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UKRAINIAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN 1917–1922: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN A NEW RUSSIAN TEXTBOOK

This article explores the representation of Ukrainian-Russian relations in 1917-1922 in a new Russian history textbook for secondary schools, authored by Vladimir Medinsky and Anatoly Torkunov. Through the example of significant historical events, the main approaches of the textbook authors to the “Ukrainian question” during the specified historical period are analyzed. They are characterized by the fact that the vast majority of bilateral relationship issues are not only presented from a Russian-centric perspective but are also subjected to manipulation and outright distortion of facts. While formally recognizing the right of Ukrainians to secede from Russia and to have their own state, the authors of the publication practically deny Ukraine’s subjectivity. In the textbook text, everything related to the national liberation struggle and the establishment of independence receives a negative assessment and is condemned.

Keywords: *history textbook, Ukrainian-Russian relations in 1917-1922, methodological approaches, Ukrainian People’s Republic, Bolshevik Russia.*

У статті проаналізовано висвітлення українсько-російських відносин у 1917-1922 рр. у новому російському підручнику з історії для старших класів за авторством В. Мединського та А. Торкунова. Дослідження зосереджено на тому, як «українське питання» конструюється в російському освітньому наративі для обґрунтування сучасних політичних стратегій РФ. Виявлено численні факти викривлення історичної дійсності, спрямовані на дискредитацію національно-визвольних змагань та заперечення суб’єктності України. Автори доводять, що підручник є не просто навчальним посібником, а інструментом реабілітації російського імперіалізму, спрямованим на ліквідацію історичної та політичної ідентичності Українського народу. Формуючи негативне сприйняття української незалежності у свідомості молодого покоління, російська держава створює ідеологічний фундамент для легітимізації своєї нинішньої експансіоністської політики.

Ключові слова: підручник історії, українсько-російські відносини 1917-1922 рр., методологічні підходи, Українська Народна Республіка, політика пам'яті, експансіоністська політика РФ.

Introduction and Background. The First World War radically changed the map of Europe and the world. Among other things, it brought the “Ukrainian question” to the forefront, which had seemed to have been removed from the historical agenda. The aspirations and concrete struggle of Ukrainians to create an independent state, in which the majority of ethnographic territories would be united, did not fit into the strategies and plans of the victors and other participants of the First World War at the time.

One of the central events that influenced not only Ukrainian-Russian relations but also world history at the end of the 1910s and the beginning of the 1920s was the 1917 revolution in the Russian Empire. The revolutionary events initially led to the overthrow of Tsarism (the February Revolution) and then to the rise to power of the Bolsheviks (the October Revolution). The positioning of the latter event has changed significantly over more than a hundred years — it was initially called the «October Revolution», then, during Stalin’s rewriting of history, it became the «Great October Socialist Revolution», and later, in Russian society, by analogy with the “Great French Revolution”, it was named the «Great Russian Revolution». The authors of the textbook acknowledge the existence of this term but, given its negative connotation (further destruction, emigration, famine, and the death of millions of people), propose using the shorter term “Russian Revolution” [16, p. 47]. However, they immediately forget about this because the term “Great Russian Revolution” is constantly used in the textbook, both in the text and in the titles of chapters and paragraphs [16, p. 5, 36-64].

Relevant Literature. Despite this, studying these events is a natural process not only in Ukrainian historiography [7; 22; 30; 31] but also in foreign one [5; 8; 18; 20; 25]. The contemporary Ukrainian historiographical process indicates a significant rethinking of events in Ukraine from 1917-1921, which were shaped during the post-revolutionary and Soviet periods. Today, a scientific concept of the Ukrainian Revolution has been formed and is developing. It is, of course, not without its shortcomings, but it exists in a variety of scientific schools and approaches. Russian historical science should not stand aside either, since most of Ukraine was part of one form or another of Russian statehood throughout the 20th century. Two stages of Russian historiography of this period can be distinguished: Soviet (1922-1991) [13; 24; 27] and Russian (from 1992 to the present) [4; 17]. It should be noted that approaches to this issue remain similar throughout almost the entire period but have certain peculiarities. In Soviet historiography, the “right of nations to self-determination” up to secession was proclaimed in the USSR Constitutions (1936 and 1977) as an achievement of “Soviet democracy”, while in recent decades, the very right of Ukraine to exist as a state is denied. For example, on 12 June 2024, former president and deputy head of the Russian Security Council Dmitry Medvedev published a map of the Russian Federation including the entire territory of Ukraine

[28]. Since Russian historical science is quite sensitive to the positions of state leaders and largely dependent on the state, we often see somewhat modified theses of Vladimir Putin or Dmitry Medvedev as imperatives of historical texts.

