukrainian presence in the Azov region and strengthens the sense of unity of the Azov region with the pan-Ukrainian process of nation-building.

In view of modern Russian armed aggression and the temporary occupation of the territories of the North-Western Azov region, an urgent task is to rethink the paradigm of researching the process of forming the ethno-cultural composition of the region's population during the second half of the 18th to the mid-19th century. Since the Russian state for several centuries attempted to occupy and Russify these ancient Ukrainian territories. At present, we are observing the culmination of these aggressive actions, as the Russian Federation once again attempts to resuscitate the «Novorossiia» project, fabricated back in the second half of the 18th century¹. Under the conditions of the modern Russo-Ukrainian war, Ukrainian historical traditions and national dignity have once again faced difficult trials. For the invaders, in this existential war unleashed by the RF against the Ukrainian people, primarily seek to purposefully destroy Ukrainian national identity². Yu. Sytnyk rightly noted that in the course of the modern hybrid war unleashed by the Kremlin against Ukraine, the Russian Federation utilizes a whole spectrum of hybrid information technologies, including the «Russian World» doctrine, which encroaches on all territories where a Russian-speaking population resides. At the same time, for several centuries, Ukrainians have undergone artificial deformation of their cultural and national identity³.

¹ Ситник О., Горбова, О., Ситник К. Парадигма дослідження процесу формування етнокультурного складу населення Північно-Західного Приазов'я (друга половина XVIII – середина XIX ст.): контекст сьогодення. *Axis Europae. Серія історія*. 2025. Issue 7. С. 14.

² Гудзь В. В., Ситник О. М., Ситник Ю. В. Мелітопольський громадянський спротив як складова частина руху опору рашистським окупантам. *Education and science as factors of post-war reconstruction: historical experience, lessons for Ukraine. Scientific monograph*. Riga, Latvia: "Baltija Publishing", 2025. С. 57–58.

³ Sytnyk Y. The imposition of the «Russian world» in Ukraine as a means of deformation of the cultural and national identity of the Ukrainians of the Donetsk region. *Zaporizhzhia Historical Review*. No. 53. Vol. 1. 2019. PP. 204–209.

Thus, the transformation of historical memory under wartime conditions proves that the battle for the past is an integral part of the struggle for the future. If for the aggressor, the history of the Azov region's settlement is a justification for conquest, for Ukrainian society, it is a source of strength and an argument in favor of agency. Awareness that the North-Western Azov region was formed as a complex, multi-ethnic, and dynamic space where the Ukrainian component was defining is key to understanding the inevitability of de-occupation. The region's past, cleansed of imperial layers, becomes a solid foundation for the formation of a modern national identity capable of resisting any external threats.

CONCLUSIONS

As our research has shown, the North-Western Azov region was never a *tabula rasa* upon which the empire wrote its own history. This region developed as a complex frontier where the Ukrainian ethnos played the role of the pivotal element, ensuring the continuity of economic and cultural life. The modern national identity of the residents of the Azov region is based on the recognition of this agency. The attempts of the RF to resuscitate the concept of «Novorossiya» are an artificial construct that ignores real ethno-cultural processes. Deconstructing this myth through the study of the documentary history of settlement is critically important for overcoming the consequences of the colonial past. Under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian war, historical memory has transformed into a strategic resource. It serves as a «friend-or-foe» marker and helps the residents of the region maintain a connection with the Ukrainian state project even in the most difficult circumstances. The future of the North-Western Azov region is inextricably linked with its Ukrainian roots. Returning to the true, undistorted history of the region's settlement is a guarantee for the restoration of territorial integrity and the formation of a unified socio-cultural space of Ukraine, where the memory of the past works for the building of a free and independent state.

ABSTRACT

This chapter investigates the role of historical memory regarding colonization processes in the North-Western Azov region during the 18th and 19th centuries within the context of contemporary nation-building. It analyzes the conflict between the imperial myth of «historically Russian lands» and the actual historical past of the region as a multi-ethnic frontier. The study identifies that the deconstruction of the «Novorossiia» concept and the revitalization of Cossack and early modern heritage serve as key instruments in countering the ideological aggression of the Russian Federation. The work emphasizes the importance of highlighting the agency of the Ukrainian peasantry and foreign colonists in the economic development of the region. The findings demonstrate that the continuity of historical memory regarding the settlement of the Azov region provides the foundation for forming a resilient regional identity as an integral component of Ukraine's broader civilizational choice. It is proven that under wartime conditions, the history of the region's settlement transforms from a purely academic topic into a potent factor of national security and resistance.

АНОТАЦІЯ

У даному розділі досліджується роль історичної пам'яті про колонізаційні процеси у Північно-Західному Приазов'ї XVIII–XIX ст. у контексті сучасного націєтворення. Проаналізовано конфлікт між імперським міфом про «споконвічно російські землі» та реальним історичним минулим регіону як багатоетнічного фронтиру. Виявлено, що деконструкція концепту «Новоросії» та актуалізація козацької та ранньомодерної спадщини є ключовими інструментами протидії ідеологічній агресії РФ. У роботі наголошується на важливості висвітлення суб'єктності українського селянства та іноземних колоністів у господарському освоєнні краю. Результати дослідження засвідчують, що тяглість історичної пам'яті про заселення Приазов'я є фундаментом для формування стійкої регіональної ідентичності як невід'ємної складової загальноукраїнського цивілізаційного вибору. Доведено, що в умовах війни історія заселення регіону трансформується з суто академічної теми у дієвий чинник національної безпеки та спротиву.

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FORMATION OF SOCIAL POLICY IN UKRAINE AS A SYSTEM OF MEASURES TO ENSURE SOCIAL SECURITY

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INTRODUCTION

The current issues regarding the state of social policy and the main directions of its reform have always attracted the attention of scholars. The viewpoints expressed vary depending on the historical period and field of study, even among representatives of the same discipline. This can be explained by the lack of comprehensive legislative regulation of Ukraine's conceptual principles and scientific approaches. In historical literature, social policy is understood as the purposeful activity of the state and its structures aimed at regulating the social sphere and social relations to improve the living conditions of the population. During the Soviet period, scholars considered the social sphere quite broadly, as the totality of all areas of social activity. In our opinion, such a definition was excessively extensive, while the essence of social policy was reduced to the confirmation of the ideological tenets of the monopoly marxist-leninist doctrine¹. Social policy plays a key role in ensuring the welfare of citizens. The social state, as proclaimed in Article 1 of the Constitution of Ukraine², recognizes the main task of such policy as achieving a decent standard of living and the free development of the individual.

By the mid-1950s, despite the growth of industrial production, there was stagnation in the standard of living of ordinary citizens, and the collectivized peasantry of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) continued to face hardship until the early 1960s. Soviet propaganda attempted to convince the population that their welfare was improving by appealing to their self-sacrifice in the interests of the state.

¹ Конституція Української Радянської Соціалістичної Республіки 1976.
URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/001_001/ed19761119#Text

² Конституція України, 1996. URL.
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80#Text>

The aim of this study is to determine the goals of social policy under the Soviet occupation regime – taking into account the accumulated experience of generations – and to present theoretically substantiated proposals for improving its scholarly support.

Among the Soviet academic literature that reveals the social policy implemented in the western Ukrainian regions, particular attention should be given to the monographs of Hryhorii Kovalchak¹. Despite the constant declarations of the Party-Soviet authorities regarding the priority of the social sphere, the existing state services in consumer services, trade, and housing and communal utilities were able to provide only a minimal level of benefits, especially in rural areas. Despite the systematic disdain of Soviet propaganda toward the capitalist way of life, citizens of the USSR sought to acquire modern technologies, obtain comfortable housing, and dress fashionably. Improvements in living conditions, housing construction, and the development of social and household infrastructure were carried out according to the residual principle. A characteristic feature was the emphasis on quantitative rather than qualitative indicators. During the Soviet period, the term «unpromising village» emerged. Housing and communal services were of extremely low quality, which negatively affected both the welfare of the population and the level of its provision.

The articles and book of the scholar-practitioner Yaroslav Fedorchuk² also deserve attention. As the First Secretary of the Dolyna District Party Committee of the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, he developed an economic concept summarized by the slogan «The economy of the state strengthens: the welfare of the people grows». Its essence lay in the idea that the state should allocate appropriate funds to satisfy the social needs of ordinary people: education, healthcare, culture, and public amenities. The economic

¹ Ковальчак Г. І. Індустріальний розвиток західних областей України в період комуністичного будівництва. Київ: Наук. думка, 1973. 236 с. Його ж: Економічний розвиток західноукраїнських земель. Київ: Наук. думка, 1988. 251 с.

² Федорчук Я. Вплив нової техніки на співвідношення трудомісткості, фондомісткості і матеріаломісткості промислової продукції. Економіка Радянської України. 1975. № 11. С. 57–62. Його ж: Економіка підвищення якості продукції. Економіка Радянської України. 1977. № 10. С. 53–56.

development of the western region of the republic and the infrastructure connected with it depended on local leaders who cared not only about career advancement and the blind execution of directives from higher authorities but also about the people. Such intentions encountered both open and hidden resistance at all levels. Nevertheless, some leaders, making use of the opportunities provided by their positions within the party-state apparatus, proposed and implemented their ideas in practice. The Ukrainian people, under the difficult conditions of totalitarianism, managed to preserve their language, culture, and enduring spiritual values thanks to the dedicated efforts of the intelligentsia, a prominent representative of which was the scholar-practitioner Yaroslav Fedorchuk. The local population received employment, free housing, social guarantees, kindergartens, recreational camps, higher education, health resorts, departmental preventive care facilities, rural hospitals, and etc.¹.

Various aspects of socio-economic processes in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have been examined in scholarly and regional studies by Ukrainian researchers. In particular, the features of the industrial and agricultural potential of the western lands of Ukraine within the USSR – such as the forestry and woodworking industries, oil and gas extraction, farming systems, the structure of animal husbandry, and social policy – have been highlighted by Oleh Maliarchuk², Vasył Ostapiak³ and Nataliia Petretska⁴.

¹ Малиярчук О. М., Сабадуха В. О. Наукова і адміністративна діяльність Ярослава Федорчука в умовах кризи радянської системи (1960 – 1980-ті рр.). *East European Historical Bulletin* / [chief editor Vasył Ilnytsyi]. Drohobych: Publishing House «Helvetica». 2023. Issue. 29. С. 163–172. DOI <https://doi.org/10.24919/2519-058X.29.292937>

² Соціально-гуманітарні виміри безпеки України: Івано-Франківська область в історичній ретроспективі (1944–1991): колективна монографія / О. М. Малиярчук, М. В. Санкович, М. М. Палагнюк, А. В. Бойда. Івано-Франківськ: Симфонія форте, 2025. 404 с.
https://search.library.nung.edu.ua/DocDescription?doc_id=480680

³ Малиярчук О., Остап'як В. Індустріальні процеси у Західному регіоні Української РСР: здобутки та прорахунки. *Український історичний журнал*. Київ. 2022. Вип. 2. С. 91–107. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15407/uhj2022.02.091>

⁴ Малиярчук О., Петрецька Н. Природоохоронна діяльність у західному регіоні Української РСР: на прикладі Івано-Франківської області *East European Historical Bulletin* / [chief editor Vasył Ilnytsyi]. Drohobych: Publishing House

A thorough examination of the mechanism of the «second Sovietization» and the establishment of the Soviet occupation regime at the district level in the Stanislav (Ivano-Frankivsk) region was carried out by Mariia Sankovych^{1,2}. The researcher revealed the main measures aimed at the Sovietization of the region: the provision of a personnel corps, the mobilization of human and natural resources for the needs of the front, and the counteraction to this process by the underground Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, the armed units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and the local population, as well as the preparation of prerequisites for the complete collectivization of the countryside and the industrial development. Historiographical studies by Ukrainian scholars Ihor Raikivskyi, Oleh Yehreshii, and Bohdan Paska³ have also been reflected in academic research.

The history of the development and implementation of social policy during the Soviet totalitarian regime in the Ukrainian SSR—particularly the changes in the economic concept throughout the successive five-year plans—has not yet been comprehensively studied. Among scholars, there exist different viewpoints regarding the evaluation of the consequences of socialist experiments at their various stages. These range from extreme and tendentious assessments and praise for the alleged infallibility of the Communist Party, which characterized the entire Soviet historiography, to entirely opposite conclusions. Some Ukrainian economists and historians express the view that the results achieved during the reform periods were highly effective. However, the

«Helvetica». 2024. Issue. 31. С. 173–182. DOI <https://doi.org/10.24919/2519-058X.31.306348>

¹ Санкович М. Аграрна політика радянської влади в Карпатському регіоні – матеріали преси і реальний стан справ. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук. Серія. Історичні науки*. 2024. Вип. 72. Т. 3. С. 42–49. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/72-3-6>.

² Санкович М. Структурні зміни в промисловості Івано-Франківської області Української РСР. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук. Серія. Історичні науки*. 2024. Вип. 73. Т. 3. С. 21–28. DOI <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/73-3-3>

³ Райківський І., Єгрешій О., Паска Б. Українська історіографія соціально-економічних процесів в Івано-Франківській області УРСР. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук*. 2024. Вип. 72. Т. 3. С. 33–41. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/72-3-5>

majority argue that there was neither an acceleration of development nor an increase in the growth rates of industrial and agricultural production. We believe that such ambiguity in assessments results not only from the use of different methodologies of economic calculation but also from the authors' attitudes toward the contradictory policies of the occupation regime. Nevertheless, according to a number of technical and economic indicators, the Soviet five-year plans did show certain advantages; at the same time, however, errors were made in the reform concept due to the usurpation of powers by ministries and departments. Ultimately, on the scale of the republic, the so-called «socialist transformations» were largely nullified. At the same time, at different stages there existed distinct regional features and economic achievements developed by the Ukrainian people.

