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**SCHOOL HISTORY EDUCATION IN THE TEMPORARY OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF UKRAINE (2014 – 2022): IDEAS OF “RUSSIAN WORLD” AGAINST THE CONCEPT OF THE UKRAINIAN STATE**

**Abstract.** *The purpose of the article is to analyze the course “History of Motherland” at schools on temporary occupied territories of Donetsk region. On the basis of the overview of syllabus contents in general and the stages of Ukrainian state-building in particular, the authors have highlighted a manipulative nature of syllabus and identified hybrid threats as consequences of its applying. Research Methodology.* The authors make conclusions considering the fact that school education has a huge impact on shaping the worldview and mounding opinions of a person. The study is based on civilizational and anthropocentric approaches, the method of content analysis has been applied. **Scientific Novelty.** An attempt to analyze the content and purpose of historical education at secondary schools on the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk region has been made in historiography of Ukraine for the first time. **Conclusions.** Teaching History in the occupied territories is an important

component of the Russian propaganda aiming at forming the Russian identity among young people. By twisting past events students are convinced that they are part of “Russky mir” (Russian world). Primarily, it refers to elimination of the events, connected with Ukrainian state formation, as well as the lack of information about national rebirth and national identity which is supposed to be the basis of the Ukrainian modern nation formation. Moreover, the Ukrainian past of Donetsk region is either hidden or distorted in favour of Putin’s ideology which creates a complete rejection of their own history and Ukrainian identity among young people. As a result, anti-Ukrainian nature of the educational course aims at eliminating their own historical memory among students and impose a new made-up one which is beneficial to Russia.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, today one of the main tasks of the Ukrainian historians is to find the ways to combat Russian information propaganda as school History course in the temporarily occupied territories can definitely be classified as information-propaganda tool of Russia’s hybrid warfare against Ukraine.

**Key words:** school history education, temporarily occupied territories, hybrid threats, “Russky mir”, historical instrumentalization, civilizational approach.

### ШКІЛЬНА ІСТОРИЧНА ОСВІТА НА ТИМЧАСОВО ОКУПОВАНИХ ТЕРИТОРІЯХ УКРАЇНИ (2014 – 2022): ІДЕЇ “РУССКОГО МИРА” ПРОТИ КОНЦЕПЦІЇ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ДЕРЖАВНОСТІ

**Анотація.** Метою статті є аналіз курсу “история отечества” для шкіл тимчасово окупованої території Донецької області. На основі розгляду змістового наповнення програм, а саме крізь призму етапів українського державотворення, автори показали їхній маніпулятивний характер та ідентифікували гібридні загрози як наслідок їх використання. **Методологія дослідження.** Автори зважали на положення, що на формування світогляду і переконань людини значно впливає шкільна освіта. За основу дослідження взято цивілізаційний та антропоцентричний підходи, застосовано метод контент-аналізу. **Наукова новизна.** Уперше у вітчизняній історіографії проаналізовано зміст та мету використання програми з історії у закладах середньої освіти на території тимчасово окупованої Донецької області. **Висновки.** Викладання історії на окупованих територіях є важливим складником російської пропаганди, завдання якої – формування в молоді російської ідентичності. За допомогою перекручування подій минулого школярам насаджується думка, що вони є частиною “русского мира”. Насамперед це виявляється у витісненні подій, пов’язаних з українським державотворенням, а також відсутністю інформації про національне відродження та національну ідею, що є основою формування української модерної нації. Водночас українське минуле Донеччини чи приховано, чи викривлено на користь російської путінської ідеології, що формує в молоді абсолютне несприйняття власної історії та свого українського “Я”. Отже, антиукраїнський характер програми покликаний знищити в молодого покоління власну історичну пам’ять та нав’язати вигадану нову, вигідну для Росії.

Зважаючи на це, в умовах сучасності одним із головних завдань українських істориків є винайдення шляхів протидії російській інформаційній пропаганді, адже курс шкільної історії на тимчасово окупованих територіях однозначно можна класифікувати як інформаційно-пропагандистський інструмент гібридної війни Росії проти України.

