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REPRESENTATION OF UKRAINE IN RUSSIAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS (UNTIL 2021)

- Abstract -

The study explores the formation of the Ukrainian history character in Russian school textbooks during the period of V. Putin's presidency until 2021, that is the social, political, intellectual circumstances, organizational and normative factors of this process. We bring to light the consideration of "Ukrainian" topics in Russian textbooks creation that was subordinated to the logic of the state-imperial narrative of Russian history. Respectively, from one hand, Ukrainians and an individual Ukrainian history, until the 15th century did not exist for the authors of school textbooks. From another, on the pages of these school texts, Russian students are convinced that significant events of Russian history took place on the territory of modern Ukraine, thereby forcing them to believe that modern Russia has a historical right to them. And finally, although Ukrainians are recognized as a separate ethnic group in school books published until 2021, their territorial map of the past is fragmentary and largely distorted.

After the beginning of the large-scale armed invasion of Russia in Ukraine in February 2022, there is fast unconditional control of the Russian authorities over historical education. One of the consequences of

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this was the total redaction of current textbooks to eliminate positive or neutral references to Ukraine and Ukrainians.

Keywords: history of Ukraine; Putin's Russia; school historical narrative; textbook creation; historical politics.

INTRODUCTION

Like any form of historical knowledge, school history course could bring both social benefits and result destructive processes. The study of history in high school in the modern world, primarily in the European and North American education, considered as a means of educating a self-sufficient citizen of the state and, at the same time, grow one fostering respect for universal values, tolerance for other cultures and traditions. From the other side, history course of schools in less democratic, and especially non-democratic societies is used primarily for the purpose of ideological and political indoctrination of listeners.

In Putin's Russia, school history has become a mean for teaching such ideas of future citizens of their country, which directly correlated with the ideologues of the newly emerged "empire". In particular, this applies to forcing through history the attitude towards Ukraine as a part of the Russian ethnic and political space, as a traditional Russian sphere of influence. This contributes to the establishment of mass ideas about the right of Russia to dictate its domestic and foreign policy to our country, and in the case of disobedience – to choose at its own discretion the methods of "taming" it. Therefore, it is important to trace the circumstances, reasons, and methods of introducing a distorted image of Ukraine through the wrong side of the telescope in Russian school history education. This survey deals with the study of these issues.

Here we will consider first on the intellectual, organizational, social, political, normative circumstances and factors of the formation of the Russian school interpretation of Ukraine's past. Next, we briefly characterize the image composition of the history of Ukraine in Russian school didactics up to

2013. That is, i.e., period before the direct Russian-Ukrainian confrontation. After that, we will focus on the analysis of the “Ukrainian case” in the huge amount of literature for schools published during 2014-2021 – the time when the hybrid phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war had been occurring and has come to the end. And soon Russia’s open and large-scale armed aggression against Ukraine began. That led to corresponding changes in the political situation and the creation of school textbooks. We are limited in this survey due to the lack of access to Russian school history textbooks published in 2022 that is currently impossible for us to reach. However, in the final part of the article, we will not only summarize, but also consider regarding latest trends in Russian school history, which based not on the processing of school texts firsthand, but on other sources (in particular, on the normative acts available from the websites of Russian government institutions, which concern teaching history in a secondary school of the Russian Federation).

THE CONDITIONS AND FACTORS OF FORMATION THE IMAGE OF UKRAINE IN RUSSIAN TEXTBOOK CREATION

The preparation of school textbooks in any educational system depends on various conditions, and the authors are guided by the set of motivations that are individual in each case. Firstly, writing school textbooks is an intellectual process, so any school text is an intellectual product, the level of which is determined by the author’s professional qualities and the general level of academic historiography on a certain issue, in that case, the Ukrainian studies.

The authors of school books in Russian Federation (hereinafter RF) are mostly historians from leading Russian academic educational institutions and universities. But among them we actually cannot see historians who study Ukrainian issues (except I. Danilevsky, a specialist in the history of Kyiv Rus’ and K. Kochegarov, an expert of Hetman region; we will mention their works below). We do not have and cannot have information about the extent to which the authors of Russian school history textbooks rely on modern historical Ukrainian studies as school texts, by definition, cannot contain any bibliographic vocations. However, assuming that special works

on the history of Ukraine are still taken into account, then their place is most likely secondary. This assumption follows from the following foundations:

- historical Ukrainian studies in RF refer to the professional historiography represented by a limited circle of researchers, and the works of not so many Russian historians writing about Ukraine are mostly burdened with imperial tendencies;

- under the circumstances of the strengthening the anti-Ukrainian orientation in the Russian official historical policy, it is absolutely unlikely the authors of Russian school textbooks dare to use information on Ukraine, gleaned from the workouts of non-Russian or those few Russian scientists (let's mention at least A. Musin, T. Tairova-Yakovleva, A. Gogun, etc.), which follow the research standards;

- we will detail below that stories about Ukraine in the school narrative are sporadic, and their coverage is superficial, so there is no particular sense in an in-depth study of Ukrainian issues.

The organization of the educational process belongs to the factors that significantly affect the content of school historical education. In secondary schools of RF, the Ukrainian past, even when it comes to the history of modern Ukraine, is mentioned in the section "History of Russia", not "World history" (as it should be from the point of view of scientific truth, at least for the period after 1991). This is what Russian school children are consciously or unconsciously taught: Ukraine is, let's say, "our history", an element of the Russian narrative, and not separate, "different", "foreign". After the experiment (started in 1993) with the introduction of the concentric system of education in 2015, the traditional "linear" model was restored (that is, the material is taught in chronological order from the most ancient to the present), "History of Russia" is studied from the 6th to the 11th year of study¹.

Any text on historical topics, including school textbook, has being written in a social context: its author can be representative not only of the professional knowledge, but also of certain social ideas about the past of his /her state. Chronic "inflammation" of historical memory is recognized as one

¹ S. Baturina, *Ukrains'ka istoriia v suchasnykh rosijs'kykh pidruchnykakh z istorii (2009–2015 rr.)* [Ukrainian history in modern Russian history textbooks (2009–2015)], in "Istoriografichni doslidzhennia v Ukraini", issue 26, 2016, p. 469.

of the most characteristic features of modern Russian reality. Most Russians are fiercely proud of their “victorious” past, because they see no prospects and reasons for pride in the present and future. As a result, there is a high probability school history and school historians in the Russian Federation receive impulses from native society with its memory pathologies and complexes.

