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**TRANSFORMATION OF HISTORIOGRAPHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE UKRAINIAN VILLAGE (THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20th – THE BEGINNING OF THE 21st CENTURY): CONCEPTUAL PRINCIPLES AND STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT**

*Abstract. The research is devoted to a systematic study on the historiographical and methodological genesis of the scientific thought about the Ukrainian village and the agrarian relations from the 1950s to the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century. The purpose of the research is to carry out a comprehensive analysis regarding the transformation of conceptual foundations and stages of the historiographical and methodological understanding of the Ukrainian village in the second half of*

the 20th – at the beginning of the 21st centuries, as well as identifying the vector of the research guidelines development from the classical Soviet approaches to modern practices of historical science. **The methodology of the research** is based on the principles of historicism, scientificity, verification, authorial objectivity, the use of the historical, institutional, systemic and problem chronological method, as well as methods of comparative judgment and generalisation. **Scientific novelty.** There have been clearly distinguished and substantiated three qualitatively different stages of the historiographical and methodological understanding of the topic: the Soviet one, which was characterised by ideologization and adherence to the Marxist-Leninist formational approach, the transitional one with its inherent de-ideologization and nation-oriented approach, and the modern one, characterised by the methodological pluralism, interdisciplinarity, and synergy. **Conclusions.** The transformation of the historiographical understanding of the Ukrainian village during the mid-20th –the beginning of the 21st centuries went from an ideologised formational paradigm to a human-centered and interdisciplinary strategy for studying this cradle of the Ukrainian history. This process was implemented through three consecutive stages, each of which is characterized by a radical change in methodological tools and a significant expansion of the intellectual horizons of researchers. The first stage was the Soviet one, which is known as the period when historiography was methodologically limited and distorted. The agrarian historians focused exclusively on the “success” of the collective farm and the state farm system (growth in production, mechanization, “the rapprochement of the city and the countryside”), completely ignoring the tragedies that befell the Ukrainian countryside during the 20th century. The above-mentioned led to the creation of an ideologically biased image of the countryside, which violated one of the most important methods of historical research – the method of objectivism. The second stage was a transitional one, during which a historiographical and methodological break occurred. In the late 1980s – early 1990s, due to the works written by L. Berenstein, S. Kulchytsky, P. Panchenko and other agrarian historians, the processes of de-ideologization and destruction of the Soviet myths have been initiated. The main emphasis was shifted to criticism of the collective farm system and rethinking the tragedies of the Ukrainian peasantry. The third stage was the modern one, which was characterized by methodological pluralism and interdisciplinarity. The main focus was on the human dimension of the transformational changes, the mentality of the peasantry, environmental factors and cultural transformations in the research and is becoming more relevant. The modern historical school seeks to implement global trends to move from a limited abstract description of facts to a thorough understanding of the role of the peasantry as an important component of the Ukrainian nation in modernization projects.

**Key words:** historiography, methodology, agrarian history, peasantry, interdisciplinary approach, synergy.

## ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ ІСТОРІОГРАФІЧНО-МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНОГО ОСМИСЛЕННЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОГО СЕЛА (ДРУГА ПОЛОВИНА ХХ – ПОЧАТОК ХХІ СТОЛІТТЯ): КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНІ ЗАСАДИ ТА ЕТАПИ РОЗВИТКУ

**Анотація.** Роботу присвячено системному дослідженню історіографічно-методологічної генези наукової думки про українське село та аграрні відносини починаючи з 1950-х рр. до початку третього десятиліття ХХІ ст. **Метою дослідження** є комплексний аналіз трансформації концептуальних засад та етапів історіографічно-методологічного осмислення українського села у другій половині ХХ – на початку ХХІ ст., а також виявлення вектору розвитку дослідницьких орієнтирів від класичних радянських підходів до сучасних практик історичної науки. **Методологія дослідження** спирається на принципи історизму, науковості, верифікації, авторської об'єктивності, на використання історичного, інституційного, системного та проблемно-хронологічного методу, а також методів порівняльного судження і узагальнювального умовиводу. **Наукова новизна.** У дослідженні здійснено чітке розмежування та обґрунтування трьох якісно відмінних етапів історіографічно-методологічного осмислення теми: радянського, що характеризується ідеологізацією та дотриманням марксистсько-ленінського формаційного підходу, перехідного з притаманними йому деідеологізацією і національно орієнтованим підходом, а також сучасного, для якого характерними стали методологічний плюралізм, міждисциплінарність та синергетика. **Висновки.** Трансформація