1. Historical Preconditions for the Formation of Social Policy

Throughout human history, each new generation has perceived the world in its own way. The generation of the 1960s in the USSR saw the world as new and youthful. The gap between the generation traumatized and devastated by war – the generation of their parents – was greater than the usual distance between different age groups. For many young people, it seemed at the very least that they had been born into a society that was changing its values, style, and rules toward more fashionable values, styles, and norms closely linked with cinema and television. Youth culture had its own idols and trends, which easily transcended state borders. Mass culture was becoming international. Trends in music and fashion originated in the English-speaking world and then moved eastward and southward. The Soviet ideological apparatus attempted to resist these trends and promoted its own alternative. These new trends were mainly addressed to wealthier and student youth, who could afford records, concert tickets, shoes, clothing, cosmetics, and so on. However, the way young people presented these products often openly conflicted with the Soviet class-based divisions. The most successful musicians of the time, such as The Beatles, became a transnational cultural phenomenon for European youth. The content and form of pop music were highly significant. In the 1960s, young people paid particular attention to style, creating an entire subculture known as the «Stilyagi». Pop music, as a hallmark of the

1960s, had a rebellious tone. In the USSR, listening to or playing British or American music for young people meant protesting – a figurative «spit in the face» to the generation shaped by Joseph Stalin or Adolf Hitler. In neighboring socialist bloc countries, this was perceived similarly, with minor local adaptations.

The youth of the 1960s made strong and unusual efforts to distinguish themselves through their appearance. Clothing, hairstyles, personal belongings, and makeup («fashionable accessories») became essential markers of age identity. At the height of the Cold War between the socialist and capitalist worlds, London served as the source of these trends, influencing European tastes in clothing, music, photography, models, advertising, and even mass-circulation magazines. The «lighthearted» side of the 1960s – pop culture and fashion – should not be dismissed as trivial or superficial. For the new generation, it was a meaningful form of self-expression, signaling individuality and generational identity. For this generation, it was a way to put an end to the «era of Nazism, racism, and despotism» associated with Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. Their anti-human «teachings» had been discredited.

In the first half of the 1960s, alongside centralized capital investments, the authorities began using the financial and material-technical resources of enterprises and collective farms to form their own development funds for the socio-cultural sphere. For various reasons – primarily the residual principle of funding and insufficient attention from the authorities – the commissioning of «cultural facilities» was often delayed, and construction plans were not fulfilled. By the mid-1960s, many settlements in the western regions of Ukraine still lacked clubs or club buildings. Some libraries operated in adapted premises. The shortage of qualified personnel remained acute. Some cultural-educational workers did not have the appropriate education, and low salaries contributed to high staff turnover.

At large industrial enterprises and associations, services related to physical education and sports developed – for example, the «Khlorvinil» football team «Khimik», Burshtyn Thermal Power Plant – «Enerhetyk», Yamnytsia Cement and Slate Plant – «Tsementnyk», Kolomyia Agricultural Machinery Plant – «Sil-mash», and Tysmenytsia – «Khutrovyk». Health-related services included sanatoriums, preventive care facilities, pioneer camps, and

recreational bases, including in the Carpathians. Most enterprises and collective farms were limited to traditional types of services: childcare in preschools, maintenance of stadiums and cultural centers, and organizing leisure activities for their employees. During the drafting of the new Eighth Five-Year Plan for the development of the national economy of the Ukrainian SSR, the Ivano-Frankivsk regional executive committee slightly increased capital investments in the construction of schools and cultural institutions to 13.7 million rubles, compared to 8.24 million rubles in the previous seven-year plan¹.

It was the responsibility of state institutions, governed by the totalitarian system, to provide the population with educational and cultural services. Each district of the region, as well as its major towns and smaller settlements, had its own library, cultural center, theater, dance troupe, and sports team, which were funded either from the budget or by large enterprises and collective farms. The main focus of the Bolshevik Party and the occupying regime was the struggle against the ideology of Ukrainian nationalism. The Soviet authorities took ideological control over the most accessible leisure centers and recreational sites – clubs, libraries, reading houses, theaters, and philharmonic halls. Through various amateur art circles, mass cultural activities, and propaganda events, communist ideals and the Soviet way of life were promoted, while everything Ukrainian was discredited. A defining feature of all cultural and educational institutions under the totalitarian system was their excessive politicization. The Ukrainian intelligentsia initiated a new attempt at national-cultural revival, known as the «Sixtiers» movement. In combating dissent, the occupying regime employed the full arsenal of moral and physical repression developed in earlier decades. The intellectual and cultural advancement of Ukrainians over the two postwar decades contained a significant political component. Members of the creative elite elevated Ukrainian national culture to a higher level and infused the national idea with new content.

¹ Малярчук О. Соціально-економічні процеси в західному регіоні Української РСР (1964–1991): монографія. Вид. 2-ге, переробл. і допов. Івано-Франківськ: Симфонія форте, 2023. С. 322.

2. Daily Life and Employment

The social sphere encompassed the domestic complex, which included housing and communal services, trade, transport, communications, consumer services, energy supply, water and gas provision, land allotments, and the use of equipment and technology, among other things. The fundamental changes that took place during the Soviet period indicate that living standards gradually improved, yet remained significantly behind those of developed countries. After Nikita Khrushchev rose to power in the USSR, Stalinist laws prohibiting changes of workplace were abolished, the working day was shortened, minimum wages were established, and both maternity leave and a universal pension system were introduced. The Soviet Union «transformed into a welfare state in its infancy, at least formally»¹.

The primary source of information, opinions, and entertainment accessible to the vast majority of the population was radio. People got their news via radio, relying more on what they heard than on what they saw or read. In the USSR, as in European countries of that time, radio was state-owned. Radio stations, transmitters, and frequencies were licensed and belonged to the state. Notably, a few foreign stations – Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and until 1959, Radio Liberation – were also operating, partially covering the European part of the Soviet Union and broadcasting objective criticism of communist authorities in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

Radio receivers, popular even before the war, were present in nearly every urban household. In rural homes across the region, mass «wired» radios – commonly nicknamed the «liar» – appeared in the mid-1950s. Radio was the principal medium of mass communication, fully controlled by the state. Young people everywhere listened primarily for popular music, while other content was later supplemented by television. Television services reached the Stanislav (Ivano-Frankivsk) region slowly, and in some mountainous areas they arrived quite late. Only in the 1960s did black-and-white TVs gain popularity almost everywhere and became a necessary part of home interiors, even in modest

¹ Джадт Т. Після війни. Історія Європи від 1945 року / переклад з англ. З. Зарембо. Київ: Наш формат. 2021. С. 465.

dwellings. During the early decades of this medium, most television programs were dull, didactic, and ideologically programmed. People had little choice – one or at most two channels – and TV broadcasting operated only for a few hours in the daytime and evening. Television, like radio, extended state policy into nearly every home, delivering a significant blow to the cinema industry and theater attendance. It offered full-length popular films, partially eliminating the need to go to movie theaters and becoming a direct competitor to them.

Postwar European historian Tony Judt argues: «The European welfare state not only did not set social classes against one another, but linked them more closely than ever before, based on a shared interest in preserving and protecting such a state. Yet state financial support for social protection and the provision of social services was grounded in the general belief that this is the task of governments. The postwar state throughout Europe was, in essence, a social state (and often constitutionally mandated as such), responsible for the well-being of its citizens. It was obliged not only to create the institutions and services necessary for good governance, security, and prosperity, but also to improve living conditions, measured by a «growing number of indicators»¹.

Traditionally, the largest portion of household expenditure in family budgets was spent on food and clothing, which consumed the majority of family income. During the postwar decades, this situation changed slowly. Young people began to spend their money on clothing and music – particularly gramophone records. The appeal of «America» and «Europe» for youth lay in their advanced fashion: household appliances, inexpensive and brightly colored clothing, cars, and accessories. This represented abundance and consumption as a lifestyle – the so-called «American way of life» – and stood in stark contrast to Soviet reality.

The shortcomings of the communist economy were no secret. It focused on mass production of «unnecessary» primary industrial goods. Consumer products in demand were either not produced, produced in insufficient quantities, or of poor quality. Soviet manufacturers damaged their reputation across virtually all sectors.

¹ Джадт Т. Після війни. Історія Європи від 1945 року / переклад з англ. З. Зарембо. Київ: Наш формат. 2021. С. 99.

The distribution and sales system for the low-quality goods that were available functioned so poorly that the true scarcity was exacerbated by shortages artificially created by bureaucracy, the retention of the best products for the elite, and corruption. The party nomenclature secured goods from Eastern European and capitalist countries. Style and quality were closely associated with Europe, in contrast to the USSR.

While Europeans could purchase cars for personal use, this was not only because they had more money; the availability of affordable cars was determined by a free market. In the USSR, a car remained a luxury throughout the entire Soviet period, meaning that supply never met demand. The party nomenclature and managers of institutions, factories, and collective farms had free access to official vehicles. For the general population, only motorcycles, mopeds, and bicycles were realistically attainable. Despite these differences, ownership of a radio receiver, gramophone, tape recorder, camera, washing machine, or television became achievable and accessible to the middle class only in the 1960s. Possession of these items became the most significant measure of Soviet welfare.

By the late 1950s, collective farms in the Stanislav (Ivano-Frankivsk) region emerged from economic stagnation and were able to focus on the improvement of «collective farm villages». Carpathian builders made a significant contribution to the development of settlements both in the region and across various parts of the USSR. Using new materials, they constructed durable administrative buildings, production facilities, workshops, bakeries, schools, nurseries, cultural centers, hospitals, feldsher-midwife stations, and trade and utility enterprises. Rural construction expanded every year and increasingly adopted an industrial basis. Its scale and focus evolved, incorporating reinforced concrete and wide mechanization of construction processes. Rural construction organizations had access to reinforced concrete factories, dozens of truck cranes, bulldozers, excavators, and other machinery.

Villages in the Stanislav region, as in the republic as a whole, were categorized as «promising», «less promising», and «unpromising». In the «promising» villages – that is, those with rural councils, collective farm administrations, or large brigades – development initiatives were concentrated. In these «promising»

villages, residential and cultural-household construction was planned according to established standards. In «less promising» settlements, where the territory did not allow for village expansion and where economic feasibility was lacking, the construction of cultural and household facilities was planned only based on the existing population, while building new housing or increasing the number of homesteads was not recommended. «Unpromising» settlements – small hamlets and villages – were to be relocated to the «promising» villages. New construction in these areas was either prohibited or severely restricted. This classification was based on an analysis of the local economy, the potential and direction of land use, availability of natural resources, labor capacity, and the level of industrial development.

In the Ivano-Frankivsk region, out of 767 villages, over 300 were considered «unpromising», and their development was deemed impractical. Only 450 «promising» villages were covered by general development plans. According to a resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and the Council of Ministers, general plans were to be developed for 291 promising villages in the region between 1965 and 1970. The pace of rural construction required accelerated preparation of these general plans. There was no unified approach regarding the categorization of settlements as «promising», «less promising», or «unpromising». Special attention in developing a general plan was given to the public center, where main public buildings were constructed, forming the core of the architectural and spatial composition of the settlement.

Despite constant declarations by the authorities about the priority of the social sphere, the existing state services in consumer services, trade, and housing and communal infrastructure could provide only a minimal level of benefits, particularly in rural areas. Despite Soviet propaganda's disdain for the capitalist way of life, people sought to acquire new appliances and comfortable housing. The living conditions of the population did not correspond to their contribution to building the industrial capacity of the state. Improvements in living conditions, housing construction, and development of social and household infrastructure were carried out according to the residual principle. A characteristic feature of residential construction was the tendency to focus on quantitative

rather than qualitative indicators. During the Soviet period, the term «unpromising village» emerged and gained widespread usage.

The level of housing and communal services for the population of the Ukrainian SSR in the second postwar decade improved somewhat compared to the previous decade. However, many indicators still did not meet contemporary requirements or expectations. Housing and communal services remained of extremely low quality, which affected the well-being and standard of living of the population. Rural residents lacked many basic communal amenities and conveniences that were commonplace in urban areas.

The most favorable period for the development of the social sphere was 1960–1970. In rural areas, electrification and radio access were implemented, and gas supply and telephone connections began. Although still insufficient, rural settlements saw the construction of residential buildings, schools, hospitals, cultural centers, shops, preschools, feldsher-midwife stations, and other household facilities. The fulfillment of residents' everyday needs depended directly on the location of a settlement relative to the regional or district center. Life in mountainous or «unpromising» villages contrasted sharply with urban or «promising» settlements. The rapid pace of housing construction and the development of rural economies were closely linked to industrial processes.

3. Labor Resources

The socio-economic life of both the country and individual regions depended on labor resources, consisting of the working-age population. Their quantitative and qualitative characteristics directly affected social production. During the period under study, a transformation occurred due to the widespread adoption of modern machinery and technologies, which required higher levels of education, professional qualifications, and improvements in training systems. The main source of labor replenishment, as in the two previous postwar decades, was the rural population of the western regions of Ukraine.

A distinctive feature of the historical development of the western Ukrainian lands was the surplus of labor. Labor emigration «overseas» had been ongoing since the late 19th century. From the first months of occupation, the Soviet authorities used

administrative methods to enforce centralized conscription, organized recruitment, mobilization, and placement of youth into industrial centers of the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR. Tens of thousands of young men and women were directed to the Donbas coal mines, the development of virgin and fallow lands in Kazakhstan, and the exploitation of oil and gas fields in Siberia. During Stalin's era, such employment often amounted to a form of «labor exile», akin to those forcibly deported as part of special contingents. Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, however, these assignments were framed as «Komsomol construction projects», a demonstration of patriotic sentiment, and «raternal assistance».

With the postwar reconstruction of local industry and the further development of the economy, opportunities expanded for young people to obtain higher or secondary education. At the same time, the number of students acquiring vocational skills in factory-training schools, craft schools, and technical colleges increased. This contributed both to the formation of a working class and to an increase in the number of experienced workers in regional enterprises. Gradually, skilled labor cadres were being formed.

In traditional sectors such as wood-processing and oil and gas industries, the workforce was largely composed of skilled workers with more than ten years of experience. In contrast, industries such as chemicals and mechanical engineering were dominated by relatively inexperienced personnel.

From the early 1960s, new trends began to emerge in the labor structure of western Ukraine, shaped by the region's development characteristics. The economy and social sphere of the region began to exhibit new dynamics. Intensive construction of new enterprises commenced, alongside the expansion and reconstruction of previously built facilities. Comprehensive mechanization and automation of production allowed output to increase through higher labor productivity rather than by increasing the number of workers.