Given that the textbook was published recently, there have been only a few reviews of it. The chapters of this textbook devoted to Ukrainian-Russian relations in 1917-1922 have not been analyzed at all. One of the mentioned general reviews was the publication of the Ukrainian Center for Strategic Communications and Information Security "Textbook of Hate. What Medynsky can teach Russian schoolchildren". The authors of the publication emphasize on the unification of Russian history textbooks and the creation of a single, state-authorized textbook for high school students. The absence of knowledge pluralism and the creation of a single textbook "can be considered the final stage of the final rehabilitation of Stalinism and Russian imperialism, the curtailment of attempts (which took place in the 1990s and early 2000s) to reassess the past" [26]. It is difficult to disagree with this statement of the authors of this publication.

The article offered to readers is actually the first attempt to analyze the historical didactic narrative presented in the new textbook, authored by V. Medinsky and A. Torkunov.

Methodology. It's clear that all these narratives quickly appear in Russian school and university textbooks. In this article, we will examine how the problem of Ukrainian-Russian relations is presented in new school textbooks on the history of Russia and the world for lower mid [15; 16]. **The purpose of this paper** is to investigate how the modern Russian state introduces the new imperial ideology through the means of a single history textbook for secondary school by discrediting the national liberation movement of Ukrainians in 1917-1922 and denying their subjectivity. A characteristic feature of these textbooks is that one of their authors is Vladimir Medinsky — a former deputy, former Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation, assistant to the President of the Russian Federation, head of the Russian Military Historical Society, reasonably accused by scientists of plagiarism in writing his dissertation and other works [5], and ideologically close to Russian fascism.

The lack of a unified methodological approach and eclectic accumulation of facts is characteristic not only of the assessment of the revolutionary events of 1917 but also of the problem of Ukrainian-Russian relations.

For the reader, who is a school student, the appearance of the "Ukrainian question" in the textbook is absolutely unclear: sporadic information about Ukraine appears without any explanations and, as a rule, with a negative connotation. If it's an authority in Ukraine, then it's "self-proclaimed" or "so-called"; when it comes to Ukrainian ideas, they're "separatist"; if it's Ukraine's independence, then it's "not real"; if events in Russia are a revolution, then events in Ukraine are a "series of coups", and so on. The student cannot form a coherent picture and understand the reasons and logic of certain historical events and processes. Thus, the authors of the textbook form a negative attitude towards Ukrainians' attempts to create their own statehood. At the same time, the authors do not experience cognitive dissonance when they mention

that on 2 November 1917, the Bolshevik government “published the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, which proclaimed the equality of peoples and their **right to self-determination** (emphasized in the text of the textbook — author’s note) — that is, the creation of an independent state” [16, p. 45]. Following Soviet historiography, declarativity also prevails here. Certain democratic principles are recognized as correct a priori, but when it comes to their observance, to granting real rights, a negative attitude and their actual denial immediately form without explanation.

In order to clarify the manifestations of the new imperial ideology in the presented historical textual narratives, the comparative analysis and the method of content research (discourse analysis) were applied. Among other things, the peculiarities of the interpretation of historical processes and events related to Russian-Ukrainian relations and the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917-1921 were studied. Particular attention was paid to the purpose for which certain key statements were presented in didactic texts. The comparative analysis of the textbook and the publications of Russian leaders on historical memory issues was carried out.

Results of the study of textbook texts

Military confrontation and the creation of the Ukrainian State. Next, we will try to focus in more detail on the most characteristic manipulative moments and outright false facts and their interpretations. In Soviet and Russian historiography, the armed struggle that took place in the former Russian Empire is classified as the Civil War. Modern Ukrainian historiography interprets these events in Ukraine as the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917-1921. There were few military conflicts that could be classified as civil confrontation in Ukraine, and they were isolated. These include the armed clashes between the detachments of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky and the republican troops at the end of November — beginning of December 1918 during the uprising led by the Directorate, and separate battles of the Directorate’s troops with the anarchist revolutionary insurgent army led by Nestor Makhno.