історіографічного осмислення українського села протягом середини XX – початку XXI ст. пройшла шлях від ідеологізованої формаційної парадигми до людиноцентричної та міждисциплінарної стратегії вивчення цієї коліски української історії. Означений процес реалізувався через три послідовні етапи, кожен з яких характеризується докорінною зміною методологічного інструментарію та суттєвим розширенням інтелектуальних горизонтів дослідників. Перший етап – радянський, який відомий як період, коли історіописання було методологічно обмеженим і викривленим. Історики-аграрники зосереджувалися єдино на «успіхах» колгоспно-радгоспної системи (зростання виробництва, механізація, «зближення міста і села»), повністю замовчуючи трагедії, які спіткали українське село протягом XX ст. Це призвело до створення ідеологічно заангажованого образу села, що порушувало один із найголовніших методів дослідження історії – метод об'єктивізму. Другий етап – перехідний, під час якого відбувся історіографічно-методичний злам. У кінці 1980 – на початку 1990-х рр. завдяки роботам Л. Беренштейна, С. Кульчицького, П. Панченка та інших істориків-аграрників, започатковано процеси деідеологізації та руйнування радянських міфів. Головний акцент було зміщено на критику колгоспної системи та переосмислення трагедій українського селянства. Третій етап – сучасний, який характеризується методологічним плюралізмом та міждисциплінарністю. Сьогодні актуалізуються дослідження, сфокусовані на людському вимірі трансформаційних змін, менталітеті селянства, екологічних чинниках та культурних перетвореннях. Сучасна історична школа прагне впровадити світові тенденції, щоб перейти від обмеженого реферативного опису фактів до ґрунтового осмислення ролі селянства як важливого компонента української нації у модернізаційних проектах.

**Ключові слова:** історіографія, методика, аграрна історія, селянство, міждисциплінарний підхід, синергетика.

**Problem Statement.** Due to a continuous development of historiographic science, it was possible for modern scholars to rethink and refine previous historical narratives, involve new methodological approaches and expand the source base to create a more complete, objective and multifaceted understanding of the past.

One of the relevant topics for the research of the Ukrainian historians is the one related to the Ukrainian village, the bearer of the national identity and culture and the fundamental basis for the formation of an agrarian civilization. Given this fact, the analysis of historiographic studies of the Ukrainian village, starting from the mid-twentieth century and ending with the present, is quite relevant for the historical science.

It was during this historical period that the evolution of methodological features and a radical renewal of conceptual approaches, which were aimed at studying the countryside, took place. The Ukrainian historians have gone from Marxism-Leninism to the latest historiographic practices based on the theoretical and methodological principles using an interdisciplinary approach that synthesizes the achievements of many sciences into one fundamental study.

The relevance of the study is also due to the need for a comprehensive understanding of the historiographical and methodological path of studying the Ukrainian village, which during the second half of the 20th – first third of the 21st century went through three radically different scientific and methodological paradigms: Soviet, transitional and independent modern.

The main problem of the study is to trace and analyze the evolution of the Ukrainian historians' views, which reflects the transition: from the ideological determinism (Marxist-Leninist formational approach, keeping in silence tragedies, and idealization of the collective farm system) to pluralism of the methodologies (human centric, synergistic, and civilizational approaches).

Hence, the scientific understanding of the topic is relevant, since it not only summarizes the research achievements for the specified period, but also contributes to the formation of objective historical knowledge necessary for the national self-awareness and solving modern socio-economic issues.