The population of any country or territory develops according to certain demographic patterns, which are shaped by prevailing socio-political and socio-economic conditions. Between the 1959 and 1970 censuses, despite overall population growth, the number of individuals in the most productive age group (20–30 years) in the USSR decreased by 7.6 million. The natural growth of the labor force in the USSR was insufficient to meet the needs of the national

economy, as the average annual increase during the five-year plans was around 2 million people, while the average annual demand for workers and employees was estimated at 2.5 million¹.

A particularly adverse factor affecting Ukraine's overall demographic situation was high mortality. By 1994, the mortality rate reached 14.7 per 1,000 people, doubling over 30 years (in 1960 it was only 6.9 per 1,000). In 1989, higher general mortality rates than in Ukraine were observed in only eight countries worldwide. While Ukraine's natural population growth was 13.6 per 1,000 in 1960, by 1990 it had become negative, reaching – 4.7 per 1,000. In 1970, the absolute natural increase was 300,000 people, observed in both cities and villages. By 1994, deaths exceeded births by 243,100 people. That year, 521,500 births and 764,700 deaths were recorded in Ukraine. In urban areas, the figures were 328,500 births and 450,800 deaths, and in rural areas 193,000 births and 313,800 deaths².

The decline in rural population due to this factor began in 1979, marking the start of ongoing depopulation trends in Ukrainian villages. Depopulation trends deepened. In fact, the decline in the total rural population began as early as the 1920s, and particularly in the 1930s, following the Holodomors, genocide, and mass deportations of Ukrainian peasants. As is well known, a population census was conducted in January 1937, the results of which caused a political scandal and drew the anger of the «leader of all times and peoples», Joseph Stalin. According to this census, the total population of Ukraine was 1.7 million fewer than in 1933. The census materials were destroyed, and the population statistics were classified. If, in the prewar year 1940, the rural population of Ukraine was 27.3 million, by 1950 it had decreased to 23.8 million, and by 1989, it was only 17.1 million. The rural population has been the main source for the preservation and reproduction of the Ukrainian ethnos. Villages preserved centuries-old national traditions, customs, rituals, and distinctive culture, yet today their

¹ Копчак С. І. Населення українського Прикарпаття (історико-демографічний нарис). Докапіталістичний період. Львів: Вид-во при Львівському державно-му ун-ті, 1974. С. 3–4.

² Копчак С. І., Мойсєєнко В. І., Романюк М. Д. Етнічна структура та міграції населення українського Прикарпаття (статистико-демографічне дослідження). Львів: Світ, 1996. С. 5.

population faces depopulation. Birth rates in Ukraine, as in other economically developed countries during the 20th century, showed a trend of sharp decline. In 1913, the birth rate per 1,000 inhabitants was 44.1, while by 1970 it had fallen to 15.2 – a threefold reduction over two generations. Only from 1970 onward did a slight increase or stabilization in birth rates occur for several years. In the USSR as a whole, birth rates were higher than in the Ukrainian SSR, due to high fertility in the Central Asian republics. At the same time, the mortality rate in the Ukrainian SSR showed the opposite trend. In prewar 1913, 25.2 people per 1,000 died, followed in subsequent years by a gradual decline. By prewar 1940, it had fallen to 14.3 (the war years are the subject of a separate study). In the postwar period, up to 1959–1960, mortality gradually declined further. In 1958–1960, it reached 6.9 per 1,000 – the lowest mortality rate in Soviet history¹.

This demographic situation led to a gradual increase in the proportion of elderly and aged individuals (in contemporary archival materials referred to as «overaged»). In 1926, the population of pension age (men after 60 years, women after 55). The proportion of the population of elderly and aged individuals rose steadily: in 1926 it was 7.6%, in 1960 – 13.4%, and by 1970 – 17.8%. The decline in mortality was accompanied by a gradual increase in life expectancy. In 1926–1927, the average life span was 47 years, by 1958–1959 it had risen to 70 years, and in 1968–1970 it had reached 72 years. Due to the growing proportion of elderly people, mortality rates began to show a slight upward trend starting in 1959: 7.5 per 1,000 in 1959, 8.0 in 1967, 8.6 in 1969, and 8.9 in 1970. Despite this, the overall mortality rate in Ukraine (as in the USSR) remained lower than in economically developed capitalist countries.

The indicator of infant mortality is considered the death of children under the age of one. About 60% of the total mortality of children under 14 years falls on the age of up to one year. In global medicine, infant mortality is regarded as the most sensitive indicator of a nation's cultural level and the state of healthcare. The

¹ Малярчук О. Соціально-економічні процеси в західному регіоні Української РСР (1964–1991): монографія. Вид. 2-ге, переробл. і допов. Івано-Франківськ: Симфонія форте, 2023. С. 292.

improvement of material well-being, culture, and the level of medical services in the Ukrainian SSR contributed to the gradual decrease of infant mortality rates throughout all the years of Soviet rule, which in turn affected natural population growth. In 1913, out of every thousand children born, 215 did not survive to one year, and in 1920 – 307, meaning that every third child died before reaching one year. By 1940, infant mortality had decreased to 161, in 1959 – 36, and in 1971 – 16.2. Infant mortality thus fell nearly 13 times.

Due to a significant decline in birth rates, despite the reduction in mortality rates, the natural population growth of Ukraine gradually and steadily decreased. In 1913, it was 18.8 per thousand of the population, in 1924 – 24.5, in 1940 – 13, in 1958 – 12.1, in 1964 – 9.5, in 1969 – 6.1, in 1970 – 6.3, and in 1971 – 6.6, i.e., it decreased threefold. In this situation, a detailed analysis of the causes of even a small but stable and gradual increase in mortality was necessary. At the same time, statistical data indicate that the increase in rural mortality clearly outpaced urban mortality. The rise in mortality in Ukraine occurred due to the overall increase in the proportion of elderly and aged people in the population structure, especially women. For example, in 1958, when overall mortality was at its lowest, 46.1% of deceased men and 66.6% of women died at retirement age. In 1965, this figure was 58.1% for men and 80% for women, and by 1970 it had increased further to 60.7% for men and 83.9% for women. It should be emphasized that the average life expectancy of women is significantly higher than that of men, resulting in a higher proportion of elderly women. According to the 1970 population census, of the total number of pension-aged individuals, men comprised only 26.6%, while women accounted for 73.4%¹.

The increase in the proportion of elderly people in the population structure was not the only reason for the rise in overall mortality. There was a gradual increase in mortality among men of working age. In 1970, the overall mortality of the entire population, compared to 1958, increased by 28.3% (from 6.9 deaths per

¹ Малирчук О. Соціально-економічні процеси в західному регіоні Української РСР (1964–1991): монографія. Вид. 2-ге, переробл. і допов. Івано-Франківськ: Симфонія форте, 2023. С. 294.

thousand population in 1958 to 8.9 in 1970). During this period, the mortality of people of retirement age increased by 28.9% (from 28.3 deaths per thousand elderly people in 1958 to 36.5 in 1970). At the same time, over the same period, mortality among men aged 15–60 increased by 11.5%, while among women aged 15–55 it decreased by 18.2%.

The increase in mortality among people below retirement age occurred exclusively due to the rising proportion of male deaths. According to data from 1968–1970, male mortality was higher than female mortality: in cities – by 64.1%, in rural areas – by 62.9% (in standardized indicators). This difference was especially noticeable among the working-age population. For example, in 1970, mortality among women aged 20–39 was 1.09 per thousand women, while among men of the same age it was 3.07 – meaning that the mortality of men in the most productive age was three times higher than that of women of the same age. In this situation, it is necessary to determine the main causes of mortality, especially among young people and working-age men. The continuous improvement of material living standards and cultural conditions, as well as the enhancement of the healthcare system, ensured not only a reduction in various diseases but also a decrease in mortality from most diseases among working-age people. However, this did not apply to injuries and deaths from various injuries and accidents. In 1968–1969, injuries were the cause of death for 66.1% of men aged 16–19, 68.1% of men aged 20–29, and 56.3% of men aged 30–39. At the same time, the share of deaths from injuries and other accidents among women was 40.4% for ages 16–19, 28.7% for ages 20–29, and 20.5% for ages 30–39¹.

Thus, trauma became the main cause of death among young working-age men. Men died from injuries three times more often than women of the same age. Moreover, the increase in mortality among the population below retirement age in the Ukrainian SSR occurred due to the rise in deaths from injuries and accidents

¹ Соціально-гуманітарні виміри безпеки України: Івано-Франківська область в історичній ретроспективі (1944–1991): колективна монографія / О. М. Малирчук, М. В. Санкович, М. М. Палагнюк, А. В. Бойда. Івано-Франківськ: Симфонія форте, 2025. С. 287.

https://search.library.nung.edu.ua/DocDescription?doc_id=480680

among men. It should be emphasized that the proportion of deaths from injuries in Ukraine, compared to some capitalist countries, was very high. In 1968, in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), 125.8 men per 100,000 male population died from injuries; in the USA – 112.3; in England – 58.5. In Ukraine, according to 1970 data, this figure was 142.2 men per 100,000. Statistical analysis showed that, on average, 25% of injuries occurred at workplaces, while 75% of all injuries were of a non-occupational nature.

It should be noted that during the period under study, the number of households in rural areas increased. This happened because people who moved to new construction sites in large cities often lived in suburban villages until they received their housing. At the same time, year by year, the number of collective farm households decreased, while the number of workers' and employees' households grew. The increase in workers' and employees' households occurred partly due to the transition of artisan (individual) households into this group.

The formation of labor resources was influenced by various factors, primarily the demographic situation. The extensive development of the economy required the mass involvement of labor mainly in industry and construction. Additional labor resources, drawn into the sphere of social production from household subsidiary farms and non-collectivized mountain villages were practically fully utilized. The redistribution of labor resources between agriculture and other branches of social production was also almost completely exhausted. The development of the social and domestic sphere required significant labor resources. For the western region of the republic, the same patterns were characteristic as for the Ukrainian SSR as a whole: a decrease in the natural population growth; the introduction of new economic mechanisms based on incentives, mechanization, and automation of production processes; the mass transition to brigade forms of labor, and so on.

4. Household Infrastructure

In the second half of the 20th century, the content of social policy did not change – at its core, as before, it was based on distributive relations and centralized administrative regulation. The

increase in economic efficiency allowed attention to be drawn to social problems. In general, the population gained access to appliances and equipment. For example, in 1966, the population of Lviv Oblast used 87,000 televisions and 273,000 various household radio devices (radio receivers, radiolas, tape recorders, radio-tape recorders), which amounted to 153 radio and television devices, including 37 televisions, per thousand inhabitants of the oblast. These figures were significantly lower than the average number of radio and television devices in the republic (respectively – 205 and 67). Despite the production of televisions directly in Lviv Oblast and the concentration of enterprises producing radio equipment, the oblast lagged far behind other regions in this regard, such as Crimea – 275, Mykolaiv – 221, Kherson – 180, and even Chernivtsi – 175. The number of televisions per thousand inhabitants in Kharkiv and Luhansk Oblasts was three times higher than in Lviv¹.

Improvement of living conditions for the population was facilitated by guaranteed wages for collective farmers, intensive housing construction, and the improvement of social and domestic infrastructure. Overall, the period under study was marked by the highest rates of housing construction and, accordingly, the expansion of municipal services. In housing construction, as elsewhere, the trend was dominated by quantitative rather than qualitative indicators, with a minimal set of amenities. The five-story buildings of cities and towns, the so-called «Khrushchyovkas», were gradually replaced by six- to nine-story buildings and private construction. A new type of service emerged and became widely spread – construction and renovation of housing on the orders of the population. The expansion of construction accelerated the transition from communal apartments («kommunalkas») and dormitories to small family-type apartments. However, many obstacles stood in the way of new housing construction. No method was found to unite the efforts of developers to comprehensively build engineering communications and improve the landscaping of surrounding areas. Local executive committees did not have the right to pool enterprise resources for the construction of cultural and domestic facilities.

¹ Державний архів Львівської області. Ф. П–3. Оп. 9. Спр. 218. Арк. 63.

In the western regions of Ukraine, a powerful construction industry was established. The main portion of the invested funds went to large trusts such as «Naftohazbud», «Khimmetalurhbud», and «Prykarpatzhytlobud». In 1966, construction and installation work was carried out by 44 general construction and specialized organizations; by 1977, there were 61. Housing and industrial construction was performed by specialized combines such as «Prykarpatspecbud», and trusts «Zakhidkhimprommontazh», «Prykarpatzhytlobud», and regional intercollective farm construction organizations, among others¹.

These trusts and their subordinate organizations faced criticism «for failing to meet assigned tasks», for not fulfilling plans regarding the commissioning of housing and productivity targets, and for delays in the construction of kindergartens, clubs, trade facilities, and municipal services².

Let us examine this problem through the example of one of the largest industrial giants of the region. Thus, during 1961–1970, the Kalush Chemical-Metallurgical Combine absorbed 238.5 million karbovanets in capital investments. Of these, 213.3 million karbovanets (89.2%) were allocated to industry, 18.8 million karbovanets (7.9%) to housing construction, and 3.5 million karbovanets (1.49%) to municipal services. Under the funds for «housing, culture, and domestic services», priority was given to industrial production, with certain «deviations from previous planned figures». Allocation of funds for the construction of housing and cultural-domestic facilities in the most favorable years did not exceed 1.5–2%. In subsequent years, a steady downward trend was observed – 0.5%.

The highest rates of housing construction were reached in the mid-1970s. During the eighth five-year plan alone, 2,218.7 thousand m² of housing was built in the agricultural Ternopil region, including 435.6 thousand m² funded by the state, enterprises, and housing cooperatives, and 1,783 thousand m² individually through state credit. In 1970, 455.6 thousand m² of housing was commissioned in the region, including 111.8 thousand

¹ Державний архів Івано-Франківської області (далі – ДАІФО). Ф. П–1. Оп. 1. Спр. 3676. Арк. 8.

² ДАІФО. Ф. П–1. Оп. 1. Спр. 3584. Арк. 1.

m² funded by the state, enterprises, and housing cooperatives. Thatched cottages with straw roofs disappeared into the past, entering ethnographic museum collections¹.