All other military actions were conducted by Ukrainians against the armies of other states. These include the Ukrainian-Polish War of 1918-1919, the few armed clashes with German troops in 1918, and with the Entente troops (French-Greek landing force from December 1918 to April 1919) in southern Ukraine. The heaviest and longest-lasting armed struggle was the military actions with the representatives of the “white” and “red” Russian armies from 1917 to 1921. The government of the conservative “white” movement and the Bolsheviks, despite some statements, in practice did not recognize Ukrainian authority and continued to regard the territory of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR) as Russian.

It’s also important to understand that the authors of the textbook, following the official Russian historical science, use the term “*Russian Empire*” and do not use the term “colonies” in relation to non-Russian territories. Territories inhabited by representatives of other nationalities, including Ukraine, were referred to as “national outskirts” or the more modern term “national districts of Russia” [16, p. 116].

In the text, all available means are used to create the impression in the reader that the main factors in the declaration of autonomy and then independence of Ukraine were complex social and military circumstances, the fatigue of the population, and the influence of external forces, rather than the desire of Ukrainians themselves to build their own state. "With growing fatigue from wartime problems and failures on the fronts... the demands for national-cultural autonomy shifted to outright separatism, the desire to leave Russia" [16]. Further in the text, these theses are "strengthened" by external factors. "The activities of foreign states, which had a destructive character, had a significant impact on public sentiment. Germany and Austria-Hungary decided to take advantage of the moment and support the demands for the independence of ... Ukraine" [16]. It is striking that by emphasizing such a list of "reasons" for the declaration of Ukrainian independence and the desire to separate from the Russian state, students are pushed towards perceiving the Ukrainian state as "unreal" and emphasizing the low support for this idea among the population of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR).

In this context, the coverage of the process of Ukrainization of the Russian imperial troops should also be considered. The authors mention the order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief General Lavr Kornilov about the Ukrainization of the 34th Army Corps led by Lieutenant General Pavlo Skoropadsky [16, p. 53], highlighting the role of the central Russian authorities in this process. However, they do not mention the mass movement of Ukrainians to create national military organizations in various parts of the Russian Empire, the holding of three Military Congresses in Kyiv, and the formation of Ukrainian regiments, which actually marked the beginning of the armed struggle against the Russians for Ukraine's independence.

In the paragraph "Revolution and Civil War on the National Outskirts", there is a small subsection "The Emergence of New National States on the Outskirts of Russia" [16, p. 117-118]. Here the authors also resort to substituting concepts and manipulation — in fact, some of the proclaimed formations were directly connected with Russia, inspired by it, and were not national states. The subsection talks about artificial formations — the Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic, the Odessa Soviet Republic, and the Ukrainian People's Republic of Soviets. The leaders of these "state" formations declared their loyalty to the Bolshevik government in Moscow and were actually guided by it. This connection is also evidenced by the fact that the aforementioned leaders quickly took up important positions in the Bolshevik Party and the central government of the Russian SFSR. Attention should also be paid to the similarity of technologies in the Russian struggle against Ukrainian statehood in the historical retrospective of the past century. This refers to the creation of quasi-state formations such as the Donetsk-Krivoy Rog, Odessa Soviet "republics", the Soviet Republic of Taurida in 1917-1918, and the Donetsk or Luhansk "people's republics", as well as attempts to create the Kharkiv, Odessa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, and other "people's republics" in 2014. These examples clearly demonstrate both the unscrupulousness of the methods of the Russian state over the past hundred years and its desire to discredit and eliminate an independent Ukrainian state.

As for the Ukrainian People's Republic itself, it had real support among most of the Ukraine's population. The Ukrainian Central Rada, as the revolutionary legislative body of the UPR, was formed in March 1917 through the delegation of representatives from political, professional, cultural, and national associations to its composition. The most representative forum of the Ukrainian movement in Ukraine, the All-Ukrainian National Congress in April 1917, transformed the Ukrainian Central Rada from a Kyiv institution into a nationwide one, expressing full support for it.

In this context, it's also important to emphasize the results of the elections to the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly — a representative institution formed on the basis of universal suffrage to determine the form of government and draft the constitution of the UPR. The elections were scheduled for 9 January and the representative body itself was to be convened on 22 January 1918. Due to the war started by Bolshevik Russia against Ukraine, the elections did not take place in the entire territory defined by law. However, it is important for us to note significant trends showing support for Ukrainian parties. Thus, the elections took place in seven out of thirteen electoral districts, held in an unstable political environment, under conditions of military action, and sometimes under Bolshevik rule. Instead of 301 deputies, only 172 were elected. These elections proved unconditional support for Ukrainian political forces. Among the delegates were 115 members of the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionary Party, 34 Bolsheviks, 9 representatives from Jewish national parties, and others [2]. Thus, we can state the support for Ukrainian political parties demonstrated in democratic elections in the UPR. The Bolsheviks (who at that time did not have a clear division between Russian and Ukrainian) received less than twenty percent support. However, neither the results of these elections nor even mentions of them will be found in this publication, as this does not fit into the Russian worldview in any way.