**Ключові слова:** шкільна історична освіта, тимчасово окуповані території, гібридні загрози, “русский мир”, інструменталізація історії, цивілізаційний підхід.

**Problem Statement.** The concept of “Russky mir” (Russian world), which emerged at the beginning of the 2000s as a philosophical and historical basis for defining the past, present, and most importantly, future existence of the Russian Federation, quickly turned into a political technology, the purpose of which was “to promote Russian great-power chauvinism and interfere in the internal affairs of post-Soviet countries” (Holovko, 2021). The effects of this political technology were among the first to be felt by residents of the temporarily

occupied Donetsk region in 2014. Among numerous manifestations of the “Russky mir” the focus of Putin’s ideologists is on secondary education institutions, because it is there that the future of the “young republic” is being educated.

In order to shape consciousness of a younger generation in the formulas of the “Russky mir”, the occupation authorities, with the support of Russia, exercise a strict control over school History subjects, which have become a significant tool for the ideological education of the youth of the so-called “dnr”. Currently, a whole generation of schoolchildren is growing up under the rule of “Russky mir”. It is necessary to determine the ways of “returning” the mind, consciousness, identity, and historical memory of young people after the de-occupation of Ukrainian territories. Our knowledge of how children were taught and what they were taught will become fundamental. The above mentioned explains the choice of the publication topic – the study of the school course syllabus “History of Motherland”, according to which, until recently, History has been taught in the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk region.

The significance of this issue found its implementation in the project “Stop Instrumentalization of History” of the programme “Learn and Distinguish: Info-Media Literacy”, implemented by the International Research and Exchanges Council (IREX), whose participants were teachers and students of Donbas State Pedagogical University in 2020 – 2022.

**Review of Sources and Recent Research.** Nowadays in Ukraine, historical events are covered using modern academic knowledge and approaches that place domestic history in the context of European history (Dvorkin, Telukha, & Kharchenko, 2021, p. 367). The Soviet narrative is finally receding into the past (the myth of the “Great Patriotic War” has been destroyed, the terms such as “Soviet occupation”, “deportation”, etc. have been introduced into History course), and domestic researchers try to bring Ukrainian historical education closer to the level of developed democratic states.

Instead, the historical policy of the Russian Federation rejects the values of democracy (primarily democratic freedoms), the European civilizational choice. Russia actively manipulates its own (and Ukrainian) history in order to create a historical myth and form the concept of “Russky mir”, which combines the imperial and Soviet narratives.

Domestic researchers study such “manipulations” actively, in particular in the aspects of: the Russian propaganda, which has become an important element of preparation for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine (Ilnytskyi, Starka, & Haliv, 2022); the image construction of the enemy and ideological legitimization of aggression wars in their historiography (Kalakura, 2022); a clear and vivid anti-Ukrainian and repressive nature of historical policy in Russia (Udod, 2022); manipulative strategy of distorting the past as a component of Russia’s anti-Ukrainian policy in Eastern Ukraine (Lozovyi, 2018); militarization of educational process in the temporarily occupied territories (Demianenko, & Demianenko, 2021) etc. The work of Mykola Haliv and Vasyl Ilnytsky is of theoretical importance for our research (Haliv, & Ilnytskyi, 2023).

There should be noted the studies by Ukrainian historian Larysa Yakubova “Ontology of Racism: Ukraine as Russia’s Alter Ego” (Yakubova, 2022), “Racism: Beast from Abyss” (Yakubova, 2023). The researcher focused on “racism” as “the highest stage of “Russky mir”” (Yakubova, 2023, p. 24) and answered important questions of today: why Putin’s Russia became totalitarian; what is the essence of racism and how it threatens both Ukraine and the world.