On average, during the period under study, 3,500–4,000 new apartments were commissioned annually in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR. The housing problem was most acute in regional and district centers. The estimated cost of 1 m² of living space from centralized funding sources in 1971 was 188.5 karbovanets, and from non-centralized sources – 179.9 karbovanets. Lists of those needing improved housing included about 15–20 thousand people per region. At the same time, those in urgent need of housing were 3–4 thousand people, or 20%. These included large families and people living in basements, attics, or unsafe buildings.

City and district executive committees, enterprises, and organizations developed annual plans to provide housing for workers who needed urgent improvement of living conditions. For this purpose, they were allocated no less than 15% of the total apartment space being distributed. Party regional committee bureaus repeatedly reviewed issues concerning violations of housing distribution procedures at their meetings and «responded» by «strengthening control» and «decisively suppressing various attempts». Archival materials indicate widespread abuse of official positions by responsible individuals².

Self-interest, «private ownership tendencie», and the desire of economic, state, and party employees for profit and enrichment became increasingly widespread. In a high-profile resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine «On the results of checking a letter from Kolomyia, Ivano-Frankivsk region» dated September 25, 1979, it was noted: «Numerous letters and complaints regarding gross violations in the distribution of housing and individual housing construction were received by the regional executive committee from Kolomyia. However, due to a formal-bureaucratic approach, such cases did not receive proper assessment and response...». Administrative bodies

¹ Малярчук О. Соціально-економічні процеси в західному регіоні Української РСР (1964–1991): монографія. Вид. 2-ге, переробл. і допов. Івано-Франківськ: Симфонія форте, 2023. С. 328.

² ДАІФО. Ф. Р–295. Оп. 5. Спр. 4436. Арк. 94.

of the city and district of Kolomyia uncovered facts of abuse and bribery involving 22 officials, against whom criminal cases were initiated¹.

In the 1970s, individual private construction became widespread among the party-Soviet nomenclature, employees of trade and economic structures, and law enforcement agencies. The most prestigious were plots of land around regional and district centers and resort areas. Departments for Construction and Architecture of regional executive committees analyzed letters and applications from workers regarding individual construction. The main reasons for complaints were: constant violations by responsible officials of the general development plans of settlements, improper procedures for individual construction, cases of unauthorized construction, etc.

A pressing issue remained the provision of needs in children's preschool institutions. Regional executive committees developed and approved long-term plans for the construction of preschool institutions. Even with successful implementation of these tasks, only about a quarter of children in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR would have access to preschool education, whereas across the republic this figure already reached 41% by 1977. The expansion of the preschool network in rural areas proceeded at an extremely slow pace.

By the early 1980s, a single region in the western part of the Ukrainian SSR had 250–400 dormitories, housing between 40,000 and 60,000 people. Most dormitories in regional centers were overcrowded. As a rule, there was no hot water, no laundry rooms, one kitchen for 15–20 families, and repairs were carried out belatedly. Dormitories for single individuals were becoming increasingly common². Archival materials contain a large amount of information on this issue. For example, in implementation of Resolution No. 58 (with the knowledge of the regional Council of Trade Unions), the regional construction and industrial materials workers' union, together with the «Ivano-Frankivskprombud» combine, developed and communicated concrete measures to improve living conditions for dormitory residents and organize public catering for construction workers. According to prepared

¹ ДАІФО. Ф. П–1. Оп. 1. Спр. 4677. Арк. 11.

² ДАІФО. Ф. П–1. Оп. 1. Спр. 4617. Арк. 17.

schedules, individual responsible employees of the regional Council of Trade Unions, managers of the combine, construction trusts, and administrations visited worker dormitories, held discussions on topics of interest to residents, provided necessary consultations, and attended resident meetings¹.

The most pressing issue for citizens, in the resolution of which the leadership involved the trade union, was the distribution of housing among employees in accordance with the established queue, as well as the organization of leisure and recreation and sanatorium-resort treatment. Although it was officially considered that the trade union committee supervised the distribution of housing, its opinion can hardly be regarded as decisive. The chair of the trade union could show some independence perhaps only in the distribution of vouchers to holiday homes and for sanatorium-resort treatment. However, even in these matters the trade union could not ignore the wishes of the party committee secretary or the «authorities». Deprived of the real right to independence in resolving important issues of the collective, the trade union was perceived as a body authorized by the party that created only the appearance of protecting the rights of ordinary citizens.

In the second half of the last century, the rural household infrastructure improved, mainly in urban-type settlements and suburban communities. Provision of household services was carried out by specialized enterprises – household combines – which for years did not change the structure of their activities. By the mid-1970s, almost all collective farms (kolkhozes) and state farms (sovkhozes) in the region had organized household service centers and comprehensive reception points². For general public use, the following services were provided: custom tailoring of clothing, furniture manufacturing, dry cleaning and dyeing of garments, and the repair of footwear, clothing items, household appliances, vehicles, and others. Regional departments of consumer services reported on the commissioning of bathhouses and shower facilities, the volume of laundry services, the services of photo studios, apartment repairs, as well as the work of hairdressing salons, rental points, and other services.

¹ ДАИФО. Ф. П–1. Оп. 1. Спр. 4118. Арк. 164.

² ДАИФО. Ф. П–1. Оп. 1. Спр. 4119. Арк. 177.

An element of the household complex – radio broadcasting and telephone service in villages – developed extremely slowly. The issue of complete electrification of villages and suburban houses remained urgent. Archival materials indicate varying numbers across the region's oblasts. In letters to the Minister of Energy and Electrification of the Ukrainian SSR, A. Makukhin, the secretaries of the western regional committees of the Communist Party of Ukraine reported that 3,000–5,000 houses in the oblasts were still not electrified. This caused numerous complaints from village residents, who required the construction of kilometers of low-voltage power lines.

The next problem in municipal infrastructure development for villages was gasification. In the western regions, due to the availability of local natural gas, villages were being gasified at relatively high rates compared to other regions of the republic. For example, in the Carpathian regions, the share of gasified villages in the mid-1990s was 30–40%, whereas 3% of gasified villages in the Odesa and Kherson regions was considered a high figure. Gasification of cities and villages was an important factor in improving the material well-being of the population. During just one seven-year period, the total savings for the population of the Ukrainian SSR from the use of gas for household needs amounted to 577 million rubles. In addition, the use of natural gas for communal and household purposes freed millions of workers from unproductive labor and significantly improved sanitary and hygienic conditions¹.

Automobile transport took an increasingly important place in daily life. The bus became the main type of urban and rural transport. Connections between remote mountain and forest villages, as well as those located at significant distances from district centers, were not well established. From the early 1970s, suburban lines began to be serviced by Hungarian diesel trains, popularly called the «Chervona Ruta». Major railway hubs developed in regional centers, through which international express

¹ Розквіт економіки західних областей УРСР (1939–1964 рр.) / [відп. ред. М. І. Петровський; І. Ф. Гриновець, І. О. Луцик, В. І. Михайлов та ін.]. Львів: Вид-во Львівського ун-ту, 1964. С. 124.

trains ran. Regional centers received direct connections to various capitals of the Soviet Union.

According to official statistics, in 1971–1980, state expenditures on improving the material well-being of people nearly doubled in absolute terms. However, analyzing the structure of state investments by economic sectors reveals a different trend: while absolute capital investments in social programs increased, their share in total expenditures decreased. During 1966–1970, capital investments in the development of the «B» group sectors accounted for 5.3% of all investments, but in the following five-year period, they fell to 4.8%. In housing construction, this decreased from 17.2% to 15.3%, and in the construction of trade, communal, and other socio-cultural enterprises – from 15% to 14.8%¹.

In the field of consumer trade, a number of measures were implemented that ensured the fulfillment of trade development plans. The first autumn Carpathian fair in the Ivano-Frankivsk region took place on October 9, 1966, on the day celebrating agricultural workers. The fair included trade enterprises from 12 districts and the city of Ivano-Frankivsk, 12 district consumer cooperatives, 8 worker supply departments, 2 trade and industrial-trade organizations, a trust of canteens and restaurants, food trade, the companies «Furniture» and «Shoes», forestry trade, cooperative trade, road restaurants, book trade, pharmacy administration, 156 collective farms, 2 state farms, and individual farmers. Over 145,000 people visited the fair².

Soviet gigantomania was vividly reflected in the architecture of stores and «trading space». The network of public catering enterprises expanded (exceeding the target by 3,702 seats). By the mid-1970s, the planned targets for opening shops, semi-finished and culinary product workshops, as well as the reconstruction and construction of enterprises producing soft drinks and sausage products, were exceeded. Characterizing trade development, both production and sales of consumer goods increased. At the same time, there was a tendency to change the subordination of enterprises within districts, especially those located around regional

¹ Саржан А. О. Зміни в соціально-економічній сфері Донбасу. Друга половина 40-х – кінець 80-х рр. XX ст. Донецьк: ООО «Лебедь», 2004. С. 233.

² Радянське Прикарпаття 1959–1975. Документи і матеріали: [в 2 т.] / Відп. ред. М. Хвостін. Ужгород: Карпати, 1983. Т. 2. С. 93.

centers. Regional authorities sought to gain more benefit from factories and plants for the development of the city rather than surrounding villages. Enterprises directly organized the sale of packaged semi-finished products, expanded factory canteens, and set up buffets.

A significant portion of consumer goods was of low quality and did not have proper demand. A typical situation in a Soviet store was that goods supposedly existed, yet there was nothing to buy. Scarce goods, especially those of imported origin, had to be purchased «from under the counter». The authorities attempted to study the population's needs for various categories of goods; various interdepartmental, local, and interregional commissions were created to analyze demand. Large industrial associations began organizing exhibition-sales of high-demand goods, meetings between representatives of industry and consumers, wholesale fairs for the sale of goods, and similar events. The production plan for the following year was formed taking into account the results of buying and selling, as well as contracts concluded between wholesale trade bases and retail trade enterprises on the one hand, and industrial enterprises, associations, and firms on the other.

In general, the state implemented numerous measures that contributed to raising living standards and improving the everyday life of citizens. Between 1965 and 1985, the average monthly salary of workers and employees in the republic more than doubled. The functioning of public consumption funds contributed to an increase in various payments to the population. A significant portion of these funds was allocated to free education, the development of healthcare, and cultural and consumer services. Since 1970, the payments and benefits received by the population of the republic from public consumption funds doubled. In 1985, the average monthly salary amounted to 174 rubles, and including payments and benefits from public consumption funds it reached nearly 250 rubles¹.

It is necessary to take into account that hidden inflationary mechanisms were operating at the same time, while prices on the consumer market were constantly rising. The growth of wages was

¹ Саржан А. О. Зміни в соціально-економічній сфері Донбасу. Друга половина 40-х – кінець 80-х рр. XX ст. Донецьк: ООО «Лебедь», 2004. С. 232.

not supported by an increase in the supply of goods and services. A significant portion of consumer goods was of low quality, and the chronic shortage was becoming increasingly widespread. The illusion of citizens' material well-being was created by money, part of which accumulated in savings banks. In an average village with a population of 1,500–2,000 people, about 600–800 residents were depositors in the savings bank, and their total deposits amounted to more than 1 million rubles¹.

During 1965–1985, savings of the population in the Ukrainian SSR increased from 6.4 to 63.7 billion rubles. However, in 1965 the annual retail turnover was almost three times higher than the total deposits of the population in savings banks, whereas two decades later unused savings exceeded the annual retail turnover by 13%. This led to widespread abuses in the trade system, speculation, and the development of the «black market» and the «shadow economy». Such everyday practices as purchasing goods «through acquaintances» or «through connections» (known as *po blatu*), that is, by using personal or family ties, became particularly widespread².

In the 1980s, the state allocated 10–15 million rubles from the budget for the improvement of cities and urban-type settlements and for major repairs of the housing stock in the western regions. In 1988, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast used 14 million rubles, which was 20% more than the previous year. Financial inspections of the use of these funds revealed «significant deficiencies and violations». In the cities and villages of the region, only 49% of roads were paved, and only 10.7% had stormwater drainage systems. Street lighting was in unsatisfactory condition in the cities of Yaremche and Horodenka, and in the settlements of Dyliatyn, Korshev, Kovalivtsi, Vyhoda, and others. Most of the urban housing stock belonged to enterprises of various ministries and departments. Such apartments were often equipped with communal amenities

¹ Малярчук О. Соціально-економічні процеси в західному регіоні Української РСР (1964–1991): монографія. Вид. 2-ге, переробл. і допов. Івано-Франківськ: Симфонія форте, 2023. С. 336.

² Саржан А. О. Зміни в соціально-економічній сфері Донбасу. Друга половина 40-х – кінець 80-х рр. XX ст. Донецьк: ООО «Лебедь», 2004. С. 234.

significantly worse than those in premises managed by the local Soviets¹.

Thus, the most favorable period for the development of the social sphere during the studied timeframe was the second half of the 1960s to the 1970s. In rural areas, although still insufficient, residential buildings were constructed for young specialists, as well as schools, school boarding facilities, preschool institutions, feldsher-obstetric stations, clubs, libraries, consumer service facilities, bathhouses, shops, public catering pavilions, administrative buildings for village councils, post offices, and bus stations; gas and telephone services were also extended. In cities, the housing sector expanded, prompting the construction of new streets, squares, roads, sidewalks, bridges, and the organization of public spaces.

5. Attempt to Outline Prospects

The social policy of the totalitarian regime in the Ukrainian SSR was based on Marxist-Leninist ideological doctrine and strict adherence to all indicators of the unified state plan. The process of economic development in the western region of Ukraine, exemplified by Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, showed certain specific features, primarily determined by the deformed structure of production. First, the party-Soviet authorities concentrated their main attention on the development of heavy industry, while agricultural production and the social sphere were considered secondary. Second, the development of social infrastructure depended on the conditions of the city or rural area, which in turn was classified as either «promising» or «non-promising».