The first Russian-Ukrainian war. Moreover, it's claimed that "in December 1917, the Bolsheviks convened the first All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets in Kharkiv, which proclaimed Ukraine a Soviet Republic. The congress decided to establish federal relations with Soviet Russia" [16, p. 117]. It is not mentioned, however, that this congress was held under the protection of Russian troops and followed scenarios and instructions from Petrograd. As a result, the Bolshevik Council of People's Commissars (CPC) later portrayed events in Ukraine as an internal conflict between "revolutionary" workers' and soldiers' soviets and the "bourgeois" Central Rada of Ukraine (UCR) [3]. Following this, Bolshevik anti-Ukrainian uprisings appeared in several industrial cities of Ukraine. Most of these, including the uprising in Kyiv, were suppressed by government troops. However, a twenty thousand army from Russia, led by the Bolshevik Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko and former tsarist army lieutenant colonel Mikhail Muravyov, came to their aid. The Bolshevik detachments consisted of soldiers, sailors, and volunteers who called themselves the "Red Guard". The Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) army, which was in the process of formation, was forced to retreat.

V. Medinsky and A. Torkunov assert unequivocally that "Kyiv was taken by Red Army units. The Central Rada sought assistance from Germany, af-

ter which Ukraine was occupied by Austro-German forces” [16, p. 117-118]. Such statements are half-truths: the fact that Kyiv was captured is undisputed. However, the textbook does not mention that this was the occupation of the capital of the UNR, which at that time was officially recognized by the Bolshevik government. The advance into the territory of the UNR was accompanied by an ultimatum from the Bolshevik CPC headed by Vladimir Ulyanov-Lenin (“Manifesto to the Ukrainian people with ultimate demands to the Ukrainian Rada”) [23] which blasphemously recognized the right of the Ukrainian people to self-determination but criticized the “bourgeois” policy of the Ukrainian Central Rada.

It should also be noted that at that time (December 1917 — the first half of February 1918) the “Red Army” did not exist yet. Even according to the official version of the Soviet Union, and later the Russian Federation, the “Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army (Red Army)” was created only on 23 February 1918, when the first battles with German troops took place near the Russian capitals of Pskov and Narva. Despite the dubiousness of this claim, as many historians have well-founded doubts about the accuracy of this date and even the fact of the battles [9; 14], the “Red Army” could not have been conducting military operations on Ukrainian territory at the mentioned time. Therefore, here too, we observe quite “free” handling of historical facts and their interpretation.

The next stage of the war began after the conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty between the UNR and the Central Powers on 9 February 1918. Three days later, on 12 February 1918, the UNR government sought military assistance from the German command against the Bolshevik aggression, and on 21 February 1918, German troops entered Ukraine. Ukrainian military units also continued the fight against the Bolsheviks. On 2 March 1918, they entered Kyiv. During March-April 1918, they advanced on Poltava, Kharkiv, Lozova, Luhansk, and undertook a campaign in Crimea (the Crimean group of the UNR army). By the end of April, the entire territory of the UNR was free of Russian troops. According to Article 6 of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty between Soviet Russia (RSFSR) and the Central Powers of 3 March 1918, the RSFSR was obligated to recognize the UNR, withdraw its troops from its territory, begin negotiations on signing a peace treaty, and establish a state border. On 6 May 1918, in Konotop, representatives of the German-Ukrainian troops and Bolshevik troops signed a ceasefire agreement. During peace negotiations between the Ukrainian State (successor of the UNR — ed.) and the RSFSR on 12 June 1918, the parties concluded a preliminary peace agreement. A demarcation line was established — a temporary delineation of the territory of the Ukrainian State and the RSFSR: Surazh — Unecha — Starodub — Novhorod — Siverskyi — Hlukhiv — Rylsk — Kolontavka — Sudzha — Belenikhino — Kupiansk [3].