The scholars’ studies on school History education in Russia are worth noting, because the academic discipline “History” in the eyes of the aggressor state is an important tool

for ideological education of youth. Thus, Vitaliy Yaremchuk (Yaremchuk, 2023) stated that official Russian historical policy became the basis of Russian school History course (Yaremchuk, 2023, p. 180). In Russia schoolchildren are taught that Ukraine is not a “different,” “foreign” state, but a component of the Russian narrative, i.e. “their” history. Topics related to Ukrainian history in school textbooks are “subordinated to the logic of the state-imperial narrative of Russian history”. The author aptly noted that in Russian historical education there is an absolute “desubjectivization” of the history of Ukraine (Yaremchuk, 2023, pp. 176, 179, 183).

Svitlana Baturina analyzed the content of Russian textbooks for the period from 2009 to 2015 and concluded that the history of Ukraine was not singled out as an independent category and was considered in the context of Russian history (Baturina, 2016, p. 477).

Yaroslav Motenko and Yevhenia Shyshkina study the education system in the territories temporarily not controlled by Ukraine as a means of political propaganda by the Russian Federation (Motenko, & Shyshkina, 2021). The authors’ research is based on the study of educational literature of local history for the course “History of Motherland”. The authors stated that the publications they analyzed are a tool of informational and psychological influence and concluded that “there is an urgent need to develop methods for determining potential risks contained in the course “History of Motherland” as a means of representing the past” (Motenko, & Shyshkina, 2021, pp. 107, 108, 109, 110).

**The purpose** of the article is to consider the syllabuses of “History of Motherland” course at schools in the temporarily occupied territory of Donetsk region as a means of instrumentalizing history and historical memory in the context of the policy of Putin’s Russia. To this end, we will trace the process of “desubjectivization” of Ukrainian history through the displacement of Ukrainian statehood concept and transition from a Ukrainian-centric discourse to a Russian-centric one in school History course in the temporarily occupied territories.

The research is based on civilizational and anthropocentric approaches, and the content analysis method has been applied.

**Results of the Research.** The school course syllabus “History of Motherland” is taken as a historical source (Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019; Programma: 10–11 klassy”, 2019) for schools in the so-called “dnr”. The syllabus developers represent secondary schools, methodological institutions, and educational governing bodies. The scientific and methodological editing of the syllabuses was carried out by the rector and vice-rector of Donetsk republican institute of additional pedagogical education, and they were reviewed by a representative of a higher school (candidate of historical sciences, head of the department of Donetsk University) and a secondary school (a teacher-methodologist). The syllabuses were compiled on the basis of the “State Educational Standard of Basic General Education of the Donetsk people’s republic” and put into effect by order of the ministry of education and science of the so-called “dnr”.

Checking documents on the anti-plagiarism system showed that the syllabus is a compilation of various works. Thus, an analysis of the explanatory note of the syllabus “History of Motherland” for Grades 10–11 showed that the text uniqueness was 13.08%. Sites that contain original information are educational sites of schools in the Republic of Tatarstan and other schools in Russia and (!?) syllabuses of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

The syllabus “History of Motherland” was republished several times with additions and changes. To determine the process of transition from a Ukrainian-centric to Russian-centric

discourse, a comparative analysis of the syllabus in the 2015, 2017, and 2019 editions has been conducted. The choice of years is due to access to these documents on the Internet.

Characterizing the editions of different years, we note changes in the final list of recommended literature, which indicate the displacement of textbooks from the Ukrainian publishing houses. Thus, in the syllabuses of 2015 and 2017, six out of 58 positions belong to publishing houses of Kyiv and Zaporizhzhia. These were Ukrainian textbooks published in Russian and dedicated to various periods of world history. In 2019, the list of literature contains 44 items, from which previous works by Ukrainian publishers were completely removed. Instead, six studies on local history published in Donetsk from 1998 to 2014 were added. We believe that the reason for rejecting a number of studies was precisely the fact that they were published on the territory of Ukraine (with the exception of the temporarily occupied territory of Donetsk region). A comparison of the texts also shows that the 2019 edition contains significantly more inconsistencies, violations in structure and logic of presentation than the previous ones.