The state proclaimed that the socialist economy worked for the individual, for the satisfaction of people's vital needs and interests, and was subordinated to them. The particularities of implementing social policy during these years consisted in the fact that the state simultaneously addressed various tasks, namely: ensuring minimum state social guarantees, regulating wages and monetary incomes, maintaining employment, providing state support for the most socially vulnerable groups, and ensuring housing for citizens, among others. The main indicator of the effectiveness of a state's

¹ ДАІФО. Ф. Р-295. Оп. 5. Спр. 5910. Арк. 231.

social policy is an adequate standard of living for the population. The standard of living of the majority of citizens, especially those working in agriculture, was characterized by low wages. The problem of developing economic and legal measures to strengthen motivation to work and to create conditions for halting the decline in real incomes of the population remained relevant, as did the need to normalize the relationship between minimum wages, pensions, scholarships, and social benefits under conditions of rising consumer prices.

In the 1960s–1980s, the development of the social and social-service infrastructure in rural areas was carried out on the basis of two main sources of financing: the state budget and allocations from collective farms. At the same time, an analysis of archival and statistical data shows that state capital investments did not cover the needs of the countryside, and the main burden of constructing facilities was shifted onto the collective farms.

At the same time, the social sphere of the Western Ukrainian countryside was undergoing fundamental changes and improvements. However, it developed at an insufficient pace, which made it impossible to properly resolve problems such as universal radio coverage, gas and water supply, and even the electrification of remote mountainous settlements. Not all villages had kindergartens, consumer service centers, hairdressing salons, and similar facilities. The lag in the development of the social and everyday services infrastructure negatively affected the attractiveness of rural areas for young people and specialists. Even the existing system of state job placement could not keep them in the countryside.

During the years of Ukraine's independence, the transformation of the socio-economic sphere in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, as well as in the country as a whole, has been extremely slow and painful. The crisis affected all sectors of socio-political, socio-economic, educational, and cultural life. Due to the Russo-Ukrainian war that began in 2014 and especially after the full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022, the path toward an open democratic society, a socially oriented economy, and the creation of conditions capable of ensuring a dignified life and the free development of every citizen has been significantly slowed.

Awareness of the positive and negative trends in the socio-economic life of the western region of Ukraine during the studied period makes it possible to formulate a program of social policy and several practical recommendations:

- the main focus should be placed on the legal framework of reforms. The provisions of the Constitution of Ukraine and Presidential Decree of Ukraine No. 543/2019 «On the Development of the Region of the Ukrainian Carpathians», aimed at stimulating socio-economic development, increasing investment attractiveness, and developing the recreational, tourism, and ethno-cultural potential of the Ukrainian Carpathians, apply to Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Zakarpattia, and Chernivtsi regions.

- the successful implementation of reforms is possible within an appropriate educational and information network, provided that qualified specialists and managers are involved.

- reforms should be carried out consistently, taking into account the experience of neighboring states.

- an important component of social policy is the management of the labor market and the implementation of an active employment policy.

The optimal resolution of socio-economic problems depends on state authorities, research institutions, and private initiative. A market system presupposes «producing what sells». The structural restructuring of industry includes: the closure of economically inefficient and environmentally harmful enterprises that cannot be repurposed to produce competitive products or transformed into environmentally safe ones; the division of large enterprises and their further reorientation toward the production of profitable goods that are in demand; the establishment of private manufacturing enterprises and the expansion of the service sector related to green tourism.

Today, as we seek to comprehend the past and find guidance for the future, it is necessary to study comprehensively the problems of the Ukrainian mentality that contributed to spiritual revival and economic development. The time has come to objectively reconstruct the history of Ukraine at its various stages, free from ideological distortions and censorship. While carrying out «socialist transformations in the countryside», the regime used all means to prevent political self-expression. The absence of peasant

political organizations complicated the search for common ground and the development of a unified approach to policy in rural areas. The transformation of the economy from one type to another has the greatest impact on the social sphere. Along with the restoration of national forms of worldview, there is also the penetration of new systems of values characteristic of Western civilization. Economic growth and competitiveness are associated with the country's economic development; therefore, the issue of education emerges as a matter of national importance.

CONCLUSIONS

The rapid pace of industrial development over a relatively short historical period fundamentally changed the nature of the economy of the western regions of Ukraine. From predominantly agrarian areas, they were transformed into industrial ones. New branches of industry emerged, and the sectoral structure of the economy changed significantly. Whereas previously the population was mainly engaged in household farming, during the period under study the majority worked in industry and construction. In the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR, the growth rates of industrial production were higher than in other regions. This made it possible, especially in the Carpathian zone, to involve a considerable amount of previously unemployed labor in «socially organized labor». Villages that had not been collectivized by the early 1970s had a significant surplus of labor.

In the second half of the twentieth century, labor-day work units in collective farms were abolished and replaced with a system of guaranteed wages. Collective farmers began receiving pensions and paid leave, meaning their social status was equated with that of other categories of citizens in Soviet society. In rural areas, although still insufficient in number, residential houses were built for young specialists, along with schools, school boarding facilities, preschool institutions, feldsher-obstetric stations, clubs, libraries, consumer service facilities, bathhouses, shops, public catering pavilions, administrative buildings for village councils, post offices, and bus stations; gasification and telephone services were also implemented.

The material and everyday living conditions of the majority of the population were determined by wages, which, along with

household plots, became the main source of family income. At the same time, the tariff rates for workers, engineering and technical staff, and employees differed significantly from the meager salaries of collective farmers. The minimal incomes of the rural population engaged in collective and state farm production resulted in low purchasing power. Gradual increases in wages for collective farmers noticeably improved people's well-being.

During the period under study, the essence of social policy in the USSR did not change. It was based on distributive relations and centralized administrative management. The growth of the country's economic potential allowed for increased attention to social issues. Housing construction was carried out at the fastest pace, particularly in rural areas. Significant changes took place in the development of villages. New technologies and materials began to be widely applied. Rural dwellings became much larger, more spacious, and met new standards. The boom in construction helped to solve, albeit not completely, one of the serious problems: many peasants began living in their own homes, which contributed to improving the quality of rural life.

During this period, the bureaucratic term «non-promising village» emerged, which negatively affected the development of rural areas. In such villages, social and household construction was «frozen», repairs were not carried out on time, and various facilities were neglected or even closed. This policy caused irreparable harm. Many schools, clubs, libraries, and kindergartens were opened in adapted premises or built according to outdated designs. In some remote settlements, the problem was even more acute: these institutions either did not exist at all or were not operational. The network of healthcare facilities and the effectiveness of medical services were significantly below urban standards. Overall, rural workers lacked adequate living conditions and leisure opportunities, which prevented them from fully meeting their cultural and educational needs.

Despite the authorities' constant declarations about the priority of the social sphere, state services in consumer affairs, transport, trade, and housing and communal services could provide only a minimum of benefits for citizens. The living conditions of the population in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR did not correspond to their contribution to the formation of the country's

industrial capacity and military-industrial complex. Improvements in the living conditions of the elderly were supported by pension legislation. Minimum pension amounts were increased for old age and in cases of loss of a breadwinner; pensions were granted to women who had five or more children even if they did not have a full work record, as well as to mothers of children with disabilities. For continuous service, workers and employees who had worked at the same enterprise for more than 25 years received an increase in pension supplements from 10% to 20%. While these measures represented positive changes, it should be noted that, overall, all these actions of the Soviet authorities did not provide an adequate standard of living for the majority of people, especially those living in rural areas.

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to characterize the main stages, directions, and current state of research on social policy using the example of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast from the second half of the 1940s to the first quarter of the 21st century. In the second half of the twentieth century, the western region of Ukraine developed significant industrial, agricultural, and social potential, which was intensively utilized within the framework of the all-Union and republican economic system. However, this was a deformed, inefficient, and stagnant socio-economic structure subordinated to the military-industrial complex of the USSR.

The principles of social justice in the state were upheld by the Constitution, which guaranteed equal conditions for the development of each individual and opportunities to apply one's abilities for both personal and societal benefit. The state assigned numerous socio-economic responsibilities not only to itself but also to various social institutions, creating corresponding services that collectively formed the system of social protection for citizens. Pensions, other types of social payments, and assistance – which served as the main source of livelihood – ensured a minimum subsistence level. However, the state's social policy was implemented on a residual basis, which became a factor of destabilization in forming a comprehensive and integrated approach. Under the dominance of command-administrative principles in the economy, the resolution of social and everyday

issues was considered secondary. Accordingly, access to social benefits and services varied sharply between urban and rural residents, as well as between workers in large enterprises and those in underdeveloped collective farms.

The development of the social sphere and the standard of living of the population displayed certain specific features: primary attention was given to the growth of heavy, chemical, and oil-and-gas industries, as well as agriculture. The social sphere lagged behind in its development. During these years, some progress was made in addressing housing issues, and in the development of education, healthcare, culture, sports, and so on. However, significant social contradictions were embedded in the system. Property stratification was emerging in society, and social tensions were increasing, even though Soviet social policy was formally based on principles of standardization and meeting the minimal needs of the «ordinary» person.

In the face of new geopolitical challenges related to the Russo-Ukrainian war, it is necessary to focus on the accumulated experience of generations, which, with state support, can reach a new qualitative level and stimulate various sectors of the economy and social infrastructure.

АНОТАЦІЯ

У роботі здійснено спробу здійснити характеристику основних етапів, напрямків і сучасний стан розробки проблеми соціальної політики на прикладі Івано-Франківської області в другій половині 40-х ХХ ст. – першій чверті ХХІ ст. У другій половині ХХ ст. у західному регіоні України було сформовано потужний промисловий, аграрний та соціальний потенціал, який інтенсивно використовувався в межах загальносоюзного і республіканського господарського комплексу. Проте це була деформована, неефективна, нединамічна соціально-економічна структура підпорядкована військово-промислому комплексу СРСР.

Принципи соціальної справедливості в державі захищала Конституція, яка гарантувала рівні умови для розвитку кожної особистості, можливості застосування своїх здібностей заради власної та суспільної користі. Держава покладала численні соціально-економічні обов'язки не тільки на себе, а й різнома-

нітні суспільні інституції – створювали відповідні служби, які загалом формували систему соціального захисту громадян. Пенсії, інші види соціальних виплат та допомоги, що були основним джерелом існування, забезпечували прожитковий мінімум. Проте соціальну політику держави здійснювали за залишковим принципом, що стало фактором дестабілізації у формуванні цілісного, комплексного підходу. За умов панування командно-адміністративних засад в економіці у країні домінував принцип другорядності щодо розв’язання соціально-побутових проблем. Відповідно, він різко відрізнявся і для жителів міста чи села, і працівників великих підприємств чи відсталих колгоспів.

Становлення соціальної сфери і життєвого рівня населення виявляли певну специфіку – головну увагу надавали розвитку важкої, хімічної, нафтогазової промисловості та сільського господарства. Соціальна сфера відставала у своєму розвитку. У вказані роки відбулися певні зрушення в розв’язанні житлової проблеми, розвитку освіти, охорони здоров’я, культури, спорту тощо. Однак, відповідно закладено великі суспільні протиріччя. У суспільстві назріло майнове розшарування, посилювалась напруженість, хоча радянська соціальна політика базувалася на основі принципів уніфікації і мінімальних потреб «простої» людини.

У нових геополітичних викликах, пов’язаних з російсько-українською війною, необхідно робити акцент на наявний напрацьований досвід поколінь, який здатний при державній підтримці вийти на новий якісний рівень та активізувати різні галузі економіки та соціальної інфраструктури.

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RUSSIAN «SPECIAL MILITARY OPERATION» (SMO) IN UKRAINE AS A GENOCIDAL WAR

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INTRODUCTION

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022, was not disguised under the cover of so-called «little green men», as had been the case in 2014, and was officially termed a «special military operation» (SMO) of the Russian Federation in Ukraine. The main declared objectives of the SMO were the «denazification» and «demilitarization» of Ukraine, as well as the transformation of Ukraine into a neutral state in international politics. Putin's real objective – the destruction of Ukraine and Ukrainians by the Kremlin – was not declared. Nor was the principal task of the SMO announced: the absorption of Ukrainian territory with the aim of its subsequent incorporation into a restored Soviet Union.

1. Theoretical foundations of the study

I borrowed the concept of «genocidal wars» from the American scholar Norman Naimark, having encountered it in his book *Stalin's Genocides*, published in Ukrainian translation in 2011. The professor of Princeton University also employs the term «genocidal policy»: both when he emphasizes Stalin's key role in the «genocidal policy of the 1930s» and when he writes of Stalin's «Ukrainophobic attitude toward the politics, history, and culture of the Ukrainian SSR and its people, especially the Ukrainian peasantry»¹.

The genocidal war waged by Stalin in the Ukrainian SSR was a policy aimed at the extermination of the Ukrainian peasantry, which constituted the numerical majority and the core of the Ukrainian ethnic community. The English scholar Robert Conquest, author of *The Harvest of Sorrow*, was not only the first Western researcher to conclude that Stalin was aware of the deaths by starvation of millions of Ukrainian peasants, but also convincingly demonstrated that the General Secretary did nothing to save

¹ Норман Н. Наймарк. *Геноциди Сталіна* / Пер. з англ. В. Старка. Київ: Видавничий дім «Києво-Могилянська академія», 2011. С. 6.

them. Consequently, as Norman Naimark argues, the terror by famine employed by Stalin «was indeed intended to destroy the Ukrainians»¹. Moreover, the American professor continues, «now that new documents from Ukrainian and Russian archives have become available, a substantial body of evidence has been assembled clearly demonstrating that Stalin and his associates were aware of the terror by famine. Stalin deliberately allowed the famine to exterminate an extraordinarily large number of Ukrainian peasants and used it as a weapon of retribution for crimes allegedly committed by these innocent people. In doing so, he committed genocide»².

The term «genocide» (from the ancient Greek γένος – race, tribe, and the Latin *caedo* – I kill) was introduced by the Polish lawyer Raphael Lemkin in his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation – Analysis of Government – Proposals for Redress*, published in Washington in November 1944³.

In this study R. Lemkin included a definition of the term «genocide», which he had proposed, as a deliberate act aimed at the destruction of an entire nation or ethnic group. He also suggested that «genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when carried out through the mass killing of all members of that nation. Rather, it signifies a coordinated plan of various actions aimed at destroying the essential foundations of the life of national groups in order to bring about their annihilation. The objective of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions, culture, language, national sentiments, religion, and economic existence of national groups, as well as the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of individuals belonging to such groups»⁴.