**Review of Recent Research and Publications.** It should be noted, first of all, the collective work of modern domestic scholars edited by Valery Smolii “History, Methodology and Source Base of the Research on the Agrarian Relations in Ukraine in the Second Half of the 20th century” (Smolii, 2006), while analyzing historiographical investigations aimed at revealing the topic. The authors applied a comprehensive and thorough methodological basis to analyze critically existing publications on socio-political, socio-economic and cultural processes in the Ukrainian village in the second half of the 20th century. There were the following historians, who covered certain aspects of the mentioned topic in the studies as S. Kornovenko, A. Morozov (Kornovenko, & Morozov, 2023), V. Ilnytskyi, V. Starka (Ilnytskyi, & Starka, 2024), Yu. Prysyzhnyuk (Prysyzhnyuk, 2021), Ya. Fedorenko (Fedorenko, 2018) and the others. Due to the multifaceted nature of the issue associated with the evolution of the historiographical and methodological understanding of the Ukrainian village, it was possible to continue research by applying the latest methodological approaches, revealing the topic in a new way.

**The purpose** of the research is to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the transformation of the conceptual foundations and stages of the historiographical and methodological understanding of the Ukrainian village in the second half of the 20th – at the beginning of the 21st centuries, as well as identifying the vector of the research guidelines development from the classical Soviet approaches to modern practices of historical science.

**Research Results.** The approaches based on the Marxist-Leninist methodology of scientific knowledge prevailed in domestic historiographic science almost the entire second half of the 20th century. That is why, the majority of scholars of that time remained silent about the tragedies that befell the Ukrainian village during the period when the country was part of the Soviet Union and were a kind of taboo for the scholars’ research. First of all, these are problematic issues related to the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933, the Soviet repressive policies and forced resettlement of the Ukrainian peasants, etc. Ideologically distorting the history of the village, the scholars often analyzed statistical data, which, in their opinion, were convincing evidence of the successes of the Soviet government in matters related to the processes of collectivization, focusing their attention primarily on improving the living standards of peasants and success in the field of cultural construction, education, etc.

However, despite this fact, in the second half of the 20th century, there were published several fundamental works, either exclusively devoted to the rural areas of Ukraine, or included in the broader context of the history of the Ukrainian SSR. Hence, the first attempt to create a generalizing study on the history of the peasantry of Ukraine was the two-volume work “History of the Peasantry of the Ukrainian SSR” (Dyadychenko, et al, 1967). It was published by a team of talented historians of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, under the leadership of the Editorial Board, which consisted of V. Dyadychenko, M. Braichevsky, M. Leshchepko, and K. Stetsiuk in 1967. The first volume of this work dealt with the history of the rural areas, starting from the period of Rus’ State and up to 1917, and the second, respectively, 1917 – 1966.

The basis of this study, when analyzing the transformations of the socio-economic relations that determined the dynamics of a rural development during each historical

period, was the formational approach that formed the basis of Marxist-Leninist theory. The authors of the publication, used diverse ideological clichés and considered the history of the Ukrainian peasantry exclusively in the context of the regional interaction with the agrarian communities of Russia and Belarus, emphasizing the commonality of their socio-economic experience, while ignoring the role of the national factor. There were also covered numerous aspects of the development of the Ukrainian village during the period under study in the 8-volume fundamental publication “History of the Ukrainian SSR” (Kondufor, 1979), which was published in the 70s of the 20th century. There were included the following scholars in the Editorial Board: I. Artemenko, V. Baran, S. Bibikov, V. Dovzhenok and the others. There was numerous data on the changes that occurred in the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual life and everyday life of the Ukrainian peasantry in the publication, among a large array of the factual material. However, despite the large array of the factual material, its presentation also had significant shortcomings that were characteristic of the entire historiography of the Soviet period. It should be noted the following as the main ones. There was the complete leveling of the national factor (all achievements of the communist system were presented as the result of the work of the Soviet people, and not as an independent contribution of the Ukrainians) if to compare with the previous work. According to L. Lanoviuk, there were too many harmful official ideologemes about the negative role of the village in the Soviet historiography (Lanoviuk, 2018, p. 160). The other ones were the lack of objective analysis regarding various statistical data and the actual selection of material (only those data that served as confirmation of the advantages of the communist system in the life of the Soviet society were used). Therefore, we can conclude that although this publication is certainly an extremely important source of data for studying the history of the Ukrainian village, its use currently requires modern methodological interpretation and critical rethinking of the material outside the framework of the Soviet paradigm.