***According to M. Hrushevsky's concept of Ukrainian statehood, its first form and stage was the Kyivan state.*** Let's trace how the syllabus for Grade 7 presents one of the most important topics of medieval history. The history of the Kyivan state is presented in the 2019 syllabus in the spirit of Russian imperial and Soviet historiography. This is indicated by the prevalence of the concept of "Old Russian state" and its derivatives. Starting from the period of the 15th – 16th centuries, the concept of "Old Russian State" is replaced by "Russian".

The use of such a name for the state of Rus' is undoubtedly a tool of information warfare and russification. The concept of "Rus'" is being replaced by "Russian", i. e. the identification of medieval state of Rus' with modern Russia as its direct successor. An unconscious, uncritical belief is embedded in the minds of students that the lands of Ukraine should be part of modern Russia, which makes the aggression by the eastern neighbour justified and legitimate in their eyes.

Let us analyze the terminology associated with the era of the Kyivan state in the context of the issue of abandoning the Ukrainian-centric discourse during the period of 2015 – 2019. The scope of analysis included topics related to the formation, flourishing, and fragmentation of Rus'. We identified three terminological groups: 1) terms that are not typical of modern Russian historiography and are used by Ukrainian scholars ("Kyivan Rus'", "Kyivan state", "Kyivan princes"); 2) the terms that were used by both Ukrainian and Russian historiography before the beginning of the Russian aggression in 2014, today only the latter is used, with the exception of the name "Rus'" ("Rus'", "Ancient Rus'", "Ancient Rus' state", "Ancient Rus' princes", etc.); 3) the terms of purely Russian historiography, which modernize the terms "Rus'", "Russky" to identify them with the modern concepts "Russia", "russian" ("russian state", "russian culture").

In the 2015 syllabus, in the topics of the Kyivan state era, more than a third of the terms (13 or 38%) used in the content of the topics belong to Ukrainian historiography. Terms that were used equally by historians in Ukraine and Russia until 2014 make up half (17 or 50%) (Programma: 7 klass, 2015, pp. 18–20). That is, from 38% to 88% of the content of the relevant topics of the 2015 syllabus is based on Ukrainian predecessor texts.

In the 2017 syllabus, the terms referring to the Kyivan state that refer to Kyiv were removed (replaced). There is no doubt that this was done purposefully so that students would not have a logical chain in the components "state with a centre in Kyiv in the Middle Ages" – "a modern state with a centre in Kyiv – Ukraine", Kyivan Rus' as the beginnings



of Ukrainian statehood. The term “Kyivan Rus’” in 2017 and 2019 was used once in the same sentence, which defines the requirements for a student’s knowledge: “...shows ... the territory of Kyivan Rus’ during the reign of Volodymyr Sviatoslavych, Yaroslav the Wise, Volodymyr Monomakh” (Programma: 7 klass, 2017, p. 15; Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, p. 30). The above mentioned allows us to conclude that this Ukrainian term was not removed by accident, it was not noticed.

The cleansing of Ukrainian historical science from the Russian imperial terminology to refer to Rus’ (“Ancient Rus’ State”), prompted by the events of 2014, exacerbates a mental gap between representatives of the generation of Ukrainians who receive school education in the temporarily occupied territory and Ukrainian youth in the territory controlled by Ukraine.

As for the tradition in Russian historiography of using the term “Russian” to denote “Rus’”, in Grade 7 of the 2019 edition it almost dissolves between the concepts of “Rus’” and “Ancient Rus’ State”. However, in the last two topics, the term “Russian” and its derivatives are used 29 times, compared to 13 times for the term “Rus’” (Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, pp. 32–25). This distortion of historical processes of the Middle Ages is designed to form an identification of the medieval state of Rus’ with modern Russia, while appealing to patriotic feelings, especially when used in an ideological context: “The idea of the unity of the Russian lands”, “The struggle of the Russian people against Horde rule” (Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, pp. 31, 32).