It must be acknowledged that the term «genocide» did not immediately gain wide acceptance and is not identical to the concept of «crimes against humanity». For some time, jurists and politicians proceeded from the assumption that genocide was merely one of

¹ Норман Н. Наймарк. *Геноциди Сталіна*. С. 8.

² Там само.

³ Raphaël Lemkin. *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation – Analysis of Government – Proposals for Redress*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944. P. 9-10.

⁴ Там само.

the possible forms of crimes against humanity. For example, this view was expressed in 1947 in a ruling by the United States Military Tribunal operating in the territory of Western Germany in the case against Nazi judges. One should also note, as important for understanding the essence of the concept of «genocide», the 1950 Law of the State of Israel «On the Punishment of Nazis and Nazi Collaborators». In that law, instead of the term «genocide», the formulation «crimes against the Jewish people», closely related to the notion of crimes against humanity, was used. Notably, the definition of this crime essentially reproduced the definition of genocide enshrined in the aforementioned 1948 Convention¹.

For this reason, the tragedy of the Armenian people in 1915–1916 continues to be classified by a number of states as a crime against humanity. Since history does not admit of the conditional mood, interested readers may now compare the definitions of these crimes as set forth in the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. We shall note the principal distinction between them: the crime of genocide is always committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group as such. Crimes against humanity, by contrast, are directed against a civilian population but do not necessarily aim at its total or partial destruction solely on the basis of the individuals' membership in that population.

It is known that the practice of physical destruction of the Ukrainian population was introduced by the Russian Bolsheviks, who in 1917–1920 waged wars against the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR). And if the government of V. Ulyanov (Lenin) waged wars to destroy the statehood of the Ukrainian people, then his successor J. Stalin destroyed the Ukrainian peasantry and intellectual elite as carriers of Ukrainian identity. The war against the sovereign Ukrainian state, launched by the Russian dictator V. Putin in 2014, aims to «finally resolve the Ukrainian question». All these Russian-Ukrainian wars, according to the authors, can be considered genocidal, the purpose of which is to destroy Ukrainian

¹ Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1948. [електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html>. Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 1994. Дата перегляду: 10.10.2022.

statehood and the Ukrainian political nation. The purpose of this study is to substantiate this conclusion with convincing arguments.

2. Historiography of the problem

The full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine in February 2022, accompanied by the terror of the Russian army against peaceful Ukrainians, has forced researchers and politicians to increasingly emphasize the genocidal nature of this largest war in Europe in the last 80 years. The genocidal nature of the Russian war in Ukraine is pointed out by historians¹, international lawyers², diplomats³ and journalists¹.

¹ Snyder T. «Genocide» and Genocide. How Putin's atrocity talk leads to atrocities [електронний ресурс]. Thinking about... Режим доступу: https://snyder.substack.com/p/genocide-and-genocide?utm_source=%2Fsearch%2FGenocide&utm_medium=reader2 Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 28.02.2022. Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022; Timothy Snyder. Russia's genocide handbook. The evidence of atrocity and of intent mounts. atrocities [електронний ресурс]. Thinking about... Режим доступу: <https://snyder.substack.com/p/russias-genocide-handbook?s=g> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 08.04.2022. Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022; Російська агресія проти України: Тімоті Снайдер виокремив шість головних ознак геноциду [електронний ресурс]. Детектор медіа. Режим доступу: <https://ms.detector.media/withoutsection/post/30496/2022-10-22-rosiyska-agresiya-proty-ukrainy-timoti-snyder-vyokremyv-shist-golovnykh-oznak-genotsydu/> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 22.10.2022. Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022; Дорошко Микола. Геноцидні війни Леніна – Сталіна – Путіна в Україні. Монографія. Київ: Ніка-Центр, 2024. 272 с.; Дорошко М., Алексєйченко О. Війни і «заморожені» конфлікти в політиці Російської Федерації на пострадянському просторі. Монографія. Київ: Ніка-Центр, 2025. 192 с.

² Азаров Д. С., Коваль Д. О., Нуріджянян І. С., & Венгер В. М. Війна Росії проти України як геноцид українського народу (переклад з англійської Дениса Азарова). *Наукові записки НаУКМА. Юридичні науки*. 2023. Т. 11. С. 12–39. [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: <https://nrplaw.ukma.edu.ua/article/view/289958>; Дата перегляду 27.01.2026; Огречук, А. Чому війна Росії проти України є геноцидом українського народу [електронний ресурс]. LCF. Режим доступу: <https://lcf.ua/thought-leadership/litigation/chomu-vijna-rosiyyi-proti-ukrayini-ye-genotsidom-ukrayinskogo-narodu/> Дата публікації: 04.07.2022 Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022.

³ Дмитро Кулеба: російські звірства в Україні є геноцидом. Авторська стаття міністра закордонних справ України для видання «The Hill» (США) [електронний ресурс]. Міністерство закордонних справ України. Режим доступу: <https://mfa.gov.ua/news/dmitro-kuleba-rosijski-zvirstva-v-ukrayini-ye-genocidom> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 01.08.2022. Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022

Thus, the American historian Timothy Snyder identified the main features of the genocidal policy of the Putin regime in Ukraine, including: denial of the existence of the state of Ukraine, dehumanization of the Ukrainian nation, denial of past genocides, support for the idea of the displacement of some nations by others, distortion of information for Russian society about the genocide being carried out by Russia in Ukraine².

Instead, in an article published in the professional publication of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy³, its authors seek to prove the presence of the deliberate intention of the Russian authorities to commit the crime of genocide in Ukraine from the beginning of the full-scale aggression on February 24, 2022. They, in particular, cite such obvious acts of genocide as murders; causing serious bodily or mental harm; forcible transfer of Ukrainian children to Russia and the deliberate creation of living conditions aimed at the physical destruction of the Ukrainian nation⁴.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in 2020–2024 Dmytro Kuleba, in an article for the American tabloid «The Hill» (USA), emphasized that «the Russian war against Ukraine is not only a war

¹ «Зупинити машину звірств». Вісім причин, чому війна РФ в Україні – справжній геноцид, а Заходу настав час відреагувати - Foreign Affairs [електронний ресурс]. NV. Режим доступу: <https://nv.ua/ukr/ukraine/events/chomu-viynaprosiji-v-ukrajini-ce-genocid-forreign-affairs-50259797.html> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 29.07.2022. Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022; Стельмах Марта. Геноцидна війна Росії проти України: питання кваліфікації (на основі праць Тімоті Снайдера). *Вісник Львівського університету. Серія Журналістика*. 2024. Випуск 54-55. С. 160–170.

² Російська агресія проти України: Тімоті Снайдер виокремив шість головних ознак геноциду [електронний ресурс]. Детектор медіа. Режим доступу: <https://ms.detector.media/withoutsection/post/30496/2022-10-22-rosiyska-agresiya-proty-ukrainy-timoti-snyder-vyokremyv-shist-golovnykh-oznak-genotsydu/> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 22.10.2022. Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022.

³ Азаров Д. С., Коваль Д. О., Нуріджанян Г. С., & Венгер В. М. Війна Росії проти України як геноцид українського народу (переклад з англійської Дениса Азарова). *Наукові записки НаУКМА. Юридичні науки*. 2023. Т. 11. С. 12–39. [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: <https://nrplaw.ukma.edu.ua/article/view/289958> Дата перегляду 27.01.2026

⁴ Там само.

of aggression, but also a genocidal campaign aimed at the destruction of Ukrainians as a national group»¹.

Historian Mykola Doroshko, using the definitions of «genocidal war» and «genocidal policy» introduced into scientific circulation by the British researcher N. Neumark, proves that such main tasks of the Russia's "special military operation" («SMO») in Ukraine as «denazification» and «demilitarization» are aimed at Putin's «final solution» of the «Ukrainian question», that is, the liquidation of the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian political nation².

The analysis of the above publications, as well as new crimes that are permanently committed by the Russian army in Ukraine, convince of the need to continue accumulating, processing and systematizing data that confirm the genocidal nature of the Russian war in Ukraine. The lessons of the genocidal wars of the Russian Federation in the post-Soviet space also seem important for the international community.

3. Russia's policy of «denazification» of Ukraine: the theory and practice of genocide

Political regimes that plan the commission of genocide against national groups usually conceal their criminal actions behind euphemistic formulations, such as the «Final Solution to the Jewish Question» used by the Nazi regime in Germany before and during the Second World War. The founders of the USSR, Lenin and Stalin, likewise masked their genocidal intentions toward Ukrainians (which is why the successor state to the USSR, the Russian Federation, has still not been held accountable for the crimes of the Soviet communist regime). Nothing similar is observed in the actions of Putin's Russia, which, from the very outset of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, has openly committed acts of genocide against Ukrainians. Moreover, Russia's military and polit-

¹ Дмитро Кулеба: російські звірства в Україні є геноцидом. Авторська стаття міністра закордонних справ України для видання «The Hill» (США) [електронний ресурс] Міністерство закордонних справ України. Режим доступу: <https://mfa.gov.ua/news/dmitro-kuleba-rosijski-zvirstva-v-ukrayini-ye-genocidom> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 01.08.2022. Дата перегляду: 27.10.2022.

² Дорошко Микола. Геноцидні війни Леніна – Сталіна – Путіна в Україні. Монографія. Київ: Ніка-Центр, 2024. 272 с.

ical leadership has publicly boasted of these crimes, justifying their necessity as a struggle against «Nazis» in Ukraine – that is, against those Ukrainians who defend the independence of their own state. This is explicitly articulated, for example, in the article by T. Sergeytsev entitled «What Russia Should Do with Ukraine», published on 3 April 2022 by the Russian state media outlet RIA Novosti – the same Russian political technologist who created the notorious «three types of Ukraine» map during the 2004 presidential campaign of Moscow’s loyal satrap V. Yanukovich.

Sergeytsev’s new publication is a continuation of his earlier article, «What Kind of Ukraine We Do Not Need», posted on the RIA Novosti platform a year before the Russian Federation’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, in which the author explains why, in his view, Ukraine is «Nazi»: «Ukraine has taken a mass Nazi oath through the seemingly respectable political vector of ‘aspiration to Europe’, within which, however, ‘Europeanness’ is unequivocally regarded not only by ideologues but also by a significant part of the population as a sign of racial superiority»¹. In order to prevent Ukrainians from attaining what is natural for them – to be part of the European community rather than «younger brothers» of Russians, as desired in the Kremlin - Sergeytsev argues that Ukrainians must be «denazified», that is, those who do not wish to return under Russian rule must be physically eliminated, while the rest are to be assimilated and transformed into «Russians».

Sergeytsev declares that the principal objective of the «denazification» of Ukraine is military victory over the «Kyiv regime», which entails the «liberation of territories from armed supporters of Nazification, the elimination of irreconcilable Nazis, and the capture of war criminals».

Following the occupation of Ukraine’s territory by Russia, Sergeytsev argues that «de-Europeanization» and «de-Ukrainization» must be carried out. The former, in his view, poses a threat to the very existence of Russia, since Ukrainian identity – which he acknowledges as European – stands in opposition to such Russian

¹ Денацифікація» по-кремлівськи: росіяни оприлюднили програму геноциду українців [електронний ресурс]. Укрінформ. Режим доступу: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-uarazom/3451395-denacifikacia-pokremlivskii-rosiani-opriludnili-programu-genocidu-ukrainciv.html> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 07.04.2022. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2022.

«values» as totalitarianism, the absence of human rights and freedoms, and the primacy of force and aggression against neighboring peoples. As it is impossible to erase European values from the mentality of the Ukrainian nation, Russia seeks de-Europeanization through de-Ukrainization – and de-Ukrainization through genocide¹.

A leitmotif of Sergeytsev's publication is the denial of the Ukrainian people's right to their own national identity and statehood, which in Putin's Russia is branded as «Nazism». Russian nationalists even deny Ukrainians the right to call the territory they have «denazified» Ukraine. «The name 'Ukraine'», Sergeytsev writes, «apparently cannot be retained as the title of any fully denazified state entity on the territory liberated from the Nazi regime»².

He means by which the «denazification» of Ukraine is to be carried out merit particular attention and full citation, since the program of genocide against Ukrainians, published under Sergeytsev's name, is being methodically implemented by Russian occupying forces in those Ukrainian territories they have managed to seize and temporarily hold.

Accordingly, the following measures are envisaged by Russia for the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories:

- the elimination of armed «Nazi» formations, as well as the military, informational, and educational infrastructure that supports their activities;
- the establishment of a Russian information space;
- the removal of educational materials and the prohibition of educational programs at all levels that contain «Nazi» ideological views;
- the conduct of mass investigative actions to establish personal responsibility for war crimes, crimes against humanity, the dissemination of «Nazi» ideology, and support for the «Nazi regime»;
- the adoption at the local level, under Russian supervision, of primary normative acts of denazification «from below», the prohi-

¹ Там само.

² Денацифікація» по-кремлівськи: росіяни оприлюднили програму геноциду українців [електронний ресурс]. Укрінформ. Режим доступу: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-uarazom/3451395-denacifikacia-pokremlivskirosiani-opriludnili-programu-genocidu-ukrainciv.html> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 07.04.2022. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2022.

bition of all types and forms of revival of «Nazi» ideology, and the incorporation of a set of anti-fascist and denazification norms into the constitutions of the new «people's republics»;

– the creation of permanent denazification bodies for a period of 25 years, while at the same time designating the territory as one of «potential integration into Russian civilization»¹.

The practical implementation of the above plan signifies the dismantling of the Ukrainian sovereign state. Its instruments are to include the liquidation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (the so-called «demilitarization» of Ukraine), and the creation of a unified political, economic, informational, and humanitarian-cultural space with the Russian Federation - a space in which there will be no room for Ukrainian identity or even quasi-statehood (as was the case during Soviet Ukraine's existence within the USSR).

Such is the ideological foundation of Russia's genocidal policy in Ukraine, openly professed and pursued by the current leadership of the Russian Federation. Evidence of this is found in the fact that, as early as 5 April 2022, former President of Russia and Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation D. Medvedev virtually reproduced Sergeytsev's ideas in a post on his Telegram channel: «...deep-rooted Ukrainianness, fueled by anti-Russian poison and all-encompassing lies about its identity, is one great fake. Such a phenomenon has never existed in history. And it does not exist now... Changing the bloody consciousness of some present-day Ukrainians, full of false myths, is the most important goal»².