The end of the 1980s was marked by changes in the life of society, which opened the way for a critical rethinking of history, a partial weakening of total control and censorship, and initiated processes that led to the national revival and, ultimately, contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union. A cardinal break occurred in the Ukrainian historical school of that time, which marked its transition from the tightly controlled the Soviet doctrine to a critical, pluralistic, and nationally oriented approach. The scientific monographs of that time were considered to be the proof. In particular, the national factor was gradually being involved in the consideration of the historical processes, and the research was acquiring human-centric features. In particular, the monograph, written by P. Panchenko and V. Chyshko was published in the late 1980s (Panchenko, & Chyshko, 1989), which characterized the path of the Ukrainian village to the scientific and technological progress during the 1960s – 1980s. The authors paid special attention to the training of the national qualified agricultural personnel as a necessary condition for the intensification of the agricultural production.

Hence, due to the analysis on the historiographic sources of the 1960s – 1980s, it was possible to state that most monographs and publications of the Soviet period of historiography were marked by the influence of the political situation, a simplified approach to covering the history of the Ukrainian peasantry, deprivation of its national features and artificially inscribed in an amorphous community – the Soviet people. In the late 1980s and early 1990s of the 20th century, there was a gradual transition from a rigidly regulated formational approach, in which the village was considered as an object of the party policy and economic indicators, to the study of the countryside as a subject of history.

The national historiography underwent radical changes, as most Ukrainian scholars began to integrate new methodological approaches to the study on the historical processes actively after the declaration of independence of Ukraine. By comparing different views and concepts and, rejecting political bias, the scholars achieved much greater objectivity in reflecting the historical development of the Ukrainian village, analyzing its socio-political and socio-economic transformations. Historiographic methodology was supplemented by the use of synergistic (analysis of the historical process, social changes and crisis periods was carried out through the prism of nonlinearity, self-organization and human-centeredness) and interdisciplinary (integration of knowledge, methods and concepts from different fields of knowledge) approaches in research. Thus, a vivid example of the implementation of an interdisciplinary approach was the work by the Ukrainian historian V. Nechytaylo, in which the peasantry is presented from a historical and philosophical position. The scholar noted that relying on the concepts of the spirituality, moral norms, and national education the Ukrainian peasantry was able to preserve its spiritual values, age-old traditions, and culture (Nechytaylo, 2004).

The vectors of historical scientific research also underwent changes. The 1990s was the time of the beginning of the reforms in Ukraine. They were characterized by the rejection of the planned economy, the liberalization of prices, the privatization of the state property, as well as the radical transformation of the agricultural sector, which led to the liquidation of the collective farm system and the emergence of the private ownership of land (unbundling). However, the implementation of reforms in the agricultural sector required a theoretical and historical basis. As a result, there emerged numerous publications by famous Ukrainian historians L. Berenstein, P. Panchenko, and O. Kadenyuk, which dealt with the modern agrarian history. In particular, L. Berenstein conducted a multi-faceted analysis that covered a number of the interrelated issues. The main focus of the research primarily was on the socio-economic transformation of the Ukrainian countryside and the justification of the need for the innovative development of the agricultural sector. The above-mentioned research is considered to be significant and was devoted to the historiographical understanding of the issue, the agrarian policy of the political parties and movements, as well as the analysis of the evolution of the agricultural education and science in the context of globalization challenges (Berenstein, 1997).

P. Panchenko, another Ukrainian agricultural historian, carried out the research, which was devoted to the analysis of the agriculture issues in the transitional period, which marked the transition from the planned command system, a priority for the Soviet Union, to the market system, which the already independent Ukraine sought to integrate. The scholar outlined those urgent economic and social issues that required immediate solutions and indicated ways out of the permanent crisis of the agrarian sector in his works (Panchenko, 1995). In general, according to Panchenko's scientific achievements at the end of the 20th century, there could be concluded the key idea regarding his many years of scientific activity: "The further development of the village is perhaps the most important issue of the Ukrainian statehood, since it was due to the village that the national Ukrainian language, national culture and vital traditions were preserved in all the turbulent events of the Ukrainian history of the 20th century" (Panchenko, 1997). This idea emphasizes the priority of a human-centric and nationally oriented approach in the post-Soviet historiography, reducing the role of the Ukrainian village to a fundamental factor of the national identity and cultural resistance in the conditions of the totalitarian regime of the 20th century.