Russian mass consciousness fixated on the past, the historical imperatives of the USSR period still prevail, the imperial stratum of which, in its turn, was largely inherited from the era of the Romanov’s reign. The “statistical average” Russian misses the Soviet Union times (paradoxically, this nostalgia is characteristic of a significant part of the middle aged and even younger generations), and tends to see Russia as a sequel or reincarnation of the former USSR. Let us cite just one example that illustrates the above and is actually a verdict. According to a survey conducted in March 2019 by the Levada Center, the most professional sociological service in Russia today, 51% of Russians had a positive attitude to Stalin, and 70% positively assessed his role in the history of their own country². That “memory of the dictator regime” (N. Kuposov) is significantly strengthened and preserved by the intensive historical engineering, which has been carried out by Putin’s propaganda machine for more than two decades in a row. Its meaning uncovered to justify Putin’s authoritarian regime using arguments from the past, now seen in his revanchist foreign policy course.

V. Putin aimed at history practically immediately after his dizzying entry into power in Kremlin. According to I. Kurilla’s observations, the main means of establishing a new official interpretation of history was establishing control over the content of television programs, school textbooks, and memorial ideology³. During Putin’s rule, the Soviet Union historical period, especially Stalin reign period, was chosen as a role model in the implementation of official historical policy. For example, one of the recent manifestations of that was the legal prosecution by the Russian “justice” with

² *Dinamika otnosheniya k Stalinu. Levada-centr. 2019* [Dynamics of attitudes towards Stalin. Levada Center. 2019]. Retrieved from <https://www.levada.ru/2019/04/16/dinamika-otnosheniya-k-stalinu/>.

³ I. Kurilla, *Bitva za proshloe. Kak politika menyaet istoriyu* [Battle for the past. How politics changes history], Alpina Publisher, Moskva, 2021, p. 14.

following liquidation by the court decision (December 2021) and prohibition the activities in Russia (April 2022) of “Memorial”, an authoritative international human rights and educational organization aiming at the exposing crimes of Bolshevism, primarily of Stalin regime.

The present Kremlin has quite a natural sentiment towards the totalitarian USSR and the USSR as a modification of Russian Empire. Its propaganda mantras as for the special greatness of Russia and the uniqueness of “Russian civilization” directly resonate with Stalin’s glorification of “the great Russian folk”. The extermination of the few elements of civil society in Putin’s Russia is justified, like in Stalin’s times, by the need to eliminate “internal enemies” who serve their “foreign patrons”. The promotion of the ideology about the right of Russia to restore the zones of influence lost after the collapse of the USSR and return to its historical territories that are considered “own”, use of militant political rhetoric (“victory rage”) are directly or indirectly referred to the Soviet victorious war with Hitler’s Germany and the Soviet expansion of the end 1930s – 1940s in East-Central Europe. Just as the Russian people led by Stalin once defeated Nazism /fascism, so presently, led by Putin, they are fiercely fighting against it. As the USSR once opposed the “war- instigator” in the West, so today’s Russia opposes NATO and the “Anglo-Saxons” in their subversive activities aimed at “bringing Russia to its knees.” In the logic of modern Russian imperialists, it is Stalin who is a role model, as he enlarged territories, kept Ukraine in subjection, neither like V. Lenin “created it artificially”, or like N. Khrushchev who presented it with “Russian” Crimea “like a sack of potatoes.”

At the same time, contradictory, unsystematic, occasional nature of Putin’s ideological approach (including historical policy) is truly considered a characteristic feature of his regime. In fact, the Russian authoritarian ruler and his entourage do not have an ideology – instead, they have interests, and they are guided not by the ideology in their social behavior, but by gangster-military logic or rather, “gangster political culture”. For example, at the beginning of the presidency of V. Putin, the ideological mixture was manifested in the combination of state symbols – in the introduction, in addition to the tricolor, which since the victory over the coup d’état initiated

by “State Committee for Emergency” was associated with the liberal-democratic camp, a coat of arms with a double-headed eagle, which refers to the symbols of the pre-revolutionary of the Russian Empire, and the “old-new” Soviet anthem. One of V. Putin’s last historical favorites was Peter the First, whom the Russian president considers his own predecessor in the matter of “returning Russian territories”⁴.

In Putin’s regime Russia, the independent Ukraine became almost the main aim of the imperial plans and delusions of the Kremlin and its subordinates. For a significant part of Russian citizens, Ukrainian people have never existed as a self-sufficient nation, therefore they do not exist now and cannot exist in the future. In the mass consciousness, Ukrainians are Russians corrupted by foreign influences. Such ideas, having a pre-Soviet origin, have been reactivated in recent decades by Kremlin propaganda and by the Russian president himself. The Ukrainian revolutions of 2003 and 2013–2014 played the role of triggers that accelerated the transformation of Ukraine into a bugaboo of Putin’s propaganda and historical politics, because they caused our country to leave the orbit of Russian influence and initiated pro-Western democratic reforms that are dangerous for the stability of Putin regime.

Since the presidency of V. Yushchenko, Kremlin ideologues fiercely deny the right of Ukrainians to have a Ukrainian view of our own past. At the same time, with V. Putin’s anti-Ukrainian speech at the Bucharest NATO Summit in April 2008 and his meaningless speculations on the row of “historical arguments” on February 21, 2022, delivered on the eve of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Russian, full of imperial supremacy, showed their look at the Ukrainian past. As the present tragic reality goes on, the historical insinuations of the Russian president were fantasized by him not only with innocent educational purpose, but have a cynical additional meaning, - they provoke the destruction of the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian political nation. As it turned out, among the most dangerous in their utilitarian potential, we find Putin’s incantation about “one nation”,

⁴ *Putin sravnil sebya s Petrom I i nazval svoej zadachej vozvrashhenie territorij* [Putin compared himself to Peter I and called his task the return of territory]. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-61749842>.

insidiously divided by “Ukrainian nationalists /neo-Nazis” and the thesis of the head of the Kremlin that the territory of modern Ukraine was artificially constructed by Bolsheviks and actually contains significant purely Russian components (the South and East – the so-called “Novorossiia”, at the same time, this imperial category was extended by him to Donbas and Slobozhanshchyna regions, which were never called that way during Romanov’s time.

The evident fact the official historical policy has become a determining factor in Russian course of school history is directly evidenced by the content of normative acts, which are considered the main guiding factor of historical education in RF, and which became state standards and programs of educational disciplines. Those books, in the post-soviet countries where they adopted, express certain consensus between the state and the teaching and scientific community in the vision of what task school history should serve. In the conditions of the gradual decline of the Russia into the regime of V. Putin’s autocracy, with the strengthening of the government’s control over historical issues (including the system of school historical education), they became the object of complete “appropriation” by the government.