**The Term “Ukraine”.** Continuing the topic of displacement of terms denoting Ukrainian statehood in the past and present, let us analyze the contexts of the absence/presence of the term “Ukraine” in the syllabus, in particular for Grade 8. It should be noted that in Grade 8 the name “Ukraine” is almost never used (although this polytonym also existed in modern times), and the historical names “Hetmanate” and “Malorosiya” are used. At the same time, the name “Ukraine” suddenly appears in the material from the middle of the 17th century in a sentence regarding the Pereyaslav Treaty of 1654: “The Entry of Ukraine into Russia” (Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, p. 44). If we follow the logic of the syllabus presentation, the use of historical names of the states “Hetmanate” and “Moscow Kingdom” is expected. This makes it possible to conclude that avoidance of the polytonym “Ukraine” is deliberate. At the same time, in our opinion, the appearance of the very formulation “Ukraine’s accession to Russia” is not accidental. It should form the idea in students the confidence that Ukraine became a part of the Russian state back in the 17th century, and therefore, Russia’s modern encroachments on the sovereignty of the Ukrainian state are natural.

In Topic 4, Grade 8 syllabus, the National Liberation War (or, according to another concept, the revolution) led by B. Khmelnytsky is presented in the spirit of modern Russian historiography as an uprising (Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, p. 44), which reduces the significance and scale of key events in the life of the Ukrainian people in the mid-17th century. This topic, which was significant for the formation of Ukrainian statehood, was even interpreted as a war (“national liberation anti-feudal”) in the Soviet historiography.

Let’s turn to the comparison of the content of the “History of Motherland” syllabus for Grade 8 of the 2017 and 2019 editions. The above-mentioned sentence of 2019 “Ukraine’s entry into Russia” sounded somewhat different in 2017: “... entry into Russia of Hetmanship (Left Bank Ukraine)”, “The Entry of Left Bank Ukraine into Russia” (Programma: 8 klass, 2017, p. 16). Thus, despite the inconsistency of using the modernized name of Russia alongside the historical name of Ukraine (Hetmanate), at least from the 2017 edition it became clear that it was about the inclusion of only part of the territory of modern Ukraine – Left Bank.

Also noteworthy are the changes in students' academic achievements in the context of the topic: the 2017 edition "(a student analyzes – *Author*) ... the significance of the Hetmanate becoming part of Russia" was replaced by the 2019 edition "(a student expresses an opinion – *Author*) ... on the nature and initiatives of Ukraine becoming part of Russia" (Programma: 8 klass, 2017, p. 17; Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, p. 45). That is, the 2017 edition focuses on the significance of the event (and therefore, primarily, for Russia), while the 2019 edition focuses on the alleged desire of the Ukrainians to become part of Russia (which satisfies Russia).

In the context of the targeted displacement of terms that refer to Ukraine/Ukrainian, it is telling to count the number of times these names are used in the syllabus, the ratio with the use of names "Russia"/"Russian". We obtained the following data: the lexeme "Ukraine" and its derivatives occur in Grade 8 4 times (twice – as "Ukrainian fortified line"), in Grade 9 – only once (the concept of "Ukrainian elite"); the lexeme "Malorosiya"/"Malorosiysky" occurs in Grade 8 4 times, in Grade 9 – twice, while the lexemes "Russia"/"Russian" are used in Grade 8 114 times, in Grade 9 – 99 times (twice – in the lexeme "anti-Russian" regarding the national movement in Western Ukrainian lands) (Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, pp. 39–49, 53–61).

In Grade 10, the lexemes "Ukraine" or "Ukrainian" were used only three times, twice as derivatives ("Ukrainization", etc.). In Grade 11, these lexemes were used 20 times (of which derivatives – 5 times), and in seventeen cases with a negative connotation (in the context of the collapse of the USSR, relations with Donbas before and after 2014). Instead, the lexemes "Russia"/"Russian" were used in Grade 10 90 times (the lexemes "USSR", "Soviet" were also used in the same meaning 76 times), in Grade 11 – 89 times (the lexemes "USSR", "Soviet" were also used 142 times) (Programma: 10–11 klassy, 2019, pp. 16–46).