The second Russian-Ukrainian war. The events related to the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty are interpreted in the textbook as the “occupation of Ukraine” by German and Austrian forces. Moreover, cause-and-effect relationships are also distorted. V. Medinsky and A. Torkunov claim that initially the territory of Ukraine was occupied by “Austro-German troops”, and

only later did “Germany and its allies formally recognize the independence of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR) and insist on its government’s participation in the negotiations in Brest” [16, p. 118]. These statements contradict the chronology of events. First, the Central Powers recognized the UNR, signed agreements in Brest, and only then, at the invitation of the UNR government, did the allied troops enter. After the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, “Germany expanded the borders of the UNR, incorporating into it the territories of the Donetsk Republic, the Odessa People’s Republic, and the West Ukrainian People’s Republic” [16].

Here, too, we observe the authors of the textbook denying Ukraine’s agency while also engaging in a “free” interpretation of historical facts and outright manipulation. They refer to the “incorporation” by Germany of various state-territorial entities into the UNR. Both the Donetsk Republic (correctly named the Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Soviet Republic (DKSR)) and the Odessa “People’s” Republic (correctly named the Odessa Soviet Republic) were short-lived quasi-state entities initiated by local Bolsheviks and not recognized by any international actors. Even the leader of the Russian Bolsheviks, Vladimir Lenin, criticized the idea of separating the DKSR from Ukraine, recognizing it as part of Ukraine [12].

The most surprising and incomprehensible inclusion in this list is the West Ukrainian People’s Republic (ZUNR). In February 1918, the ZUNR did not yet exist; it was proclaimed only nine months later, in November of that year. At that time, Germany, having been defeated in First World War, had lost its influence in Ukraine. Therefore, the assertion that Germany was involved in the unification of the two Ukrainian states, the UNR and the ZUNR, which formally occurred at the end of January 1919, seems to be either a misunderstanding or an outright manipulation of historical facts.

After the expiration of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, the Bolsheviks, as stated in the textbook, “raised the issue of liberating the territories occupied by German and Austrian troops” [16, p. 120]. But the fact is that the “occupying” German and Austrian troops were quickly withdrawn from Ukraine according to international agreements and the decisions of their governments. From whom, then, did the Bolsheviks plan to “liberate” Ukraine? The answer is obvious: from the Ukrainians themselves, since after the departure of the allied troops and the elimination of the pro-monarchist regime of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, the second UNR was restored in Ukraine, headed by the collective body of the UNR Directory. Despite the initial leftist views of its leaders, this new government did not intend to abandon the idea of the UNR’s independence [31, p. 25-29]. Thus, the “liberation” of Ukraine in the Russian way was actually an occupation.

The authors of the textbook assert that the task of “liberating” Ukraine was accomplished “quite quickly due to three circumstances: 1) the majority of the population supported the idea of restoring a unified state; 2) the armed support of the Red Army; 3) the active work of communist organizations in these territories, which were part of the single Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)” [16, p. 120].

Of the three circumstances that “contributed to the liberation” (in fact, the occupation — authors’ note) of Ukraine by the Bolsheviks, points 2 and 3 about the armed “support” of the army and the active activities of Bolshevik organizations are not disputed. The Red Army, which the Bolsheviks managed to significantly increase and arm by 1918, became a decisive factor in the occupation of Ukraine, which did not have a regular army, not least due to a number of reservations from the German-Austrian allies. In addition, the Bolsheviks had an extensive network of party organizations in Ukrainian cities, which often operated underground and conducted demoralizing propaganda.

However, the assertion that the majority of the population supposedly supported the “restoration of a united state” does not withstand any criticism. To begin with, we must understand that the thesis of support for a united state is quite general, and the authors do not explain their opinion. The problem is that at that time, there were adherents of the restoration of a united state within the former Russian Empire, but they envisioned its future structure differently. It should be borne in mind that besides the supporters of Ukrainian independence, there were also supporters of the “red” (Bolshevik), supporters of the “white” democratic, and supporters of the “white” monarchical Russia in the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR). It should also be noted that the institution of citizenship was not yet clearly formed, and a significant portion of emigrants, fleeing persecution in Russia, often found themselves in the territory of the UNR, carrying with them an anti-Ukrainian identity. This was especially evident during the existence of the state of Hetman P. Skoropadsky, when a significant portion of the supporters of the restoration of the Russian Empire/ republic were sheltered by the Ukrainian and allied armies in April-November 1918. Therefore, the thesis about the support of the majority of the local Ukrainian population for Russian “liberation” is nothing more than a substitution of concepts. We see this in the example of the second Bolshevik-Ukrainian war of 1918-1919 and the military campaign of 1920 when the UNR troops, supported by the population, resisted Russian aggression. The two-year war was fought with varying success and ended with the defeat of the UNR.