We had already mentioned above as for the interest that V. Putin showed in school history from the first years of his presidency. At first, the urge to switch it on “public service” that was carefully hidden behind euphemisms, like the need to overcome the “imbalance” of school history education. However, since 2012, when V. Putin became the president of the Russian Federation for the third time, they honestly talked about “creating a single history textbook” (as it was described in the Russian media and in the statements of Russian president). 2013 should be considered a turning point in the above sense. This was “contributed” to V. Putin’s personal calls, recommendations and instructions, presently announced by him on several public platforms, which actually talked about the need to develop an ideological norm of historical education at school⁵.

⁵ Baturina, *op.cit.* 2016, pp. 469 – 470.

G. Kasianov, *Common Past, Different Visions: The Ukrainian-Russian Encounters Over School History Textbooks 1990s–2010s*, in “Bildung und Erziehung – Education and parenting”, issue 75, 2022, pp. 151–152; S.G. Malkin, *Istoriko-kulturnyy standart i*

So, in 2017, after long-lasting preparations, under the auspices of the Russian Historical Society, the “Concept of a new educational and methodological complex on national history” and the so-called “Historical and cultural standard” was created under the control of Kremlin in 2012⁶. Since that time, the writing of school textbooks is carried out on the basis of the provisions fixed in these documents (between which there were almost no differences). These circulars became “a practical embodiment of the model of school history education proposed by the President of the Russian Federation in 2013”⁷. So, in the formal absence of a “single history textbook” in the literal sense, historical education has been largely unified since that time. In 2020, an improved “Concept of Teaching the History of Russia” course was adopted, including the updated “Historical and Cultural Standard”, which has already formally become an integral part of the “Concept” educational course “History of Russia” in 2020. In particular, it contains provisions on the ““coup d’état in 2014” in Ukraine, “the reunification of Crimea with Russia” and “humanitarian” support of Donetsk and Luhansk regions”⁸.

The government controls the content of school history education through the approval by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation the lists of textbooks presented at schools (in particular, in recent years such lists were drawn up in 2014, 2018, 2020, 2022). An important step in the process of subordinating historical education to the official ideological line was also the creation in July 2021 of the Interdepartmental Commission on

professionalnaya podgotovka pedagoga v formirovanii grazhdanskoy identichnosti (postanovka problemy) [Historical and cultural standard and professional training of a teacher in the formation of civic identity (statement of the problem)], in “Samarskiy nauchnyy vestnik – Samara Journal of Science”, issue (10)3, 2021, pp. 265–268.

⁶ *Novosti i sobytiya Rossiyskogo istoricheskogo obshchestva. Podgotovlen proekt usovershenstvovannoy Kontseptsii prepodavaniya “Istorii Rossii”* [News and events of the Russian Historical Society. A draft of the improved Concept of Teaching “History of Russia” has been prepared]. Retrieved from <https://historyrussia.org/sobytiya/podgotovlen-proekt-usovershenstvovannoj-kontseptsii-prepodavaniya-uchebnogo-kursa-istoriya-rossii.html>.

⁷ Malkin, *op.cit.*, p. 266.

⁸ *Kontseptsiya prepodavaniya uchebnogo kursa “Istoriya Rossii” v obrazovatelnykh organizatsiyakh Rossiyskoy Federatsii, realizuyushchikh osnovnye obshcheobrazovatelnye programmy* [The concept of teaching the course “History of Russia” in the educational organizations of the Russian Federation, implementing the main general education programs]. Retrieved from <https://historyrussia.org/sobytiya/podgotovlen-proekt-usovershenstvovannoj-kontseptsii-prepodavaniya-uchebnogo-kursa-istoriya-rossii.html>.

Historical Education headed by the well-known ideologue of the Putin regime, personal assistant (since 2020) of the Russian President, Mr. V. Medinsky.

So, we can see that during Putin's rule, school history in RF increasingly immersed itself in the space of actual historical politics, while other circumstances and factors lost their independent significance. Below we will focus on the content of the Russian historical narrative in the aspect of Ukrainian history, as it appears in school editions.

THE PORTRAIT OF UKRAINE IN RF SCHOOL HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Firstly, we should highlight that until 2014, Ukrainian subjects barely found in such regulatory documents as Russian state standards and programs of secondary education. Some more of them are available in student books and teacher books. As an example, according to S. Baturina's calculations, relevant topics can be found in 80% of the school and university educational publications on the "History of Russia" published before 2007 she analyzed⁹. The general assessment of such "Ukrainian" inclusions in the didactic literature of the 1990s - early 2010s comes down to stating their small number and occasional presence in the context of the major problems of Russian history. The authors of the textbooks of that time are noticeably dependent on pre-revolutionary imperial and Soviet historiographical stereotypes and distortions, which, in turn, haven't undergone thorough revision either in Russian academic science, or moreover, in the context of the anti-Ukrainian official historical policy of the Kremlin.

For example, the territory of modern Ukraine during the Middle Ages was considered as a component of "Russian history", the topics of a single "Russian" (sometimes Old Russian") nation of the times of the "Old Russian State" /"Ancient Rus" and "Russianness" were common on the pages of school textbooks, principalities of the period of fragmentation, in particular

⁹ S. Baturina, *Do pytannia pro predstavlennia ukrains'koi istorii v dydaktychnij literaturi Rosijs'koi Federatsii* [On the question of the presentation of Ukrainian history in the didactic literature of the Russian Federation], in "Istoriografichni doslidzhennia v Ukraini", issue 21, 2011, p. 316.

South-Western Russia of the 12th–14th centuries. Since Soviet times, theses about the formation of the Ukrainian ethnos (“Ukrainian nationhood”) only in the 15th century, about the “entry” / “joining” / “reunification” of Ukraine with Russia in 1654 as desirable and acceptable for Ukraine, without accentuating colonial aspects, about the anti-Moscow policy of the Ukrainian hetmans as “treason”. The Ukrainian national movement in the Russian Empire was usually unnoticed, instead, the statements about the artificiality and weakness of the Ukrainian state formations of 1917–1921 were widespread. Denial of any features of the Great Famine of 1932–1933 in Soviet Ukraine was typical. Textbooks of that time critically described the Ukrainian national liberation movement of the 1940s–1950s¹⁰.