***National and cultural revival as a component of state-building processes.*** The syllabus for Grade 9 "History of Motherland" course (covering the 19th century) avoids mentioning of Ukrainian nation-building. Vitaliy Yaremchuk drew attention to the "imitation" of Russian school History textbooks, which inform about the formation of national consciousness, for example, the Belarusians, while continuing to call the Ukrainians "Malorosy", as if there were no Ukrainian national revival. (Yaremchuk, 2023, p. 185).

If the 2017 syllabus for Grade 9 still includes the item "introducing them [students – *Author*] to the spiritual values and cultural achievements of the Ukrainian and other peoples of their native land..." in the list of expected results after studying the course (Programma: 9 klass, 2017, p. 20), in the 2019 syllabus we do not find clear references to the Ukrainian people.

Returning to the analysis of the 2019 syllabus, we draw attention to the subtopic "Public Movement and National Policy in the 30s-50s of the 19th Century". The syllabus compilers, for example, mentioned national policy in the Kingdom of Poland and the issue of Jews in the Russian Empire. Then comes the following text: "The situation in the Western Region (Cyril and Methodius Student Society)" (Programma: 5–9 klassy, 2019, p. 55). The question arises: whose situation is the sentence referring to? In this case, the authors do not specify the information that should connect these events specifically with the Ukrainians. By the way, in the 2017 syllabus, students are required to give examples of Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish social movements in the 20s – 50s of the 19th century (Programma: 9 klass, 2017, p. 16). In the 2019 syllabus, the compilers noted that students should name the main directions of social movement of this period, i. e. they avoided clarifications that would specify the movements, including the Ukrainian one (Programma 5–9 klassy, 2019, p. 56).

The next important point that is worth emphasizing is the mention of Ukrainian movements, contained in Topic 4 "Russian Empire and Donetsk Region in the 2nd half

of the 19th Century (Social and Political Aspect)". The compilers defined the community movement, of course, mentioned Muscovism and Malorosiystvo, and separately highlighted the trend of the independentists: "Dual Loyalty of the Ukrainian Elite. The "Separatist" Current (N. Mikhnovsky, Yu. Bachynsky). Its anti-Russian Orientation" (Programma: 5–9 klasy, 2019, p. 58).

Firstly, it seems interesting that the authors singled out Yulian Bachynsky, because in general they ignore historical events related to Western Ukrainian lands and do not pay attention to figures from Western Ukraine. Secondly, they interpreted the views of Ukrainian independentists from an "anti-Russian" perspective, avoiding the main goal of the independentists – the unification of Ukrainian lands. Thirdly, the authors nevertheless acknowledged that there was a separate Ukrainian elite, but ignored information about the Ukrainian national revival.

***The desire to lay bare the historical foundation of the fake republic.*** In the 2019 syllabus for Grade 10, Topics 3 and 4, dedicated to the events of 1917 – 1918, deserve a chief focus. The course of the Ukrainian national liberation struggle is presented as the events of "... the Great Russian Revolution in the national outskirts of Russia" (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 20).

In Topic 3 there are mentioned the Ukrainian Central Rada and its universals, but there is no information about the creation of the Ukrainian People's Republic, although this event is central in the context of the UCR's activities. That is, the authors of the syllabus kept quiet about the fact of creation of the Ukrainian national state in modern period. Instead, the so-called "alternative congress of Bolsheviks" in Kharkiv is presented as an event of all-Ukrainian significance (which is a distortion). Without any doubt, the purpose of such a presentation of the material is to form the idea that Ukraine first emerged as the Soviet republic: "All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants' Deputies (Kharkiv)" (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 20).

Indeed, we clearly respect the obligations of the Donetsk-Kryvorizka Republic. Despite the fact that the level of representation at the time of the DKR declaration was low: it was voted for, less than 50 votes, in Kharkiv on February 12, 1918 (Soldatenko, 2011). This is the example of instrumentalization of history by syllabus compilers. The reason is that the fake republic "dnr" looks for its historical background in the DKR, seeking to represent the former as a historical continuity. In February of 2015, deputies of the People's Council of the "dnr" expressed their support for the Donetsk-Kryvorizka Republic (Smirnov, 2015).