At the end of 1918, the Bolshevik authorities in Moscow decided to follow a tried-and-true scenario and restored the puppet “Ukrainian Soviet Republic” and its “government”. According to the authors of a textbook, “in November 1918, the Ukrainian Soviet Republic was restored, and a temporary workers’ and peasants’ government of Ukraine was created. However, soon the bourgeois-nationalist Directorate, led by Volodymyr Vynnychenko and Symon Petliura, seized power in Kyiv and declared war on Soviet Russia” [16, p. 121]. Despite the distortion of the historical process — first, the Directorate was created and the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR) was restored, and only then was the “Ukrainian Soviet Republic” restored, not the other way around as stated in the mentioned publication — this time the Russian Bolsheviks led by Vladimir Lenin did not even attempt to maintain “propriety”. The fact is that this time the “temporary workers’ and peasants’ government of Ukraine” was created not in Ukraine but in Bolshevik Russia, in Moscow, with the direct assistance and support of the local authorities.

It's not surprising that under such circumstances, the UNR government sent radiotelegrams to the Council of People's Commissars (CPC) of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) on 31 December 1918, and on 3 and 4 January 1919, expressing protest against the invasion of Bolshevik troops into the territory of the UNR. In response, a note from RSFSR People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Georgi Chicherin was received, stating that there were no RSFSR troops in Ukraine, and that the Directorate was being fought by the army of the "Ukrainian Soviet government, which is completely independent" [29, p. 11]. At the same time, in a telegram to Commander-in-Chief Joakim Vatssetis, RSFSR Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars Vladimir Lenin noted that the creation of local Soviet governments in the occupied territories of national republics "removes the possibility for Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian chauvinists to view the movement of our units as an occupation and creates a favorable atmosphere for the further advancement of our troops" [12]. Under these conditions, the Directorate was forced to declare war on Soviet Russia on 16 January 1919.

Without delving into excessive detail about the course of military actions, it can be noted that the "rather quick liberation" of Ukraine, as claimed by the authors of the textbook, dragged on for more than two years — from November 1918 to November 1920. During this time, the Bolsheviks lost Kyiv twice (in 1919 and 1920) and significant territories until they broke the resistance of the Ukrainian army, which had lost the support of its ally (the Second Polish Republic) and exhausted its supplies of weapons, ammunition, equipment, and medicine.

At the end of paragraph §10 "Revolution and Civil War in the National Outskirts", V. Medinsky and A. Torkunov, among others, cite two old Soviet propaganda clichés: that "nationalists — the Central Council and the Directorate — did not enjoy mass support. The latter tried to come to terms with the Poles, 'selling' them Western Ukraine in exchange for military assistance. The head of the Directorate, Symon Petliura, while proclaiming Ukraine's 'independence' (as stated in the text — author's note), simultaneously carried out ethnic cleansing, with tens of thousands of Jews falling victim to it" [16, p. 121].

It's evident that the issue of population support and its massiveness is existential for any political regime. Therefore, the Russians, lacking such support, entering Ukraine "on bayonets" in 1917 and 1918, and waging aggressive wars in subsequent years, were more interested than anyone else in creating the impression of a lack of support for the Ukrainian government among Ukrainians. This "insufficient" internal support was supposedly "compensated" by the Directorate's signing of a treaty with Poland, under which it ceded Ukrainian territories. In reality, the Polish-Ukrainian Warsaw Treaty (April 1920) only formalized the then-existing territorial realities that had developed as a result of military confrontations between the two countries.

The problem of Jewish pogroms. An even more manipulative claim is found in another assertion that attempts to link Symon Petliura and Ukrainian independence with Jewish pogroms. Why was this important for the Bolsheviks, and why does it continue to be significant for their followers? Symon Petliura

became the most iconic figure of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917-1921, one of its symbols. "It is not for nothing that the fighters for Ukrainian independence in 1918-1921 began to be called Petliurists. Moreover, Symon Petliura headed the state structures of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR), which ended up in exile. Therefore, he became one of the greatest enemies of Soviet power, whom Moscow needed to destroy – both physically and morally" [10]. For this purpose, the Bolsheviks baselessly accused him of anti-Semitism and organizing Jewish pogroms.