Despite the mostly identical interpretation of the above-mentioned problems, it is still worth noting that there was still no complete unanimity in questions about the history of Ukraine. It seems the textbooks authored by I. Danylevsky and I. Andreev¹¹ are distinguished by the greatest originality in general and the presence of elements of academic knowledge about Ukrainian subjects in particular. For example, when talking about Greek colonies in the Northern Black Sea region, the authors do not forget to emphasize specifically their actually weak connection with the history of Russia, saying that “the remains of some colonies are located on the territory of Russia”, and naming among them only Tanais and Phanagoria¹². The Andrus Agreement of 1667 was assessed as a “real tragedy for the Ukrainian people”¹³. In the textbook for the 7th year of study, we won’t find anything about the “treason” of the Ukrainian hetmans, including Mazepa. In general, the works of I. Danylevsky and I. Andreev present rather atypical for Russian school literature cultural and anthropological image of the history of Russia,

¹⁰ Baturina, *op.cit.* 2016, pp. 471 – 475.

¹¹ I.A. Danilevskiy & I.L. Andreev, *Istoriya Rossii s drevneyshikh vremën po XVI vek. 6 kl.: ucheb. dlya obshcheobrazovatel. uchrezhdeniy* [History of Russia from ancient times to the 16th century. 6th grade lesson. For general education established], Mnemosina, Moskva, 2012; I.L. Andreev & I.A. Danilevskiy, *Istoriya Rossii s kontsa XVI po XVIII vek. 7 kl.: ucheb. dlya obshcheobrazovatel. uchrezhdeniy* [History of Russia from the end of the 16th to the 18th century. 7th grade lesson. For general education established], Mnemosina, Moskva, 2013.

¹² Danilevskiy & Andreev, *op.cit.* 2012, pp. 18–19.

¹³ Andreev & Danilevskiy, *op.cit.* 2013, p. 95.

rather than heroic and pathetic. However, in their works we find statements such as that in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereinafter GDL) “the majority of the population spoke Russian”¹⁴, or that in the 12th–15th centuries “a common all-Russian culture is beginning forming”¹⁵. It is obviously not accidental that the textbooks of the abovementioned authors were no longer reissued after 2013 (in that year their 5th editions were published, both for 6th and 7th years of study of school).

The analysis of school historical literature of the modern period (2014–2021) shows that its previously established general features in the aspect of the “Ukrainian case” have not changed yet. It also concerns some elements of academic knowledge. In particular, the information about the Ukrainian Hetmanship is presented in a rather balanced way. For example, some authors describe the activities of Hetman Mazepa very neutrally¹⁶. In one of the textbooks, in the section “History in Personalities”, as for Khmelnytskyi, we see the following: “State and military figure, hetman of Ukraine, leader of the national liberation uprising of Ukrainians against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth”¹⁷. Without making any negative evaluative judgments, the battle of Konotop in 1659 is mentioned, where “Hetman Vyhovsky defeated the Moscow army”¹⁸. The authors of school textbooks insist on the high political status of the Hetmanate within Russia, speaking either of its “broad autonomy”¹⁹, or of the “new Cossack state entity - the Zaporizhzhya Army”²⁰, or calling the Cossack polity the “autonomous

¹⁴ Danilevskiy & Andreev, *op.cit.* 2012, p. 85.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 126.

¹⁶ D.D. Danilov, D.V. Liseytsev, N.S. Pavlova, & V.A. Rogozhkin, *Istoriya Rossii. XVI–XVIII veka. 7 kl.: ucheb. dlya organizatsiy, osushchestvlyayushchikh obrazovatelnyuyu deyatel'nost'* [History of Russia. 16th–18th centuries. 7th grade: lesson. For organizations carrying out educational activities], Balass, Moskva, 2015, pp.189–190.

¹⁷ N.M. Arsentev, A.A. Danilov, I.V. Kurukin & A.Ya. Tokareva, *Istoriya Rossii. 8 kl. Ucheb. dlya obshcheobrazovatelnykh organizatsiy. V 2 ch. Ch. 2* [History of Russia. 8th grade Study for general education organizations. In 2 v. Part 2], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2016, p.72.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ T.V. Chernikova & R.V. Pazin, *Istoriya Rossii. XVI – konets XVII veka. 7 kl.: uchebnik* [History of Russia. 16th - the end of the 17th century. 7th grade: textbook], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2021, p. 250.

²⁰ N.M. Arsentev, A.A. Danilov, I.V. Kurukin & A.Ya. Tokareva, *Istoriya Rossii. 8 kl. Ucheb. dlya obshcheobrazovatelnykh organizatsiy. V 2 ch. Ch. 2* [History of Russia. 8th grade

Ukrainian state”²¹. But generally, the strengthening of desubjectivization of Ukraine as a historical category is very noticeable in modern school literature. This is especially evident in the cycle of textbooks published in 2021, the editor-in-chief of which is the aforementioned V. Medynskyi (in total, 11 school textbooks on general history and “History of Russia” were published under his editorship that year). This was revealed in several moments.

First of all, it is worth noting that a significant mass of Ukrainian history is connected to historical phenomena that either took place in the past on the territory of modern Ukraine (that is, they belong to the “territorial” history of Ukraine), or were part of the history of the Ukrainian ethnos (that is, they could be considered as components of the “ethno-national” history of Ukraine) definitely considered as components of “History of Russia” / “History of our country”. In particular, the history of nomadic communities (Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians), Greek city-states of the Northern Black Sea region, including the Crimea, was unquestionably appropriated in this way. We can see the mentioned topics with corresponding interpretations in texts describing the initial periods of Russian history²².

The history of all the Russian principalities of the late Middle Ages, including Galicia-Volyn, and the Belarusian and Ukrainian lands presented as the history of Russia. For all Eastern Slavs until the 15th century, Russian-centric ethnic terminology is used. Despite ethnic differentiation in the Middle Ages, the population of the Eastern Slavic area has been called “Russians” / “Russian people” / “Russian people” many times, and more

Study for general education organizations. In 2 v. Part 2], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2016, p.73.

²¹ Danilov, Liseytshev, Pavlova & Rogozhkin, *op.cit.*, p. 134.