An important source for studying the history of the Ukrainian village in the post-Soviet period was the research conducted by O. Kadeniuk. In his scientific publications, the author, summarizing the experience of higher educational institutions that prepared the personnel potential for work in the agro-industrial complex and the personnel issues and the scientific support of the Ukrainian village, revealed the role of the agrarian scholars in implementing the reform of the agricultural sector (Kadenyuk, 1996).

The beginning of the period of independence was a period when the so-called white spots (gaps) of the Ukrainian history began to be actively studied, any information about which was classified in the KGB archives until the end of the 1980s. One of such topics that exposed the crimes of the Soviet leadership was the topic of the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933 in the Ukrainian countryside. The key figures, who formed the modern canon of the Holodomor research were the Ukrainian historians Stanislav Kulchytsky and Vasyl Marochko. Thus, Stanislav Kulchytsky, in his numerous monographs and articles published over the 30 years since the declaration of Ukraine's independence, made a fundamental transition from stating the fact of the famine to revealing its socio-economic and political mechanism. The researcher argued that the tragedy was not the result of a natural disaster but the result of a conscious policy of the Stalinist leadership aimed at subjugating the Ukrainian peasantry.

At the same time, Vasyl Marochko focused on the source-based aspect, introducing previously inaccessible arrays of documents from the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR and the local party cells into the scientific circulation. His works made it possible to visualize the genocide geography and prove a systematic extermination of the Ukrainians at the level of individual districts.

The joint achievement of both historians was the formation of the genocidal concept of the Holodomor in the 21st century, which is based on proving the subjective intention of the Kremlin to destroy the Ukrainians as a national group (Kulchytsky, 2008; Marochko, 2007). Due to their work at the beginning of independence, the foundation was laid for the legal recognition of the Holodomor as the genocide at the state and international levels. Hence, the work by Kulchytsky and Marochko became a link that connected disparate archival facts into a coherent scientific system, which is considered to be the basis of the Ukrainian national memory nowadays.

The end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries are characterized by increased scholars' interest regarding the Ukrainian village issues. In particular, there emerged a number of the scientific works on the agrarian history, which clarified certain aspects of the socio-political and socio-economic transformations in agriculture, and studied in detail the demographic changes in the lives of the peasants and the state of ecology in the rural areas. One of the first was a thorough monograph written by the famous Ukrainian historian I. Rybak "Social and Domestic Infrastructure of the Ukrainian village 1921 – 1991" (Rybak, 2000), in which the scholar paid specific attention to the social and domestic changes in the Ukrainian village and highlighted the level of well-being of its inhabitants. Analyzing the social infrastructure of the Ukrainian village in the early 1990s, the scholar concluded that the deterioration of the social and living conditions directly caused the outflow of the rural population to cities, whose more developed infrastructure allowed for a better level of the social security (Rybak, 2000).

There were also some works devoted to the peculiarities of covering the social and everyday life of the Ukrainian village, written by Maryna Ihnatenko "The Village in Our Ukraine: New Political Stereotypes and Socio-Economic Determinants of Changes 1991 –

2008” and Lyudmila Kovpak “Social Life Conditions of the Population of Ukraine in the Second Half of the 20th Century (1945 – 2000)” (Kovpak, 2003) (Ihnatenko, 2009). The authors stated a deep social inequality between the city and the countryside, while analysing a large amount of the factual material, which remained unchanged both during the Soviet era and during the period of independence. The scholars made a conclusion that the well-being of the rural areas was determined exclusively owing to the support of state policy and the strategic lines of presidents and governments (Fedorenko, 2018, p. 127). Such a critical dependence was explained by the paradoxical situation of the agricultural sector. According to the official data, the village provided the entire society with the basic material resources (food, raw materials), though it remained constantly on the periphery of the social development.

Another agricultural historian of the modern period was S. Padalka. Using the latest scientific and methodological approaches, the scholar focused on the study of the agrarian policy in Ukraine and its socio-economic consequences, which is important for the understanding the economic inefficiency of the collective farm system and the causes of the crisis that led to the reforms of the 1990s. It should be noted that there were publications related to the socio-economic transformations in the Ukrainian country side among the scholar’s studies, which are worth mentioning, in particular, such as “Changes in Forms of Management in the Ukrainian Countryside in the 90s of the 20th Century” (Padalka, 2002), “Changes in the Number, Economic Behaviour, Needs and Values of the Ukrainian Peasants (1990 – 2000)” (Padalka, 2013), etc.

