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Education between “class” and “nation”: the influence of the theory of class struggle on Ukrainian educational historiography (1920s–1980s)*

The theory of class struggle emerged in the 19th century based on historical and philosophical concepts about the division of society into classes with opposing interests. The most extensive theoretical foundations for class struggle were laid down by Karl Marx and his followers. In the second half of the 19th century, class theories began to permeate Ukrainian historical science, but the methodological basis for the work of Ukrainian scholars was the Marxist theory of class struggle that came into focus in the 1920s–1980s when most of Ukrainian lands were a part of the totalitarian Soviet Union. Russian Bolsheviks reduced Marxism to a unified methodology that was applicable to all areas of scientific knowledge, including history.

The influence of Soviet Marxism (Marxism-Leninism) on Ukrainian historical science was analyzed by Serhiy Vodotyka¹, Leonid Zashkilniak², Yaroslav Kalakura³, Iryna Kolesnyk⁴, Viktor Kosmyna⁵, Andrii Portnov⁶, Oleksandr Reyent, Natalya Yakovenko⁷,

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¹ S. Vodotyka, *Narysy istorii istorychnoi nauky USRR 1920-kh rokov*, Kyiv–Kherson 1998.

² L. Zashkilniak, *Metodolohiia istorii vid davnyiny do suchasnosti*, Lviv 1999.

³ Ya. Kalakura, *Ukrainska istoriohrafia: kurs lektsii*, Kyiv 2004.

⁴ I. Kolesnyk, *Ukrainska istoriohrafia: kontseptualna istoriia*, Kyiv 2013.

⁵ V. Kosmyna, *Problemy metodolohii tsyvilizatsiinoho analizu istorychnoho protsesu*, Zaporizhzhia 2011.

⁶ A. Portnov, *Istorii istorykiv. Oblychchia y obrazy ukrainskoi istoriohrafii XX stolittia*, Kyiv 2011.

⁷ N. Yakovenko, *Vstup do istorii*, Kyiv 2007.

Oleksiy Yas⁸, Vitaly Yaremchuk⁹, and other scholars. They emphasized the importance of the theory of class struggle in the methodological framework of Soviet scientific “(and pseudo-scientific) constructs. This concept has been examined by Nestor Hupan¹⁰, Vitaly Telvak and Oksana Salata¹¹, Mykola Haliv, and Vasyl Ilnytskyi¹². Research into Soviet historiography has been conducted by scholars such as Nigel Grant¹³, George M. Enteen¹⁴, Sheila Fitzpatrick¹⁵, Peter Gatrell & Robert Lewis¹⁶, Roger D. Markwick¹⁷, Arup Banerji¹⁸, Simon Ings¹⁹, and others. However, the origins of class postulates have never been examined by Ukrainian scholars dealing with the history of education. This article aims to present the results of such a study.

The chronological framework of the study is related to the dominance of the Marxist doctrine in Ukrainian historical science that had emerged in the USSR. However, the article does not deal with events that occurred after 1985 when the Soviet Union gradually began to deconstruct the Marxist paradigm of historiography. Historiographic sources for the study were selected using the nest method. The advantage of the nest method is that it focuses on historiographic sources (works of Ukrainian scholars on the history of education) where the influence of the theory of class struggle is most vividly presented.

The theory of class and class struggle, which constitutes the cornerstone of Marxism-Leninism²⁰, became the most important theoretical and methodological basis of the Ukrainian scientific narrative that evolved during the totalitarian regime of the USSR. In Lenin’s interpretation, class struggle was elevated to the status of the main historical process which even overshadowed the importance of economic factors. As noted by Leonid Zashkilniak, the social class factor in Marxism-Leninism significantly exceeded economic concerns (despite the fact that economic factors were not disregarded by Lenin or the Bolshevik ideologues). Accepting the criticism of “economic determinism” by fa-

⁸ O. Yas, *Klas i natsiia u kontseptsii ukrainskoi istorii Matviia Yavorskoho*, “Istoriografichni doslidzhenia v Ukraini” 2013, no. 23, pp. 98–235.

⁹ V. Yaremchuk, *Ukrainska istoriografii: suspilno-politychna istoriia*, Ostroh 2017.