²² A.A. Danilov & L.G. Kosulina, *Istoriya Rossii s drevneyshikh vremen do kontsa XVI veka. 6 kl.: Ucheb. dlya obshcheobrazovatel'nykh uchrezhdeniy* [History of Russia from ancient times to the end of the 16th century. 6th grade: Textbook for general education established], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2015, pp. 9–10; N.M. Arsentev, A.A. Danilov, P.S. Stefanovich & A.Ya. Tokareva, *Istoriya Rossii. 6 kl. Ucheb. dlya obshcheobrazovatel'nykh organizatsiy. V 2 ch. Ch.1* [History of Russia. 6th grade Study for general education organizations. In 2 v. Part 1], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2016, p. 19; T.V. Chernikova & K.P. Chilikin, *Istoriya Rossii s drevneyshikh vremen do nachala XVI veka. 6 kl.: uchebnykh* [History of Russia from ancient times to the beginning of the 16th century. 6th grade: textbook], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2021, pp. 14–19.

correct ethnic dictionary has never been used. In one of the latest textbooks, the sequence of the presentation of the material about the main principalities after the “disintegration of the state of Rus” is picturesque: “§12. Galicia-Volyn principality; §13. Vladimir-Suzdal principality; §14. Lord Veliky Novgorod”²³. In the same textbook, the imperatives of the pre-revolutionary Russian imperial historiography about the “Russian” character of the Great Patriotic War underlined: “The majority of its territory was composed of Western Russian lands and Orthodox Western Russian population [...]. Chronicles in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were kept in Russian [...]”²⁴.

The other textbook, the Ukrainian Slobozhanshchyna goes “land in the south-west of Russia”, where the Russian government provided shelter (“tsar salary, bread and land”) to the Zaporizhia Cossacks, who, they say, were fleeing from the repressions of the “Polish authorities” after the defeat of the uprisings of 1630²⁵.

The authors of modern Russian school textbooks unapologetically appropriate the past of Southern Ukraine (in their terminology – “Novorossiia”) to their history, in the context of the annexation of these territories to the Russian Empire in the 18th century. Consciously, as it seems, the fact of a kind of political and “demographic” emptiness of Steppe Ukraine in the period of the end of the Middle Ages - early modern era is emphasized: they say that since ancient times there was an unoccupied “Wild Field” here as a “natural barrier that separated the Crimean Khanate from Russia and of the Commonwealth of Nations”²⁶. However, there was no tycoon colonization during the periods of the Great Patriotic War and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, nor the creation of Cossack communities, nor spontaneous colonization movements of the Ukrainian population during the Khmelnytskyi period and later times²⁷. Therefore, the responsible

²³ Chernikova & Chilikin, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 184.

²⁵ T.V. Chernikova & R.V. Pazin, *Istoriya Rossii. XVI – konets XVII veka. 7 kl.: uchebnik* [History of Russia. 16th - the end of the 17th century. 7th grade: textbook], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2021, p. 248.

²⁶ Arsentev, Danilov, Kurukin & Tokareva, *op.cit.*, p.50.

²⁷ V. Masnenko, V. Telvak, B. Yanyshyn & V. Telvak, *Identity transformation of the Ukrainian Donbas: from the “Wild field” to Russian occupation*, in “Analele Universității din Craiova. Istorie”, issue 2 (40), 2021, pp. 101–114.

imperial government with the “accession of Novorossia” to its own possessions had to “get busy” as for the resettlement of “foreigners” and Russian nobles together with their peasants²⁸ (at the same time, there was not a word said about the wave of colonization, just as, after all, nothing was said about the ethnic composition of the population of “Novorossiia”). Many “Russian” cities were, they say, founded, and Odessa “was destined to become the largest Russian port on the Black Sea”²⁹.

Russian policy regarding the Crimean Khanate, annexed by the empire in 1783, is described as purely complimentary. However, there was no brutal persecution of the Crimean Tatars, and the resettlement policy for this region was noted for its effectiveness: “The population of Crimea was insignificant. In 1783, it numbered no more than 60,000 people. They were mainly Crimean Tatars. The efforts of the authorities led to the fact that soon many Russians began to live here, as well as Bulgarians, Greeks, and Germans”³⁰. The authors of the textbook allegedly do not know that, escaping from the imperial “positive activity”, during the 1783-1860s, half of the Crimean Tatars “voted with their feet” (emigrating mainly to the Ottoman Empire)³¹.

In one of the guides to Russian history, the Ukrainian Donbas was accidentally integrated. In the methodical development for teachers, during the introductory lesson of the “History of Russia” course for 6th grade students (the topic of which is “Our Motherland is Russia”), it is recommended to show a slide that should tell that “during the Great Patriotic War (WWII) [...] in the village of Krasnodon, young men and women organized the “Young Guard” and, together with the partisans, carried out various diversions behind enemy lines”³².

²⁸ Arsentev, Danilov, Kurukin & Tokareva, *op.cit.*, pp. 50–52.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p.52.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p.53.

³¹ A. Kappeler, *Rosiiia yak polietnichna imperiia: vynyknennia, istoriia, rozpad* [Russia as a multi-ethnic empire: emergence, history, disintegration], UKU, Lviv, 2005, p. 42.

³² Ye. N. Sorokina, *Pourochnye razrabotki po istorii Rossii: k uchebniku N. M. Arsenteva, A. A. Danilova i dr. (M.: Prosveshchenie). 6 klass* [Post-class studies on the history of Russia: to the textbook of N. M. Arsentieva, A. A. Danilov and others. 6th grade], Chekhov, 2016, p. 12.

In the textbooks of 2021, the “treason” of the Ukrainian hetmans is emphasized. It looks like a kind of “intellectual innovation” that Khmelnytsky, a traditionally positive figure in Russian perception, was counted among the “traitors” who “idly dreamt” about the “independence of Little Russia”, because he was always considered a supporter of the union of Ukrainians with Moscow. This assessment of him is substantiated by the fact that at the end of his life he developed a plan to withdraw from the union of the Hetmanship with Russia and become a vassal dependent on Sweden. The reason for the “betrayal” of the hetmans is presented as if it was connected with Moscow’s reluctance to satisfy the state appetites of the Cossack elders, and not with Russia’s suppression of Ukrainian autonomy. According to the authors of the textbooks, the majority of the population of the Hetman region did not support the “traitor” hetmans³³.

Instead, the “integration of Little Russia” (that is, the incorporation of Hetmanship into the empire) is considered as a completely normal and natural process, which is explained as a manifestation of the desire of the Russian government of the time of Catherine II to follow the canons of the enlightenment ideals of social order and uniformity³⁴. It is also about the fact that “inhabitants of Little Russia and Great Russia (Ukrainians and Russians) were considered one folk, and this was another argument in favor of the same administrative system of Little Russia and Great Russia”³⁵. However, it is not explained (obviously, deliberately) to what extent this was the position of the Russian imperial officials of the 18th century corresponding to reality. Russia’s annexation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth territories is justified as follows: “It should be noted that during the splitting of Poland, Russia returned the original territories belonging to Russia, which were inhabited by the Orthodox population”³⁶.