When considering the syllabus for Grade 11, let's focus on some indicative aspects. In general, the Soviet period is presented to the youth of the occupied Donetsk region in exactly the same way as to Russian schoolchildren. Based on the aforementioned scientific research by Vitaliy Yaremchuk, we should note the key moment when the "Country of Soviets" is seen as a "multi-ethnic state", and not an imperial entity with manifestations of Russian great-power chauvinism (Yaremchuk, 2023, pp. 186–187).

In the syllabus the period of the 1930s is presented as "The USSR during the period of Stalin's modernization. Features of modernization in Donbas" (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 25). "Modern Ukrainian historical science clearly disagrees with this formulation, the period cannot be called "modernization" period, if there was a massive direct decrease in population".

***The national direction of the Resistance Movement and the proclamation of the Ukrainian state during World War II.*** It is not surprising that the syllabus authors use



ideological clichés of Soviet historiography, such as the “Great Patriotic War,” which have become basic in modern Russian historiography. It should be noted that the scope of the topic of the “Great Patriotic War” is much larger compared to others.

The syllabus does not contain any information about the “Act of Restoration of the Ukrainian State” of June 22, 1941. In addition to the fact that this is an important event in the history of Ukrainian statehood, we should also note that after the adoption of this document, the OUN(b) began preparations for the opening of a new front – the anti-German one (Trofymovych, & Trofymovych, 2019, p. 93). Instead, within the framework of the topic, fighters for Ukrainian independence (for example, Stepan Bandera and his followers) are attributed to collaborationists and the German occupation regime: “... The Nazi “new order”... Collaboration with the enemy: reasons, forms, scale (the Vlasovtsi, the Banderivtsi and other Nazi collaborators)” (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 29).

The national and human rights struggle of Ukrainian dissidents during the period of the 1960s – 1980s is presented by the authors of the syllabus rather vaguely and cursorily. In Topic 4 “The USSR and Donbas in the era of “stagnation””, students must understand the concept of a “dissident movement”, characterize the dissident movement and its features (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, pp. 36–37). However, the compilers did not mention the Ukrainian dissidents at all, in particular, such prominent figures who are directly related to the history of Donetsk region, such as Oleksa Tykhyi, who is originally from Donetsk region, or Vasyl Stus, whose childhood and youth are also connected with Donetsk region.

***Restoration of the Ukrainian state.*** In the context of analyzing the syllabus text through the prism of the Ukrainian statehood concept, the issue of Ukraine’s independence restoration in 1991 deserves attention. This event is not specifically mentioned in the syllabus, but is reflected within the sub-item dedicated to the collapse of the Soviet Union in Topic 5 in the syllabus for Grade 11 “The USSR and Donetsk Region during the Period of Perestroika” (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, pp. 37–39). Despite the fact that the main provisions of the syllabus are presented in a balanced manner and the collapse of the USSR is linked to “national movements” in the republics (“Crisis of interethnic relations and rise of national movements. Confrontation between the union centre and republics. Beginning of the collapse of the Soviet state. Parade of sovereignties” (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 38)), The academic achievements of students include the requirement to be able to give examples on “the destructive role of Ukraine in the collapse of the USSR” (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 39).

This provision carries two messages for the Ukrainian youth in the temporarily occupied territories: it instills a negative attitude towards the fact of the collapse of the Soviet empire and places responsibility for this process on Ukraine. And this despite the fact that Ukraine was the ninth of the fifteen republics to declare sovereignty (Russia did so a month earlier and was the sixth), and was the sixth one to leave the USSR, unlike its predecessor republics, after the coup.