It should also not be forgotten that Ukraine has been denied the right to exist by the Russian Federation on numerous occasions. In his programmatic article «On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians», published on 12 July 2021, V. Putin described Ukraine as a product of the «Soviet era» and its territory as having been formed on the lands of «historical Russia». According to Putin's mythologized narrative, the Ukrainian people are merely a

¹ Там само.

² Денацифікація» по-кремлівськи: росіяни оприлюднили програму геноциду українців [електронний ресурс]. Укрінформ. Режим доступу: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-uarazom/3451395-denacifikacia-pokremlivski-rosiani-opriludnili-programu-genocidu-ukrainciv.html> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 07.04.2022. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2022.

part of the Russian people. At present, he claims, they have been «Nazified» and therefore require «denazification», to be carried out by the Russian army¹. Thus, the objective of the Russian Federation is the genocide of Ukrainians, the destruction of Ukraine, and the erasure of its memory.

It is noteworthy that Sergeytsev's article was published in early April 2022, at the very moment when Ukrainian Self-Defense Forces had liberated the Kyiv region from Russian occupiers, and when the world, confronted with the tragedy of mutilated Bucha, Irpin, Borodyanka, and other settlements freed from Moscow's invaders, witnessed what Putin's policy of «denazification» meant in practice. Under the pretext of «denazifying» the Kyiv «fascist regime» and «Nazi formations», allegedly responsible for «genocide» in the territories of the so-called DPR/LPR, Russian forces carried out genocide against the Ukrainian people. Evidence of this lay in the planned and prepared repressive actions: Russian soldiers went door to door with pre-compiled lists of Ukrainian officials, volunteers, civic activists, and military personnel².

What does the definition of «denazification» mean, and why did V. Putin choose this term to justify the full-scale invasion of Ukraine? It is well known that the concept of «Nazism» (or «National Socialism») refers to the ideology and practice that prevailed in Hitler's Germany from 1933 to 1945. The means of implementing the Nazi political doctrine were military aggression and genocide. War served as Hitler's instrument for achieving world domination. The policy of genocide, which entailed the physical extermination of «inferior» peoples and groups (Jews, Roma, gays, and others), became a tool for implementing the theory of racial superiority of the Germanic peoples and the cult of the leader as the fundamental principle of political power. The enforcement of Nazi ideology relied on methods of dictatorship and repression.

¹ Путин написал статью об Украине: «Детище советской эпохи, в значительной степени создавалась за счет исторической России» [электронный ресурс]. Настоящее время. Режим доступа: <https://www.currenttime.tv/a/putin-ukraine/31354841.html> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 12.07.2021. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2022.

² Як у Бучі почули благу звістку після звірячої рашистської «денацифікації» [електронний ресурс]. Inform. Режим доступа: <https://cutt.ly/cH8aKLc> Назва з екрана. Дата публікації: 09.04.2022. Дата перегляду: 11.10.2022.

After Germany's defeat in the Second World War and as a result of the Nuremberg Tribunal (the trial of war criminals – leaders of the Third Reich), a process of denazification was carried out. This process involved identifying Nazi criminals, prosecuting and punishing them, dismantling the Nazi regime, and banning Nazi ideology.

For the international community, the terms «Nazi» and «genocide» have become embodiments of absolute evil. Thus, in contemporary Russian propaganda, «denazification» is intended to evoke memories of the atrocities of Hitler's Nazi regime and the victory over it in the Second World War – a victory which, as Putin has repeatedly asserted, was achieved thanks to «the Russians and their Red Army». By applying the labels «Nazism» and «genocide» to our state, the Kremlin seeks to convince the world that present-day Ukraine is analogous to Nazi Germany.

However, Putin's use of the term «denazification» bears no relation to the actual history of the crimes committed by German Nazis in the 1930s and mid – 1940s. It is therefore entirely inappropriate to invoke the Holocaust in the context of Russia's alleged «struggle against Nazism». As Ukrainian scholars V. Lozovyi and H. Yavorska note, Russia's war against Ukraine «has revealed the Russian understanding of who a 'Nazi' is: a Nazi is a Ukrainian who refuses to recognize himself as Russian. This becomes grounds for genocide and an attempt to conceal the Nazi essence of the contemporary Russian regime. However, within the framework of propaganda warfare, this method has proved effective».

Another target audience of the Russian Federation's propaganda efforts is Russian society itself. The promotion of the false narrative about the «revival of Nazism» in Ukraine is aimed at mobilizing support for Putin's authoritarian regime within Russia. In particular, these terms have been employed in a powerful disinformation campaign among Russian military personnel in order to demonize Ukraine. To justify the «justice» of the invasion and military actions, they were persuaded that the Russian army was carrying out a «mission to liberate Ukraine from Nazism» and to stop «genocide».

References to the «denazification» of Ukraine have also been directed at the population of Crimea and the so-called LPR/DPR, who were told that they had been «saved» from a Nazi regime. One

of the justifications for the unlawful occupation of Crimea was the claim that the peninsula's residents might otherwise have remained «under the rule of neo-Nazis». Similarly, the creation of the «LPR/DPR» was framed, *inter alia*, as a struggle against «Ukrainian fascism».

The Kremlin has explained that by «denazification» it means the liberation and cleansing of Ukraine from «pro-Nazi individuals». However, the criteria for identifying such individuals remain undefined. Russian propaganda asserts that «Nazis and fascists» hold power in Ukraine and are allegedly oppressing and exterminating the local Russian population, which therefore supposedly requires «liberation from the Kyiv regime». Given that Ukraine's leadership includes broad representation of national minorities, «denazification» clearly does not signify the removal of ethnic Ukrainians from power, but rather pursues broader objectives: the overthrow of the Ukrainian state authorities, the elimination of the country's social and cultural elites and civic activists, and the carrying out of repressions against them.

Another declared aim of Moscow's «denazification» campaign is the discrediting of the West and NATO, which are portrayed as supporting «extreme nationalists and neo-Nazis» in Ukraine to achieve their own goals. According to Kremlin ideologues, this narrative was intended to provoke criticism of the states and organizations assisting the «Kyiv regime».

Thus, by disseminating and emphasizing the theme of Ukrainian «neo-Nazism» and «fascism», as V. Lozovyi and H. Yavorska underscore, Kremlin propaganda focused on four target audiences and corresponding objectives for each:

- Russian society – to create the image of an enemy and generate a perceived need to fight it; to consolidate the population around the Putin regime;
- the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation – to dehumanize Ukrainians and justify the legitimacy of military actions and violence;
- the population of Crimea and the so-called LPR/DPR – to portray the actions of the Russian Federation and the separatists as protection against Nazism;

– the international community – to render supporters of Ukraine vulnerable to criticism for allegedly backing a «Nazi regime»¹.

The Russian propaganda apparatus, reinforced by the participation of differently motivated Western journalists with anti-fascist inclinations and certain Kremlin-aligned scholars who exaggerate the role of Ukrainian ultra-right groups, sought to convince the world of the legitimacy of «denazification» as the declared objective of the Russian Federation’s «special operation» in Ukraine.

In the West, as early as 2014, media publications and television programs began to appear warning against Ukrainian nationalism. A telling example was the report «Hitler’s Helpers: How Nationalists Continue to Divide Ukraine», broadcast on the German television channel *Das Erste*. The authors emphasized that a portrait of S. Bandera had been «placed near the main stage of the Maidan», and claimed that his struggle for an independent Ukraine was also a «struggle against Jews, Poles, and Russians», asserting that this was why he had entered into an alliance with Hitler².

The American television network NBC aired a report entitled «Ukraine’s Hypernationalist Military Summer Camp for Kids». Subsequently, Reuters published a commentary titled «Ukraine’s Neo-Nazi Problem», noting a supposed «revival of the far right» in Ukraine³. Isolated incidents were manipulatively presented as a broader trend, thereby creating the illusion of widespread Ukrainian ultranationalism.

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine launched by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022 failed to achieve its initial objective - the rapid seizure of Kyiv and the replacement of the Ukrainian government. The aggressor was forced to reformulate the goals of the invasion and, accordingly, adjust its propaganda. The term «denazification» was almost immediately restricted in its use for domestic audiences: data from closed polls commissioned by the Kremlin to assess public attitudes toward propaganda narratives

¹ «Денаціфікація» України в російській пропагандистській війні [електронний ресурс]. Національний інститут стратегічних досліджень. Режим доступу: <https://niss.gov.ua/news/statti/denatsyifikatsiya-ukrayiny-v-rosiyskiy-propahandystskiy-viyni> Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 28.05.2022. Дата перегляду: 28.10.2022.

² Там само.

³ Там само.

revealed that respondents were unable to explain what «denazification» meant and complained that the word was «difficult to pronounce». As a result, its usage in the media was significantly reduced¹. However, it was impossible to abandon the term entirely, since in his televised address on 24 February 2022 the President of the Russian Federation had already declared denazification to be one of the objectives of the «special military operation», also referring to the need to protect against alleged «genocide» in the territories of the «LPR/DPR».

Why does Russian society – or at least the 80 percent of sympathizers of dictator Putin – support not only Russia's invasion of Ukraine but also the «denazification» of Ukrainians? Above all, because the consciousness of the majority of the Russian population is easily manipulated. This is a particular mental feature attributed to Russian society – an unquestioning trust in state authority. Accordingly, paternalism toward the population has been a characteristic of Russian rule regardless of who stands at its head – a tsar, a general secretary, or a president.

Researchers of Soviet totalitarianism also draw attention to the persistence within Russian society of the cult of the ruler, who is perceived as being permitted to do whatever he deems necessary. Thus, despite the official condemnation of the «cult of Stalin» in 1956, its consequences have never been fully overcome in the present-day successor state of the USSR – the Russian Federation. On the contrary, the current Russian dictator, Putin, has long described Stalin as an «effective manager» who resorted to mass repression in order to assert the greatness of the Soviet Union.

However, as the well-known British historian Robert Conquest observed, «the cult of personality is by no means the principal feature of the Stalinist regime. It is little more than a stock phrase first used by Khrushchev. The most terrifying aspect of Stalinism is not the glorification of the dictator, but the terror and the falsifications that constituted the essence of his policy». Echoing this view, the Ukrainian scholar L. Yakubova notes that «the most dreadful ele-

¹ «Денацифікація» України в російській пропагандистській війні [електронний ресурс]. Національний інститут стратегічних досліджень. Режим доступу: <https://niss.gov.ua/news/statti/denatsyfikatsiya-ukrayiny-v-rosiyskiy-propahandystskiy-viyni> Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 28.05.2022. Дата перегляду: 28.10.2022.

ment of Stalinism lies in its destructive impact on the fundamental value foundations of social reproduction, in the mass dysplasia of consciousness manifested in the mimicry of ordinary citizens, as well as in the transformation of entire professional strata into predators serving Bolshevik terror – both physically and ideologically, in Chekist torture chambers, in the Soviet press, and in the Soviet school»¹. According to L. Yakubova, this became «the most ruinous consequence of unovercome Stalinism»².

Evidence that Stalinism has not been overcome in Russia is reflected in the results of a sociological survey conducted in May 2021 by the Levada Center. In this poll, Stalin ranked first among the most outstanding historical figures, with 39 percent of respondents naming him as such (the second most popular figure was the founder of Soviet Russia, Lenin, with 30 percent). This points to the persistence of the Soviet Bolshevik legacy in Russia – a totalitarian political regime whose aim was the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat on a global scale.

This largely explains why the majority of the Russian population supports the political course of the Putin regime aimed at restoring the USSR, in which Ukraine was regarded as the most valuable «pearl». That is why many Russians enthusiastically endorsed Putin's «special operation» with its proclaimed objectives of the «denazification» and «demilitarization» of Ukraine.

As for the civilized world, the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and the numerous crimes committed by Russian occupiers came as a genuine shock. Today, few in the West – apart from those «useful idiots» of Moscow allegedly financed by the Kremlin – attempt to justify Putin's genocidal practices in Ukraine. Indeed, it was the genocide perpetrated by Putin against Ukrainians that became the decisive factor in the formation of an anti-Putin coalition of more than forty countries, which united their efforts to supply Ukraine with weapons, military equipment, and ammunition in order to secure the victory of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the battlefield against the army of dictator Putin. The genocidal actions of the Russian occupiers in

¹ Лариса Якубова. Анатомія рашизму [електронний ресурс]. Український тиждень. Режим доступу: <https://tyzhden.ua/anatomiia-rashyzmu/> Дата публікації: 19.03.2022. Дата перегляду: 28.10.2022.

² Там само.

Ukraine have even compelled parts of the Western world to reconsider their attitude toward the very names «Russia» and «Russians». In defiance of established grammatical norms, these words have at times been written with lowercase letters as a symbolic statement that they do not belong to the community of civilized states and nations.

Yet the world is still far from fully freeing itself from deeply entrenched stereotypes such as the notion of Russia's «special place and role in global politics» or the «decisive role of the Russian soldier in liberating the world from Nazism», and similar narratives. The Putin propaganda machine continues to operate at full speed, disseminating groundless and absurd accusations that the «Kyiv regime» is allegedly guilty of «genocide» and «Nazism». These claims, together with the spread of various pseudo-historical myths, form an integral part of Russia's propaganda war against Ukraine, aimed at delegitimizing the Ukrainian state.

For example, by accusing Ukraine of «Nazism», Putin once again seeks to play upon the German sense of historical guilt – as evidenced by his telephone conversation with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on 13 May 2022. However, as the Chancellor noted, equating «Nazis in power in Kyiv» with Hitler's Nazi regime is an unfounded and «false» assertion¹. Thus, Kremlin propaganda manipulations are gradually losing their force when confronted with the horrific and visible evidence of criminal actions committed by Russian troops in Ukraine. Likewise, the fictitious «genocide in Donbas», invented by Kremlin political technologists, has collapsed in the face of the real genocide of Ukrainians carried out by Russian aggressors.