³³ T.V. Chernikova & S.V. Agafonov, *Istoriya Rossii. Konets XVII – XVIII vek. Uchebnik. 8 kl.* [History of Russia. The end of the 17th - 18th centuries. Textbook 8th grade], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2021, pp. 40–42; Chernikova & Pazin, *op.cit.*, pp. 248–251.

³⁴ Chernikova & Agafonov, *op.cit.*, pp. 226–227.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 226.

³⁶ A.Yu. Morozov, E.N. Abdulaev, S.V. Tyurin & K.P. Chilikin, *Vseobshchaya istoriya. Istoriya Novogo vremeni. XVIII vek: 8 kl.: uchebnik* [Universal history. History of the New Age. XVIII century: 8th grade: textbook], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2021, p. 69.

Despite a lot of speculations in modern Russian school textbooks rotates around the topic of the “multinational Russian Empire”, the imperialism of Russia itself is not problematized. It is shown as a kind of natural norm: according to the authors of one of the textbooks, “the Russian state arose as a multinational one from the very beginning”, the method of its creation is veiled by the euphemisms “expansion of the empire” and “annexing peoples in its union”³⁷. The position of non-Russian ethnic groups is described in the categories of ethnic exoticism, not national decline, the procedure for managing the imperial space - as effective measures for imperial unification, and not oppression and restrictions, which resulted in either national leveling in some cases, or the growth of opposition to St. Petersburg in his attempts to curb national movements in others.

As for Ukrainians and their resistance to imperial policy, this problem allegedly did not exist. For example, one of the textbooks points to the “formation of national self-awareness among Belarusians” in the second half of the 19th century, at the same time Ukrainians are called “Malorosy”³⁸, and much more noticeable, at the same, similar processes were not observed among Ukrainians, not to mention manifestations of Ukrainian national activism. In another text, in the section “Politics of Russification of the Western Territory” we find two sentences about Ukraine’s status as an imperial province: “The publication of books in the Ukrainian language was limited to fiction style (who and when have it limited? In what way? And finally - why was it limited? No explanation. (Author)). Russian became the only language of education in Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine”³⁹ (once again, why did this situation become possible? Did it matter? Answers to these questions are generally necessary in this case, but the authors did not take care of the that. (Author)).

³⁷ Chernikova & Agafonov, *op.cit.*, p. 166.

³⁸ N.M. Arsentev, A.A. Danilov, A.A. Levandovskiy & A.Ya. Tokareva, *Istoriya Rossii. 9 kl. Ucheb. dlya obshcheobrazovatel. organizatsiy. V 2 ch. Ch. 1* [History of Russia. 9th grade Study for general education organizations. In 2 v. Part 1], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2016, p. 149.

³⁹ Ya.V. Vishnyakov, N.A. Mogilevskiy & S.V. Agafonov, *Istoriya Rossii. XIX – nachalo XX veka. 9 kl.* [History of Russia. 19th - early 20th century. 9th grade: textbook], Prosveshchenie, Moskva, 2021, p. 246.

The events of 1917–1921 in Ukraine are inscribed in Russian textbooks in the concept of an integral “Revolution and Civil War in Russia”. It cannot be said that the Ukrainian context of the revolutionary era was ignored - all the Ukrainian political entities of the Dnieper bank Ukraine at that time were mentioned, they were called “national governments”⁴⁰, and the Directory of the Ukrainian National People’s Republic, according to the Soviet historiographical tradition, was also called “bourgeois-nationalist”. At the same time, the relevant material is written with clear sentiment towards the actual “Ukrainian Soviet governments”, which headed the “Ukrainian Soviet Republic”⁴¹. It was noted that the Ukrainian government “did not enjoy the support of the population”. The policies of the Ukrainian Soviet governments are not criticized in any way, and the very method of their establishment in Ukraine is ignored by the authors, with the exception of the telling sentence about how the “Ukrainian Soviet government” won victories over the Ukrainian authorities in the winter of 1917–1918: “At the request of the Ukrainian of the Soviet government to fight against the Central Rada, the USSR troops arrived (sic!) in Ukraine”.

We should note the authors of modern school textbooks describe the history of the USSR quite carefully, without eulogies, including the Stalin period. And this looks like a reflection of the Russian academic view of the Soviet era. Of course, the genocidal qualification of the Great famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine is categorically denied, which corresponds to the conceptual guidelines of both Kremlin ideologues and Russian academic science. The tragic events of the early 1930s are described lapidarily, and the description itself does not contain a clear answer to the question of whether the famine was an unintended and unplanned result of the Kremlin’s erroneous / criminal decisions in the course of implementing the policy of collectivization, or whether it had a conscious, regime-made character, and was aimed at achieving certain political goals. One textbook tells about a common “tragedy”, which was not the result of the deliberate actions of the

⁴⁰Horinov, M. M., Danilov, A. A., & Morukov, M. Yu, *History of Russia. 10 cl. Study for general education organizations*, In 3 v, Part 1, Prosvechstenie, Moscow, 2016.

⁴¹V. Telvak & W. Werner, *Interest in historical figures on the World Wide Web as a marker of historical consciousness in contemporary Ukraine*, in “Eminak”, issue 1 (41), 2023, pp. 234–254.

Stalinist leadership, but the result of the disorganization of agriculture due to the policy of complete collectivization, as well as unfavorable weather conditions. However, the conscious actions of the government, which hid the fact of famine from the world and exported grain abroad in order to obtain currency, are actually recognized. In another text, along with the fact of unjustified “social experiments” and a significant increase in the amount of grain seized for the needs of the state in order to sell abroad and cover “expenses for industrialization”, it is said that “the peasants were not left with even the necessary minimum of grain for the needs of feeding families and carrying out sowing”⁴². If in one case no specific regions affected by famine are named, in others four regions are indicated, including Ukraine (the other three are the Volga river region, the North Caucasus, Kazakhstan)⁴³.

In modern Russian school literature, we find only fragmentary references to the events of the WWII in the actual Ukrainian context. Quite a bit has been said about the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian nationalists) and the UIA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) in terms of the topic of “national movements” during the war. At the same time, the story is presented in a factual manner. For example, there are sharp accusations against the Russian Liberation Army.