Pogroms, as a phenomenon, were present at that time in the territory of the former Russian Empire in general, and in the territory of the UNR in particular. All military formations present in Ukraine can be accused of carrying them out. However, the Directorate's government took exceptional measures to combat pogroms. A separate ministry for Jewish affairs, the first of its kind in Europe, was created in the government. In 1918, Jews, along with other nationalities in Ukraine, received the right to national-personal autonomy. After the beginning of active hostilities, Symon Petliura supported the idea of creating Jewish self-defense units. Petliura's government paid significant monetary compensation to Jews affected by the pogroms. In total, about twenty million hryvnias were paid out [19].

Many scholars address the topic of pogroms in Ukraine; here are some opinions from representatives of well-known Western universities. Henry Abramson, a professor at Harvard, Oxford, and the Hebrew University (Jerusalem), and the author of several books, including "A Prayer for the Government: Ukrainians and Jews in Revolutionary Times, 1917-1920", writes that "it cannot be proved that he had the responsibility of agency; indeed, all available evidence indicates that he was in no way the "architect" of the pogroms" [1, p. 139]. Despite this, he notes that Symon Petliura should bear responsibility as the head of state, even if he did not fully control the troops. On the other hand, Professor Sergei Yekelchik of the University of Victoria in Canada believes that «to consider the UNR government responsible for the pogroms is to oversimplify history" [32, p. 39]. Despite some differences in assessments, there are no grounds for the accusations made by the Russian authors of the mentioned textbook on manifestations of anti-Semitism by the Ukrainian government and its leader.

Establishment of "socialist" republics. Summarizing this section, the authors of the textbook "History. History of Russia 1914-1945. 10th year" note among Russia's losses after First World War and the revolution that "having triumphed in Russia, the socialist revolution was suppressed in other European countries" and that "Russia was not considered a great power by the international community. The First World War and the Civil War ended for Russia with territorial losses. Finland, Poland, the Baltic States became independent countries, the lands of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus, Bessarabia, part of Armenia were alienated" [16, p. 138]. Thus, according to this logic, the greatest problem for Russia was the loss of the "greatness" of the state due to the loss of several territories on the European continent, which were traditionally considered "national outskirts". This manifestation of territorial expansionism

does not even consider that the “Baltic States” is not a country, but a region that traditionally includes Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in Russia, and that Western Ukraine (at least a significant part of it — Eastern Galicia) could not have been “alienated” from Russia since it had never been part of it.

Russia’s achievements during this period are primarily presented as “the Civil War ended with the preservation of Russia as a single state, which became the core of the subsequent unification of most of the peoples of the former empire”, and most importantly, “with the victory of the Reds in the Civil War in Soviet Russia, the Russian civilizational space was restored” [16, p. 139]. It is important to realize that the concept of the “Russian civilization space” applies to all non-Russian peoples who were forcibly or otherwise incorporated into the new state, and the new ideology of this space became “Bolshevism”. The authors are ready to overlook all the crimes and terror of the Bolsheviks for the sake of the ephemeral restoration of the Russian “civilization space”.

Moreover, the authors no longer veil the identification of Bolshevik “Soviet Russia” with the entire state, in which there is actually no place for non-Russian republics, equating the RSFSR and the USSR: “Soviet Russia (since 1922 — the USSR) continued to feel itself in the position of a ‘besieged fortress’” [16, p. 138].

Even more candidly about the real plans of the new rulers is stated in the world history textbook, co-authored by the same V. Medinsky. Regarding the newly proclaimed states, the text reveals an unequivocal strategy: “following the previously proclaimed right of nations to self-determination up to separation, Lenin’s government recognized the independence of Finland, Poland, Ukraine, the Baltic States, and Transcaucasia (Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia). At the same time, the Bolsheviks planned to bring communists to power in these countries and effectively reconnect them with revolutionary Russia. This plan succeeded only concerning Transcaucasia” [15, p. 49].

It is difficult to understand the logic of such a conclusion since the Bolsheviks ultimately managed to occupy Ukraine and Belarus.