¹⁰ N. Hupan, *Ukrainska istoriografii istorii pedahohiky*, Kyiv 2002.

¹¹ V. Telvak, O. Salata, *Reception of Hrushevsky studies: epistolary aspect*, “Skhidnoievropeyskyi Istorichnyi Visnyk – East European Historical Bulletin” 2021, no. 20, pp. 31–38.

¹² M. Haliv, V. Ilnytskyi, *Theoretical argumentation in the historical narrative of Ukraine of the second half of the 19th – first half of the 20th century (on the example of research in the history of education)*, “Eminak” 2022, no. 3(39), pp. 66–80.

¹³ N. Grant, *Soviet education*, 4th ed., Penguin 1979.

¹⁴ G.M. Enteen, *Marxists versus non-marxists: soviet historiography in the 1920s*, “Slavic Review” 1976, no. 35(1), pp. 91–110.

¹⁵ S. Fitzpatrick, *Revisionism in soviet history*, “History & Theory” 2007, vol. XLVI, no. 4, pp. 77–91.

¹⁶ P. Gatrell, R. Lewis, *Russian and soviet economic history*, “The Economic History Review” 1992, vol. XLV, no. 4, 743–754.

¹⁷ R.D. Markwick, *Rewriting history in Soviet Russia: the politics of revisionist historiography (1956–1974)*, New York 2001.

¹⁸ A. Banerji, *Writing history in the Soviet Union: making the past work*, New Delhi 2008.

¹⁹ S. Ings, *Stalin and the scientists: a history of triumph and tragedy 1905–1953*, London 2016.

²⁰ L. Zashkilniak, op. cit., pp. 154.

mous scholars, Lenin focused on social consciousness, but resolutely divided society and consciousness along class lines and argued that consciousness is inextricable from social status. From a methodological point of view, class interests had to be identified and the true meaning behind each view or opinion had to be uncovered²¹.

Ukrainian historians of education who lived and worked in the Soviet regime adopted similar methodological assumptions. However, research conducted and published in different periods indicates that this process was gradual. For example, Gennadiy Zhurakivskiy did not immediately acknowledge the postulate of the “economic basis” and “political superstructure” of society. In *Essays on the history of ancient education* (1926), Zhurakivskiy describes the educational systems of ancient societies by focusing on their political situation. Therefore, from the very beginning, the author posits that educational practices in different historical eras were always conditioned by socio-political factors²². When characterizing the emergence of Hellenic education in Egypt or schools in the Roman Empire, Zhurakivskiy focuses mainly on political factors rather than economic concerns²³.

Similar approaches were adopted by other authors who, in the 1920s, had not yet embraced the doctrine postulating that historical processes are monofactorial. These scholars did not identify cause-and-effect relationships between the economy vs. education and educational ideas. Historians have traditionally argued that education is dependent on social interests and political realities. In particular, Oleksandr Hrushevskiy did not use the term “class” in an article about changes in the school system on the Left Bank in the 18th century (1924), but considered “the social and political struggle of the Ukrainian people” as one of the factors that influenced historical processes. In his opinion, the interests of the “Ukrainian nobility” were the key driver behind the changes in the schooling system of that time²⁴.

In the same year, in an article entitled *Dragomanov and Sunday Schools*, Sylvester Glushko noted: “Educational and school affairs could be addressed only a decade later, when the reign of Nicholas I had ended and the conditions of cultural life had somewhat changed”²⁵. According to the author, the emergence of Sunday schools was influenced mainly by political and cultural factors, rather than economic concerns. Hryhoriy Ivanytsia (1926) argued that historians need to establish a link between former educational systems and the social environment in which they evolved. In his opinion, research on the history of schooling should analyze social groups that influenced the

²¹ Ibidem.

²² H. Zhurakovskiy, *Ocherky po istorii pedagogiki v svyazy s iystoryei klassovoi borby*, vol. I, Kyiv 1926, p. 3.

²³ Ibidem, pp. 135, 150.

²⁴ O. Hrushevskiy, *Zminy shkilnoi systemy na Livoberezhzhi v XVIII v.*, “Ukraina” 1924, vol. I–II, p. 82.