The assertion of Ukraine’s independence, like that of other former republics of the USSR, is considered in the context of the disintegration of the USSR and is quite neutral. However, the “color revolutions” of the 2000s in the countries of the post-Soviet space - Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan - were evaluated negatively. In Ukraine and Georgia, they are said to have been created not so much by the internal situation in these states as by the USA, the EU, and NATO. It is noted that in 2004, V. Yanukovych, who “advocated for strengthening relations with Russia”, was deprived of a

⁴²D.D. Danilov, V.G. Petrovich, D.Yu. Belichenko, P.I. Selinov, V.M. Antonov, A.V. Kuznetsov & D.V. Liseytshev, *Istoriya. Seredina XIX – nachalo XXI v. 11 kl.: ucheb. dlya organizatsiy, osushchestvlyayushchikh obrazovatelnyuyu deyatel'nost. Bazovyy i uglublennyy urovni. V 2 ch. Ch. 1* [History The middle of the 19th - the beginning of the 21st century. 11th grade: lesson. for organizations carrying out educational activities. Basic and in-depth levels. In 2 v, Part 1], Balass, Moskva, 2016, p. 326.

⁴³*Ibidem*, p. 326; O.V. Volobuev, S.P. Karpachev & P.N. Romanov, *Istoriya Rossii: nachalo XX – nachalo XXI v. 10 kl.: uchebnik* [History of Russia: the beginning of the 20th - the beginning of the 21st century. 10th grade: textbook], Drofa, Moskva, 2016, p. 106.

legitimate victory, instead, under pressure from the opposition and Western countries, a third round of elections was initiated, in which Yushchenko, “a supporter of Ukraine’s entry into NATO”, won. During Yushchenko presidency, “the degree of nationalism increased”, “Ukrainian youth were brought up in a nationalist spirit”, “political and ideological pressure on the Russian-speaking population increased”⁴⁴, “ignoring the interests of millions of its own citizens, Ukrainian authorities forced the Russian language out of mass media, film distribution, and the education system”.

The social and political processes of 2013–2014 in Ukraine, the beginning of Russia’s hybrid war against our country are described in full harmony with their official interpretations. It is interesting that one of the textbooks recognizes the fact of a “massive national uprising” during the second Maidan and the just nature of the demands of the “opposition forces” who rebelled against V. Yanukovych⁴⁵. However, the authors of Russian textbooks qualify the events of the Revolution of Dignity as the “overthrow of the legally elected” President V. Yanukovych and the implementation of a coup d’état⁴⁶.

At the center of the school narrative regarding the events in Ukraine in 2014 is the substantiation of the legal legitimacy and historical justification of the “reunification of Crimea with Russia”, as well as the legitimacy of the establishment of pro-Russian enclaves in the East of Ukraine. The material is presented in such a way that the alleged annexation of the Ukrainian Crimea by Russia was the result of the free choice of the local population, and not the rapid occupation of the peninsula by the regular Russian army. Russia, they say, initially only carried out the mission of a “peacemaker” who sought to prevent “bloodshed” between supporters of the Maidan and its opponents on the peninsula. “Russian servicemen” “did not interfere in anything”, but only “guarded the premises of the parliament, the airport and some other objects”,

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p. 340.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 341.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, pp. 341–342; V.A. Nikonov & S.V. Devyatov, *Istoriya Rossii. 1914 g. – nachalo XXI v.: uchebnyk dlya 10 kl. obshcheobrazovatelnykh organizatsiy. Bazovyy i uglublennyy urovni: v 2 ch. Ch.2: 1945 g. – nachalo XXI v.* [History of Russia. 1914 - the beginning of the 21st century: a textbook for 10th grade. general education organizations. Basic and in-depth levels. In 2 v. Part 2: 1945 - the beginning of the 21st century], OOO Russkoe slovo – uchebnyk, Moskva, 2021, pp. 194–195.

which made it possible to avoid “possible bloodshed”⁴⁷. Soon, Russia nobly responded to the results of the all-Crimean referendum on March 16 “on the fate of Crimea” (again, apparently organized without any outside interference), in full compliance with international law, by deciding on its “inclusion” in the Russian Federation⁴⁸.

The events in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions are interpreted in accordance with the Russian official narrative: in the spring of 2014, the “rebels” who “struggled for the recognition of the state status of the Russian language” and “self-government” encountered a “repressive policy” and then an armed “punitive operation” of the “Kyiv authorities”. In such conditions, when Kyiv did not want to enter into a “dialogue” with the “insurgents”, many Russians “voluntarily began to provide assistance to them”, because their aspirations, as well as “the rejection of the nationalism of the Kyiv authorities by the majority of the population of the southeastern regions of Ukraine”, were met “sympathy of Russian society”⁴⁹.

In 2014, “in the fresh wake” of the annexation, a special methodical manual for teachers was released, which was probably intended to provide more extensive arguments than in the current textbooks for the assertion of the Russian historical registration of Crimea. This text by K. Kochegarov⁵⁰ is densely sprinkled with quotes from V. Putin, and the main message is quite frank – it is a Putin phrase chosen for the epigraph from his message to the Russian Parliament dated March 18, 2014, with the words that that Crimea “has always been and remains an inseparable part of Russia”⁵¹. According to the author, it was especially difficult for Crimeans (including Ukrainians) to live in the period from 1991 to 2014. The “Crimean Spring” of 2014 brought them liberation from the “oppression of Ukrainization”, and they have a bright future ahead of them, colorfully depicted in the chapter - epilogue “Future of Crimea as part of Russia”.

⁴⁷ Volobuev, Karpachev & Romanov, *op.cit.*, p. 342.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 342; Nikonov & Devyatov, *op.cit.*, pp. 195–196.

⁴⁹ Volobuev, Karpachev & Romanov, *op.cit.*, p. 343.

⁵⁰ Baturina, *op.cit.* 2016, pp. 476–477.

⁵¹ K.A. Kochegarov, *Krym v istorii Rossii: metodicheskoe posobie dlya uchiteley obshcheobrazovatelnykh organizatsiy* [Krym in the history of Russia: a methodical manual for teachers of general education organizations], OOO Russkoe slovo – uchebnik, Moskva, 2014, p. 3.