Without even mentioning the governments of independent Ukraine, the authors of this textbook resort to further manipulations. Specifically, they state that “the rulers of Poland tried to include the territory of Soviet Ukraine (actually, recognized by the Bolsheviks as the Ukrainian People’s Republic — ed.) in their state, but the Soviet (actually, Russian — ed.) troops expelled them from Kyiv in 1920 and pushed them to the west. However, the Polish-Soviet war (actually, Polish-Ukrainian-Bolshevik, as it was the result of the 1920 Warsaw Agreement between Poland and the Ukrainian People’s Republic — ed.) ended with the defeat of the Red Army near Warsaw, as a result of which Poland occupied the territory of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus” [15]. This textbook maintains the dichotomy typical of these publications — Russian Bolshevik troops liberate territories, while the troops of other countries occupy them.

All of this closely resonates with another text written by the current president of the Russian Federation, V. Putin, “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians”: “The example of the Ukrainian People’s Republic shows how unstable various quasi-state formations that emerged on the territory of the for-

mer Russian Empire during the Civil War and turmoil were. Nationalists sought to create their own states" [21]. The author does not analyze why, in his opinion, "the Ukrainian People's Republic was an unstable state formation" and what role the military aggression of the neighboring state — the RSFSR — played in this "instability". It is obvious that the reasons for this aggression are consonant, if not identical, to the reasons for modern Russia's war against Ukraine, and they lie in the rejection of the right of the Ukrainian state to exist at all.

V. Putin actually criticizes the Bolsheviks' position on national policy. In the article, he writes that "in 1922, during the creation of the USSR... Lenin's plan for the creation of a union state as a federation of equal republics was implemented. The right to freely exit the union was included in the text of the Declaration on the Creation of the USSR, and later in the 1924 USSR Constitution. Thus, the most dangerous 'time bomb' was planted in the foundation of our statehood. It exploded as soon as the safety, preventive mechanism in the form of the leading role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union disappeared" [21]. Both in this article and in the textbooks mentioned, one of the main narrative lines is that Ukrainians do not have the right to their own state. Both the policy over a hundred years ago towards Ukraine and the current policy are aimed at the elimination of its statehood and independence.

The current authoritarian leadership of the Russian Federation places great importance on the "correct" interpretation of history. All efforts of the state apparatus and society are subordinated to fulfilling this task. On 8 May 2024, the President of the Russian Federation issued a decree "On the Approval of the Fundamentals of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Historical Education" [11]. According to this document, historical education is "the activity of disseminating accurate and scientifically grounded historical knowledge in society, regulated by the state" [11]. Among the most important tasks is the creation of a unified methodology for teaching history in preschools, schools, and higher education institutions, and the creation of unified school textbooks on the history of Russia and world history for this purpose. It must be said that textbooks authored by V. Medinsky and his colleagues have practically already fulfilled these directives from the highest leadership.

Conclusions. Summarizing the review of the coverage of Ukrainian-Russian relations in 1914-1922 in the new Russian textbook authored by V. Medinsky and A. Torkunov, "History. History of Russia 1914-1945. Year ten. Basic Level. Textbook. Moscow, 2023" the following should be noted.

The authors of the textbook generally employ the methodological approaches of Soviet historiography. The only modification is the depiction of the "White movement", which is presented in the text without a negative connotation. Elements of criticism of the national policy of the first Bolshevik government led by V. Lenin have also appeared, characterizing it as too liberal. The positioning of national movements, including the Ukrainian one, has practically not changed. They are presented as separatist, "national-bourgeois", and lacking popular support.

The textbook frequently contains instances of biased interpretation, outright manipulation, and falsification of historical facts and processes, as men-

tioned earlier in this article. This is done to discredit public movements, the activities of the armed forces and government, and the national liberation movement in Ukraine as a whole. Instead, events and structures (often inspired by Moscow) that opposed Ukraine's independence are brought to the forefront.

The close relationship of the authors to the current government, the rigid framework of Russian legislation in the field of historical memory policy, historical education, and the Russian leadership's attempts to use history as an argument to justify aggressive, expansionist policies towards Ukraine and the former USSR countries, make impartial and objective coverage of Russian history practically impossible. A striking example is the consideration of Ukrainian-Russian relations in 1914-1922.

V. Medinsky and his co-authors, following contemporary Russian leaders, deny the Ukrainian state its subjectivity both in the specified historical period and in the present. They use "arguments" such as the "lack of legitimacy and support" among the population of the independent state; the "incompetence" of the state institutions of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR); "dependence" in international policy and external influences on internal affairs. Thus, students form incorrect ideas about the Ukrainian people and their statehood and about one people, consisting of Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians. This allows for manipulation of the consciousness of Russian citizens and justifies the necessity of Russia's expansionist policy towards Ukraine from 2014 to the present.

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