²⁵ S. Hlushko, *Drahomanov i nedilni shkoly*, “Ukraina” 1924, vol. IV, p. 35.

educational system and should characterize the “various measures that are undertaken by social groups to achieve class goals in the field of pedagogy”²⁶. In 1931, Lev Mylovydov, a historian of education and Mykhailo Hrushevsky’s student, published an article on the project to establish a university in Kyiv in the second half of the 18th century. Mylovydov argued that the project had been undertaken to further the interests of the “Ukrainian nobility”²⁷.

Numerous inconsistencies regarding economic, social, and political factors can be found in the work of historians of education in the 1920s. Hryhoriy Grihorovych examined the history of education in Bukovyna (1926) and, contrary to the Marxist doctrine, argued that the availability of public education in the region increased in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire despite “high levels of poverty among peasants”, mountainous terrain, and the fact that peasants had limited access to land²⁸. Aware of the contradiction between the economic factor (“base”) and the educational “superstructure”, Grihorovych justified his argument by claiming that education had developed because “schools became necessary for the state for its military and industrial purposes”²⁹.

In an article about student riots in Kyiv in 1878 (1928), historian Oleksandr Nazarevskyi singled out five factors that had contributed to the development of the student movement: the difficulties experienced by students and the authorities’ attitude towards academia; the general rise of the revolutionary movement in the region; opposition sentiments related to the Turkish war of 1877–1878; considerable popularity of the cultural and national movement among the Ukrainian intelligentsia and youth; students’ negative attitudes towards professorship and disdain for immoral professors³⁰. This abundance of factors (mostly socio-political), none of which were economical in nature, suggests that Nazarevskyi relied mainly on positivist, rather than Marxist ideas in his work. Some publications by Ukrainian historians of education were written in a completely positivist style even in the late 1920s and the early 1930s. In his report (1931) on Kyiv Academy students’ educational trips to Western European countries in the 18th century, Petro Kudryavtsev did not mention economic prerequisites or social/class interests, but merely cited numerous source facts. At the same time, he emphasized the significance of this “national moment” in the cultural and political history of Ukraine³¹.

²⁶ H. Ivanytsia, *Do marksivskoi metodolohii istorii pedahohiky (Problema sotsialno-henetychnoi analyzy)*, “Zapysky Kyivskoho instytutu narodnoi osvity” 1926, vol. I, p. 11.

²⁷ L. Mylovydov, *Proieky universytetu u Kyievi u druhii polovyni XVIII v.*, “Kyivski zbirnyky istorii y arkhelohii, pobutu y mystetstva” 1931, vol. I, p. 299.

²⁸ H. Hryhorovych, *Osvita na Bukovyni*, “Shliakh osvity” 1926, no. 1, p. 130.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 131.

³⁰ O. Nazarevskyi, *Bereznevyi rukh’ kyivskykh studentiv r. 1878*, “Za sto lit. Materialy z hromadskoho y literaturnoho zhyttia Ukrainy XIX i pochatkiv XX stolittia” 1928, vol. III, p. 107.

³¹ P. Kudryavtsev, *Osvitni mandrivky vykhovantsiv Kyivskoi akademii za kordon u XVIII st.*, “Kyivski zbirnyky istorii y arkhelohii, pobutu y mystetstva” 1931, vol. I, p. 294.

Such inconsistencies in the works of Ukrainian historians of education during the first decades of the Soviet regime can be attributed to two factors: 1) many scholars had been educated at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries when history was taught in secondary and higher schools with emphasis on political factors, and historical science was dominated by positivist, neo-romantic, and neo-Kantian approaches; 2) it is more natural to describe the history of education in different countries and societies in the political (for example, Sparta, Rome, Austrian-Hungarian Empire) and cultural (enlightenment, religious, philosophical, and scientific influences) domain than in the economic (means of production, forms of ownership) context.