In addition to individual scientific works written at the end of the 20th century, the collective monographs remained popular scientific publications, focusing on the socio-political and socio-economic transformations in the rural areas. One of the fundamental historical publications of the mentioned period was a collective monograph, the authorship of which included famous Ukrainian agricultural scholars L. Berenstein, P. Panchenko, S. Padalka, and the others, “Ukraine at the Turn of Historical Epochs (Formation of New Production Relations in the Agrarian Sector of the Economy of Modern Ukraine (1991 – 2000)” (Berenstein, et al, 2000). The study was devoted to the analysis of the formation of new production relations in the agrarian sector of Ukraine during 1991 – 2000. The first part of the monograph was devoted to the theoretical justification of reforms as a necessary condition for the development of the civil society. The historians focused in detail regarding the organizational measures and practical steps in the implementation of the agrarian reform in the second part of the monograph, and there could be found the evaluation of the political and socio-economic consequences of the transformations carried out in the countryside in the third part of the monograph.

The collective monograph “The Ukrainian Village in the 20s – 90s of the 20th Century (Short Historical and Economic Essay)” was another important publication of the above-mentioned period (Berenstein, et al, 1998), published on the basis of the Institute of History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. The authors analyzed the key events that had influence on the agriculture, the socio-economic structure and the life of the Ukrainian peasants in the 20th century from the new methodological and ideological positions in the work.

The fundamental publication, which rightfully took a priority place among the monographs on the agricultural topics, was the collective monograph “History of the Ukrainian Peasantry” (Smolii, et al, 2000), the authors of which included such famous historians as V. Smolii,

S. Klyuchytsky, V. Danylenko, V. Baran, O. Androschuk, A. Morozov, S. Padalka and the others. The two-volume work summarized the research work in the field of the history of the Ukrainian peasantry, carried out over the past decade and a half. In general, the outdated approaches and stereotypes that were inherent in the Soviet historical science were overcome in the work.

Another monograph, written by the joint efforts of historians and economists N. Baranovska, V. Verstiuk, S. Vidniansky, M. Herasymchuk, V. Horbyk, V. Danylenko, L. Kovpak, M. Kotliar, S. Kulchytsky and V. Lytvyn, is “Ukraine: The Establishment of an Independent State (1991 – 2001)” (Baranovska, et al, 2001). There was revealed the formation process and principles of functioning of an independent Ukrainian state comprehensively in the work. In addition, there were analyzed the key socio-political, socio-economic and cultural changes of the transformation period. Among the thorough analytical, factual and statistical data, attention was also paid to the transformations in the Ukrainian countryside during the period of independence. There were highlighted the economic and environmental factors of agricultural production and the development of the rural culture in the late 20th – early 21st centuries in the work.

The collective monograph “Historiography, Methodology and Source Base of Research on the Agrarian Relations in Ukraine in the Second Half of the 20th Century” by numerous leading scholars L. Berenstein, S. Kulchytsky, P. Panchenko, S. Padalka, S. Zhyvora, N. Tarasenko, N. Sklyar and the others was an important methodological compass and critical source, which enabled to comprehend both historical research and modern economic realities of the transformation of the Ukrainian countryside (Berenstein, et al, 2000). Its authors carried out a critical analysis and evaluation of the research (by historians, economists, and agrarians) on the socio-political and socio-economic processes in the Ukrainian countryside in the second half of the 20th century, based on the principles of historicism. There were also the methodological recommendations on the methodology of the further research into the agrarian relations and the source base for studying the modern agrarian sector of Ukraine in the work.