CONCLUSIONS

The content of school historical literature in Putin's Russia, mainly after 2014, is vastly correlated with the ideas of the Kremlin bureaucracy about why and how it is worth telling the Russian population about the past. It is about the state-centric and imperial-centric representation of the history of Russia. In school textbooks, the actual identification of the history of Russia with the history of the Russian states and emphasis on their historical greatness and achievements is noticeable much. One of the greatest achievements of Russia is the creation and functioning of the Russian "multinational empire", which confidently "annexed" peoples and painlessly civilized them. But there are also unfavorable assessments of the policies of the Romanov state government, including national, but such plots are inferior both in volume and persuasiveness to the typically heroic and pathetic line of coverage of the past. It seems that the Russian school textbooks depict the Soviet era, including the Stalin era, in a relatively balanced way. At the same time, it is believed that the shortcomings of its national policy have been corrected in modern Russia, which is allegedly successfully conducting a course to strengthen the civic identity of the Russian multi-ethnic nation.

Historical events from the Ukrainian past are included in the general logic of school history outlined above. If we try to highlight the academic level and ideological connotations of textbook interpretations of the history of Ukraine with the most general term, then, to our opinion, we are talking about limited subjectivity.

First. Until the 15th century, Ukrainians and accordingly a separate Ukrainian history for textbook authors did not exist. All that has been until now is "Russian" history, which was created by "Russian people".

Second. On the pages of school texts, students are convinced that significant segments of Russian history took place on the territory of modern Ukraine, thereby forcing them to believe that modern Russia has a historical right to them. The nomadic communities of the Northern Black Sea region and the Greek city-states of the same region were in no way connected with the formation of the Russian ethnos, the modern multinational community,

which in Russia is called “Russians”, or the current territory of the Russian Federation recognized by international law. The history of “Old Russia” / “Old Russian State” has an indirect relation to the history of Russia, and the history of the princely lands of South-Western Russia of the 12th-14th centuries has no relation whatsoever. and these same areas as part of the GLS. What is described as the “history of Novorossiya” is actually the history of the imperial mastery and reclaim of Southern Ukraine. And of course, in no other way than the territory of imperial annexation and imperial colonization, which were committed twice (in 1783 and 2014), the history of Crimea is not a component of the history of Russia.

Third. Although Ukrainians are recognized as authors of school texts as a separate ethnic group, their presence on the map of the past is fragmentary and largely distorted. Episodic references to Ukrainians do not provide answers to questions about perhaps the most important milestones in its history. For example, the era of the Hetmanship, the aspirations of its elite for independence from Russia are mostly evaluated not as a legitimate realization of the natural right of every people to independent existence, but as a selfish policy of the Hetmans, not supported by the majority of the Ukrainian population. Important events of Ukrainian history of the 19th - early 21st centuries, which are mentioned in Russian school literature (Ukrainian nation-building during the imperial era, the Ukrainian revolution of 1917–1921, national liberation movements of Ukrainians in the 20th century, and the establishment of modern Ukraine) are described from the perspective of their insignificance and infidelity - to the opinion of Russian authors, they did not enjoy serious support from Ukrainian society and were not able to satisfy its aspirations. Only those Ukrainian governments and socio-political forces that agreed to de facto colonial dependence on Russia are considered important and progressive.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that we have not found the most toxic theses of the Russian president and Kremlin propagandists on the pages of Russian school literature on history. When reading a school textbook, a Russian school lad will not come across true historical nonsense, such as the statement that Ukrainians and Russians are “the same people” (although, as shown above, certain movements in instilling such ideas have already been

made), he will not find there and nostalgia for the Soviet Union. So, we can see that in school historical didactics in the period up to and including 2021, a certain minimum of scientific adequacy was observed, in particular with regard to the “Ukrainian” case, and the school narrative differed in a certain way from the Kremlin propaganda narrative (although such differences with the gradual strengthening of government control over textbook creation and the sharp change in the political course and propaganda rhetoric of the Kremlin after 2014 became less and less). Whether this is about the observance of basic academic decency and the permissible ignoring of the most blatant delusions, or about the insufficient level of centralization of textbook creation and ideological pressure on textbook authors, or about the game of democracy and the game of respecting educational and academic freedoms, or about all of this together - you can just guess.

After the beginning of the large-scale armed invasion of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, we are witnessing the rapid establishment of unconditional control of the Russian authorities over historical education. Already in the spring of 2022, Russian publishing houses have begun the process of “editing” current textbooks for positive or neutral references to our country⁵². As an employee of the leading Russian school publishing house “Prosvetshenie” expressed anonymously, “our aim is to make as if Ukraine simply does not exist”⁵³. Already on the eve of the new 2022/2023 academic year, textbooks edited in accordance with the conjuncture of the “special military operation” reached schoolchildren, they describe events up to and including 2021⁵⁴.

Beginning the autumn 2022, the new political reality “integrates” rapidly into the RF school history course in a normative sense. In September,

⁵²Ye. Nesterova, *Pered nami zadacha – sdelat tak, budto Ukrainy prosto net. Iz uchebnikov izdatelstva “Prosvetshenie” ubirayut upominaniya Kieva i Ukrainy* [The task before us is to make it as if Ukraine simply does not exist. Mentions of Kyiv and Ukraine are being removed from the textbooks published by “Prosvetshenie”]. Retrieved from <https://zona.media/article/2022/04/23/enlightenment>.

⁵³ Ibidem.

⁵⁴ N. Mikhnenko, *Vek vrozhdennoy Rossii. O chem govoritsya v novykh shkolnykh uchebnikakh po istorii* [The Age of Renaissance Russia. What is said in the new school history textbooks]. Retrieved from <https://poligon.media/v-novyh-shkolnyh-uchebnikah-po-istorii/>.

the RF parliament adopted amendments to the current legislation in the field of secondary education, according to which starting from 2023/2024 unified mandatory federal programs in humanitarian disciplines are being introduced in Russian secondary educational institutions (the RF parliament adopted the draft law, 2022). In the same month, changes were made to the federal state educational standard in accordance with the order of the Minister of Education of the Russia. According to one, after studying a school history course, graduates will have to understand “the importance of Russia in world and socio-economic processes”, as well as understand the causes and consequences of “the collapse of the USSR, the revival of the Russian Federation as a world power, the reunification of Crimea with Russia, a special military operation in Ukraine and other important events of the 20th and early 21st centuries.”

On December 22, 2022, the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation approved a new school curriculum in history (the Ministry of Education approved the school curriculum in 2022), and the introduction of changes to the textbooks that correlate with that conception. That was entrusted to V. Medinsky. As reported by the Minister of Education of the Russian Federation, by the end of January - the beginning of February 2023, the “first drafts” of uniform textbooks on general history and the history of Russia should have been worked out, and in March 2023, textbooks for senior classes should be ready. Therefore, the idea of the Russian president about complete unification and ideological indoctrination of school history education will most likely be implemented in full.