At the same time, references to «denazification» are already being used as a tool of intimidation. According to a recent statement by one of the deputies of the State Duma, Poland is allegedly encouraging Russians «to put it first in line for denazification after

¹ «Денацифікація» України в російській пропагандистській війні [електронний ресурс]. Національний інститут стратегічних досліджень. Режим доступу: <https://niss.gov.ua/news/statti/denatsyfikatsiya-ukrayiny-v-rosiyskiy-propahandystskiy-viyni> Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 28.05.2022. Дата перегляду: 28.10.2022.

Ukraine»¹. Thus, the «queue» for Russian «denazification» is said to be growing.

To overcome the negative impact of Russian propaganda's construction of a «Nazi image» of Ukraine, it is advisable to mobilize existing state and civil society resources in the sphere of countering disinformation and to make use of mechanisms for participation in international historical and media projects. The world must be widely and consistently informed about the real grounds, intentions, and circumstances of Russian aggression, as well as about the manipulative techniques employed by the Russian Federation – namely, the copying and imitation of elements of Nazi ideology with their false projection onto the conduct of the state that is the object of aggression.

Since Putin's «denazification» of Ukraine aims at the liquidation of the Ukrainian political nation, the Ukrainian response to this genocide must be a policy of deconstructing the Russian historical interpretations imposed upon Ukrainians.

For this reason, the preparation of a truthful history of the origins of the state of Rus', centered in Kyiv and based on original sources, and its dissemination at all levels of Ukrainian society, constitutes an extremely important Ukrainian weapon in the fierce struggle on the historical battlefield with Muscovy. Victory in the war over history will become the final nail in the coffin of the Russian Empire, for it will demonstrate that no European imperial tradition – based, in particular, on the myth of Muscovy's succession from the Kyivan state – ever truly existed. The Askoldian period of Ukrainian history stands as the most compelling evidence of the groundlessness of Moscow's claims to the political heritage of the state of Rus' centered in Kyiv².

In order to eradicate Russian pseudo-historical myths from Ukrainian national consciousness, the Ukrainian authorities must

¹ «Денаціфікація» України в російській пропагандистській війні [електронний ресурс]. Національний інститут стратегічних досліджень. Режим доступу: <https://niss.gov.ua/news/statti/denatsyifikatsiya-ukrayiny-v-rosiyskiy-propahandystskiy-viyni> Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 28.05.2022. Дата перегляду: 28.10.2022.

² Дорошко М.С. Війни пам'яті як інструмент російської агресії проти України. *International journal Law & Society*. 2022. № 6. С. 60-69; Doroshko M. Rosja kontra Ukraina: front historyczny. *Wschód Europy. Studia humanistyczno-społeczne*. 2022. Vol.8. № 2. S. 141-153.

develop a coherent state historical policy. Its priority tasks should include: the formulation of principles and a regulatory framework for state historical policy with a clear definition of its subjects, as well as mechanisms of coordination and oversight; strengthening the scientific and expert support of this policy and ensuring its systemic character; deconstructing the myth of «all-Russian» unity; overcoming Soviet-Russian historical mythology; constructing Ukrainocentric interpretations of the past; incorporating a truthful Ukrainian history and national memory into the contemporary European sociocultural space; and developing a European strategy for representing the historical past¹.

These tasks have become even more urgent following the proclamation on 24 February 2022 of the policy of Ukraine's «denazification». This signifies that Putin's Russia leaves Ukraine no chance not only to return to the European community of nations, but even to survive as a distinct nation and sovereign state. Therefore, the «battles» over history will be difficult for Ukraine, yet indispensable for achieving final victory over the Russian aggressor and, consequently, for realizing its European and Euro-Atlantic choice.

4. Why Russia's actions in Ukraine constitute genocide against the Ukrainian nation?

As early as the third day of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, on 26 February 2022, Ukraine filed an application with the International Court of Justice regarding the Russian Federation's violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The purpose of this application was not only to stop the war, but also to expose Putin's lie – namely, his claim that Russia's invasion of Ukraine was justified by an alleged «genocide» committed by official Kyiv against the population of Donbas, which Russia had occupied.

In fact, we are witnessing a huge number of crimes committed by the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine against the Ukrainian nation and its statehood. According to Oleksandra

¹ «Інтерпретації історії у політиці Російської Федерації як загроза національній безпеці України». Аналітична записка 13.05.2015. [Електронний ресурс]. Національний інститут стратегічних досліджень. Режим доступу: <https://niss.gov.ua/en/node/1659> Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 13.05.2015. Дата перегляду: 28.10.2022.

Matviychuk, a well-known Ukrainian human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine opened 67,000 criminal proceedings for crimes committed by «racists» in Ukraine in the first year of Russia's full-scale aggression alone. Meanwhile, the Verkhovna Rada Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, argues – with good reason – that Russia's actions in Ukraine constitute genocide against the Ukrainian nation. In support of this conclusion, the Ukrainian Ombudsman cites the following irrefutable facts:

- the killing of members of a particular group – as of 23 February 2023, Russia had killed 8,006 civilians (and this figure covers only those territories to which access is available);

- causing serious bodily harm – as a result of Russian attacks, 13,287 civilians have been injured, including 927 children;

- deliberately creating conditions calculated to bring about the partial or complete destruction of people – including massive missile strikes against energy infrastructure facilities that began on the eve of the heating season;

- preventing births, including crimes of sexual violence (the youngest recorded rape victim was four years old);

- the forcible transfer of children from one ethnic group to another (officially, more than 16,000 children);

- the imposition of Russian-language education and the «re-education» of children in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine;

- the forced passportization of the population in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine;

- the forced mobilization of the male population into the ranks of the Russian army – in occupied Crimea, this was first carried out in areas predominantly inhabited by Crimean Tatars¹.

As noted by the well-known American historian Timothy Snyder in his address to the United Nations Security Council on 14

¹ «Ознак геноциду немає»: Омбудсман запросив Міжнародну комісію ООН з розслідування порушень в Україні відвідати українські населені пункти, аби побачити очевидне [електронний ресурс]. Омбудсман України. Режим доступу: https://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/news_details/oznak-genocidu-nemaye-ombudsman-zaprosiv-mizhnarodnu-komisiyu-oon-z-rozsliduvannya-porushen-v-ukrayini-vidvidati-ukrayinski-naseleni-punkti-abi-pobachiti-ochevidne Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 05.09.2023. Дата перегляду: 07.09.2023.

March 2023, the Russian authorities, while pretending to be an innocent victim of so-called Ukrainian aggression and «Russophobia», are committing the crime of genocide on Ukrainian territory, cynically portraying these barbaric actions as concern for the «protection of Russians and Russian culture»¹. In fact, Snyder argues, «the Kremlin is training Russians to believe that genocide is normal. We see it in the Russian president's repeated statements that Ukraine does not exist. We see it in the fantasies of genocide in Russian state media... We see it when someone appears on Russian state television and says, «We will kill 1 million, we will kill 5 million, we can destroy you all», meaning all Ukrainians. And then the Kremlin accuses Ukrainians of so-called «Russophobia», thereby promoting the claim that the imperial state is the victim, even though the imperial state, Russia, is waging a brutal war. This is historically typical behavior. The imperial power dehumanizes the actual victim and claims to be the victim itself... Now Russia's war crimes in Ukraine can and will be assessed under Ukrainian law, because they are taking place on Ukrainian territory, and under international law. It is clear to the naked eye that an aggressive war, crimes against humanity and genocide are taking place»².

In reality, Snyder argues, the Kremlin is accustoming Russians to the idea that genocide is normal. We see this in the repeated statements by the President of Russia claiming that Ukraine does not exist. We see it in fantasies of genocide disseminated by Russian state media. We see it over the course of a year as state television broadcasts daily to millions or tens of millions of Russian citizens. We see it when Russian state television depicts Ukrainians as pigs. We see it when Russian state television portrays Ukrainians as parasites. We see it when Russian state television describes Ukrainians as worms. We see it when Russian state television presents Ukrainians as Satanists or vampires. We see it when Russian state television declares that Ukrainian children should be drowned. We see it when Russian state television

¹ «Русофобия» як аргумент РФ для геноциду: виступ Тімоті Снайдера на Радбезі ООН [електронний ресурс]. texty.org.ua Режим доступу: <https://texty.org.ua/fragments/109208/rusofobiya-yak-arhument-rf-dlya-henocydu-vystup-timoti-snajdera-na-radbezi-onn/> Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 16.03.2023. Дата перегляду: 16.04.2023.

² Там само.

proclaims that Ukrainian homes should be burned together with the people inside them. We see it when individuals appear on Russian state television and say: «They should not exist at all. We must shoot them». We see it when someone appears on Russian state television and says: «We will kill one million, we will kill five million, we can destroy you all», referring to all Ukrainians. And after all this, the Kremlin accuses Ukrainians of so-called «Russophobia», thereby advancing the claim that the imperial state is the victim – even though that imperial state, Russia, is waging a brutal war. This, Snyder emphasizes, is historically typical behavior. Imperial power dehumanizes the actual victim and simultaneously claims the status of victim for itself. When the victim (in this case, Ukraine) resists attack, killing, and colonization, the empire declares that wanting to be left alone is irrational – that it is a disease, a «phobia». This assertion that victims are irrational, that they are «phobic», that they suffer from a «phobia», is intended to distract from the real-world experience of the victims, which is one of aggression, war, and brutality. The term «Russophobia» is an imperial strategy designed to shift attention away from a real war of aggression and toward the alleged feelings of the aggressors, thereby undermining the existence and lived experience of those who have suffered the greatest harm. The imperialist says: «We are the only real people here. We are the true victims. And our hurt feelings matter more than other people's lives». Russia's war crimes in Ukraine, Snyder concluded, can and will be assessed under Ukrainian law, since they are committed on Ukrainian territory, and under international law as well. It is evident to the naked eye that what is taking place is a war of aggression, crimes against humanity, and genocide¹.

The use of the term «Russophobia» in this context – the claim that Ukrainians are mentally ill rather than enduring atrocities – constitutes colonial rhetoric. It forms part of a broader practice of inciting hatred. This is why the session was important: it allowed the international community to recognize Russia's frenzied rhetoric

¹ «Русофобія» як аргумент РФ для геноциду: виступ Тімоті Снайдера на Радбезі ООН [електронний ресурс]. texty.org.ua Режим доступу: <https://texty.org.ua/fragments/109208/rusofobiya-yak-arhument-rf-dlya-henocydu-vystup-timoti-snajdera-na-radbezi-onn/> Назва з екрану. Дата публікації: 16.03.2023. Дата перегляду: 16.04.2023.

about genocide. The notion that Ukrainians suffer from a «disease» called «Russophobia» is deployed as an argument for their destruction, alongside claims that they are parasites, Satanists, and so forth.

To assert that one is a victim while in fact being the aggressor is not a defense. On the contrary, it is part of the crime itself. The incitement of hatred directed against Ukrainians is not a component of protecting the Russian Federation or its citizens; it is an element of the crimes committed by Russian citizens on Ukrainian territory. In this sense, by convening this meeting, the Russian state found yet another way to confess to war crimes, Snyder observed.¹

Snyder's speech at the UN Security Council convinces us that the international community must definitely punish Russian war criminals who committed the crime of aggression against the sovereign Ukrainian state. All Russian initiators and perpetrators of the crime of genocide against the Ukrainian people must also be punished. Because, as the history of the crimes of Russian communism proves, unpunished evil always repeats itself.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, an analysis of the prerequisites for Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, called by the Kremlin a «special military operation», allows us to define the Russian invasion against the sovereign Ukrainian state not as a war for territory, but as a genocide planned by the Putin regime, the main instruments of which were the policy of destroying Ukrainian identity (Kremlin propagandists called it «denazification») and Ukraine's economic potential (Putinists formulated this task as «demilitarization»). The implementation of these tasks, as Moscow believes, will contribute to the restoration of the Soviet Union, since history shows that the Russian imperial project cannot be implemented without Ukraine. Only its defeat in the war with Ukraine can prevent the implementation of the geostrategic goal of imperial Russia.

¹ Там само.

ABSTRACT

The study analyzes the prerequisites for Russia's armed aggression in Ukraine, called by the Kremlin a «special military operation» (SMO). An important component of the publication is its theoretical part, which provides a definition of the terms «genocidal war» and «genocidal policy». This makes it possible to define the Russian invasion against the sovereign Ukrainian state not as a war for territory, but as a genocide planned by the Putin regime, the main instruments of which were the policy of destroying Ukrainian identity (Kremlin propagandists called it «denazification») and Ukraine's economic potential (Putinists formulated this task as «demilitarization»). The implementation of these tasks, as Moscow believes, will contribute not only to Russia's absorption of the state territory of Ukraine, but also to the «final solution to the Ukrainian question» in a new version of the Russian empire with the code name «USSR 2.0». This study is also extremely relevant in light of the international community's attempts to classify Russia's actions in Ukraine as genocide. This is facilitated by an in-depth historical and political analysis of the sequence of crimes that pose a threat not only to Ukraine but also to the international security system. The authors are convinced that the study of this issue contributes to the understanding of the root causes of modern war and the need for global condemnation and holding accountable the perpetrators of genocidal policies.

АНОТАЦІЯ

В дослідженні аналізуються передумови збройної агресії Росії в Україні, названій Кремлем «спеціальною військовою операцією» (СВО). Важливою складовою публікації є її теоретична частина, в якій подається визначення термінів «геноцидна війна» і «геноцидна політика». Це дає змогу визначити російську інвазію проти суверенної Української держави не як війну за територію, а як спланований путінським режимом геноцид, основними інструментами якого стали політика знищення української ідентичності (кремлівські пропагандисти назвали це «денацифікацією») і економічного потенціалу України (це завдання путіністи сформулювали як «демілітаризація»). Реалізація цих завдань, як вважають у Москві, сприятиме не лише поглиненню Росією державної території України, а

й «остаточному вирішенню українського питання» у новій версії російської імперії з умовною назвою «СССР 2.0». Також дане дослідження є надзвичайно актуальним у світлі спроб міжнародної спільноти кваліфікувати дії Росії в Україні як геноцид. Цьому сприяє поглиблений історико-політичний аналіз послідовності злочинів, які становлять загрозу не лише для України, а й для міжнародної системи безпеки. Автори переконані, що дослідження цього питання сприяє усвідомленню глибинних причин сучасної війни та необхідності глобального осуду і притягнення до відповідальності виконавців геноцидної політики.

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