The joint work by foreign and domestic scholars was an interesting experience of the scientific explorations. The rural area of Ukraine was also one of the chief focus, among the many topics that interested the foreign scientists. In particular, the Professor of the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Naples named after Federico II, A. Graziosi, devoted much effort to the study on the Ukrainian peasantry. In the collective work “The Inconvenient Class in Modernization Projects”, the scholar, together with other foreign and domestic historians D. Beauvois, Yu. Prysiazhniuk, O. Mykhailiuk, S. Toktsky and A. Zayarnyuk, tried to assess the role and importance of the peasant component in the history of the 20th century (Graziosi, et al, 2010). Thus, the French historian Daniel Beauvois proved that the figure of the peasant became a central figure in the history of Eastern Europe, and the peasant nation in general, according to A. Graziosi, had a powerful heuristic potential for the historical science. The above-mentioned is the evidence of the fact that the agrarian history continued to remain a relevant topic in the scientific research of the historians.

The modern stage (the first third of the 21st century) is marked by the desire to implement world historiographical trends. That is why, the Ukrainian historiography faced new challenges. Thus, according to historian Yu. Prysyazhnyuk, the majority of domestic historians scholars adhere to the European historical tradition generally and, therefore, their works were limited to the abstract tasks, and only a few make efforts aimed at creating new interdisciplinary syntheses (Prysyazhnyuk, 2021, p. 26).

The current stage (the beginning of the 21st century) is marked by the active implementation of the world historiographical trends. A vivid example of a new methodological understanding of the history of the Ukrainian village and its inhabitants could be found in the works by Anatoliy Morozov (Kornovenko & Morozov, 2023), Serhiy Kornovenko (Kornovenko, & Kompaniyets 2024), Vasyl Ilnytskyi (Ilnytskyi, & Vasylenko, 2024), Serhiy Lyakh (Lyakh, 2023), Volodymyr Starka (Ilnytskyi, & Starka, 2024), Ihor Farenyi (Farenyi, 2024) and others. These studies represent a change in the research paradigm: from a narrow-profile presentation of the facts to a large-scale interdisciplinary synthesis, which allows us to understand rural society as a multifaceted socio-cultural phenomenon.

**Conclusions.** Thus, we can conclude that there was a move away from an ideologized Soviet description of successes as there was the transformation of the historiographical understanding of the Ukrainian village in the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries based on a formational approach to covering history, toward an interdisciplinary, critical, and human-centered analysis of the political, economic, social, and cultural processes.

Being quite cautious in the statements, the historians, the authors of thorough works on the topic of the Ukrainian village created in the sixties and seventies of the 20th century were unable to analyze the historical development of this “cradle of the Ukrainian nation” with due objectivity. Emphasis was placed exclusively on the growth of production, mechanization of the agricultural sector, and the successes of the collective farm and state farm system, while the tragedies of the Ukrainian countryside, such as the Holodomor, repressions, demographic losses, unsatisfactory levels of social security, labor migration, and actual exploitation of peasants, were simply ignored.

As a result, maintaining the main line of the Communist Party’s policy and taking into account material about positive changes only, as well as rejecting one of the main principles of historical science, i.e. the principle of objectivity, led to the creation of an ideologically biased, inferior, and distorted image of the Ukrainian countryside, which served exclusively to legitimize Soviet agrarian policy. Therefore, the scientific achievements of contemporary historians were methodologically limited by the ideological framework of the Soviet historiography despite the thoroughness in collecting permitted materials.

After a short transitional period of historiographical searches (late 1980s – early 1990s), which initiated the processes of de-ideologization of history, the destruction of the Soviet myths and the beginning of the new methodological concepts formation, the Ukrainian historiography moved to a modern stage of development. A historiographical breakthrough occurred due to the works by such scholars as L. Berenstein, S. Kulchytsky, P. Panchenko. The main emphasis shifted to rethinking the tragedies of the Ukrainian peasantry and criticizing the collective farm system as ineffective and anti-human. The research was updated on the social degradation of the village during the period of “stagnation”, the economic consequences of the collapse of the USSR and the unsuccessful agrarian reforms of the 1990s. The issues related to the human dimension of transformational changes, the mentality of the peasantry, environmental factors and cultural transformations of rural space in the conditions of a market economy and globalization.

The modern Ukrainian historical school is characterized by the desire to implement world historiographical trends, which will enable agricultural historians to move from a limited abstract description of facts to a thorough understanding of the role of the peasantry as an important component of the Ukrainian nation in the modernization projects of the 20th and 21st centuries.

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