The war unleashed by Russia in 2014, followed by a full-scale invasion in 2022, is qualified as a powerful impetus for completing the process of Ukrainian nation-building and is a challenge to Ukrainian statehood (Politychnyi protses, 2022, pp. 686–688). The beginning of the hybrid war in 2014 in the East and South of Ukraine in the school curriculum in the occupied territories requires a chief focus. In Topic 7 “The New Course of “New” Russia”, the annexation of Crimea is presented in the syllabus in the sub-item “Foreign Policy of Russia at the Beginning of the 21st Century” and is interpreted as “Crimean crisis 2014”. But despite

the fact that the event is attributed to foreign policy, there is not a single word about Ukraine, as if the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea had no relation to the Ukrainian state. According to academic achievements, the annexation of the Crimea is considered as “reunification of the Crimea with Russia”, in addition to this provision, students should also characterize “the reaction of the population of Russia to the reunification of the Crimea with Russia, to the situation in Donbas” (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 42).

Events after 2014 found a distorted interpretation in Topic 8 “Donbas in 1991 – 2013. Proclamation and Development of the Donetsk People’s Republic”. Thus, the territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions controlled by Ukraine are called “occupied”, and the political life in the Ukrainian state is labelled as having elements of “neo-nazism”: “The policy of Kyiv government in the occupied territories of the DPR and LPR. Russophobia and Neo-Nazism as Elements of Socio-political Life in Modern Ukraine” (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 44). In general, Donbas during the years of Ukraine’s independence is presented as a special region, while the role of the Ukrainian state in relation to it is portrayed negatively: “Consequences of Ukrainian Independence for Donbas” (Programma: 10–11 klasy, 2019, p. 43). Separatist tendencies in the region are described as if Donbas had never been part of Ukraine, but existed separately.

**Conclusions.** Analysis of the syllabus convinces us that it has an anti-Ukrainian orientation and is a tool of hybrid warfare, therefore, it poses a threat as a factor that directly affects the formation of Russian identity among schoolchildren. The suppression of meanings of Ukrainian history and the Ukrainian state-building process in school History education syllabus in the temporarily occupied territory of Donetsk region is aimed at forming among the youth of this territory the idea that Russia has the unquestionable right to interfere in the internal affairs of modern Ukraine and to claim the territory of a sovereign state. This forms in the minds of schoolchildren the idea that “in reality” Ukrainian territories are “originally Russian lands”. The ideology of the “Russian world,” which is promoted by school syllabus in the occupied territories, is a way to spread a new type of totalitarian ideology – “racism,”<sup>1</sup> which is designed to destroy sovereign countries and commit both physical and mental genocide.

The syllabus analysis of different years makes it possible to conclude that each time there were significant new edits to its text in order to completely abandon the terms and concepts of Ukrainian historical science translated into Russian and to use the language standards of Russian historiography in the syllabus. The authors and/or peer-reviewers of the 2015 syllabus had not yet acquired sensitivity to the language of Ukrainian historical science as a language hostile to the ideology of the so-called “dnr” and partially used Ukrainian texts (possibly syllabus and textbooks on the history of their native land). The 2017 edition shows the replacement of most terms and meanings with the Soviet/Russian ones, but the content still retains some of the accents of Ukrainian historical concepts and the use of historical and ethnographic names of Ukrainian lands. The 2019 edition demonstrates a new round of censorship, the aim of which is to finally eradicate all formulations in the content that create the impression that there was a continuity of the Ukrainian state-building process on the territory of modern Ukraine. A rhetorical question arises: who was the peer-reviewer who caused gradual changes in the syllabus, and where to look for him geographically?!

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<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of “racism” as a new type of totalitarian ideology was officially approved by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in the Statement: “On the use of the ideology of racism by the political regime of the Russian Federation, condemnation of the principles and practices of racism as totalitarian and misanthropic”.

After the liberation of the currently occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the public and political leadership of the Ukrainian state will face an acute problem of readaptation of children and youth who were under the pressure of anti-Ukrainian propaganda.

Further research into the problem requires the analysis of correlation between the components of the history of Russia and the history of Donetsk region in the “History of Motherland” syllabus, its analysis at the structural and logical level, and the application of a multi-level analysis of World History syllabus in the temporarily occupied territories.

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