However, beginning from the second half of the 1920s, Ukrainian historians of education began to acknowledge that the economic factor was the key determinant in the sphere of education. In an article on the state of the Kharkiv Collegium in the 18th century (1927), Olga Vodolazhchenko attributed the increase in the number of students to the economic factor³². Researcher Pavlo Klepatskyi wrote about rural schools in the Poltava region at the beginning of the 19th century (1927), and he noted that these schools attracted his interest “as a phenomenon of socio-economic relations dating back to the serf era”. In an attempt to identify the links between the economy and the appearance of schools in the estates owned by the statesman and industrialist V. Kochubey, Klepatskyi noted that Kochubey “ran an industrial economy that did not quite fit into the framework of the then semi-feudal despotic regime”. Klepatskyi attributed Kochubey’s liberal policies to the bourgeois mode of management, which led to the establishment of schools in the landowners’ villages³³.

At the same time, Soviet official Yan Ryappo who conducted research on the history of education, wrote an article on the objectives of scientific and methodological work (1926) and emphasized the fundamental role of the national economy. He included all cultural and educational organizations (especially schools) in the “superstructure of the national economy”, and regarded them as a great productive and organizational force of society³⁴. Subsequently, he wrote: “In the process of decisive restructuring of the national economy and social relations, a new cultural superstructure had to emerge, contributing in turn to the reorganization of the national economy and the entire social order”³⁵. It is important to note that Yan Ryappo not only emphasized the dependence of education on the economic factor, but also noted the existence of reverse influences. It should be emphasized that such statements were also made by historians of education in the fol-

³² O. Vodolazhchenko, *Z istorii Kharkivskoho Kolehiumu v XVIII vitsi*, “Naukovi zapysky naukovy-doslidchoi katedry istorii ukrainskoi kultury” 1927, no. 6, p. 111.

³³ P. Klepatskyi, *Prykhodski (silski) uchylyshcha na Poltavshchyni v rokakh 1800–1812*, “Zapysky Poltavskoho instytutu narodnoi osvity 1927, vol. IV, p. 23.

³⁴ Ya. Riappo, *Cherhovi zavdannia naukovo-metodolohichnoi roboty*, “Shliakh osvity” 1926, no. 1, p. VI.

³⁵ Idem, *Narodnia osvita na Ukraini za desiat rokiv revoliutsii*, Kharkiv 1927, p. 3.

lowing decades. For example, in his monograph on public education in the 1960s and 1990s (1980), Volodymyr Borysenko wrote about the mutual influence of the “base” and “superstructure”, i.e. the economy and education³⁶.

In the 1930s, the threat of physical repression prevented any deviations from the Marxist doctrine³⁷. Therefore, it is not surprising that H. Zhurakivskyi adhered to the generally accepted methodological discipline in the 1930s and the following years. In the early 1930s, Zhurakivskyi wrote a monograph entitled *A study of the history of the bourgeois educational movement in Ukraine in the early 1860s*, which was never published. The monograph begins with a description of economic processes, industrial development, emergence of factories and plants, capitalization of agriculture, and increasing trade volumes, especially exports³⁸, whereas the state of education and the educational movement in Ukraine in the 19th century were discussed in subsequent chapters of his work.

In the post-war period, the theory of class struggle as a methodological framework of the Ukrainian Soviet historical narrative did not evolve further. It was only under the influence of Stalin’s postulates about the aggravation of the class struggle during the construction of socialism, which were expressed as early as 1928, that historians of education began to apply this philosophical and methodological concept in their works. In 1949, Mykola Nizhynskyi wrote about the educational activities of A. Makarenko and postulated that the doctrine of class struggle did not disappear which even after the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, but only changed its form and became even fiercer³⁹. Similar views were later expressed by Stepan Zbanduto in an article about the history of the K. Ushynskyi Odesa State Pedagogical Institute⁴⁰. Historians V. Terentiev and P. Babko (1959) examined the development of higher technical education in the Ukrainian SSR at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s and also reported on the exacerbation of class struggle. They noted that some institutes were “infiltrated by hostile elements”, namely the sons of former landowners and manufacturers. In their opinion, the social composition of the student community in the analyzed period improved not only by accepting students from the working class, but also by “purging” higher schools of “socially hostile individuals”⁴¹.

According to scholars, analyses of past education practices have scientific merit when they are conducted through the lens of the class approach. For example, in a pref-

³⁶ V. Borysenko, *Borotba demokratychnykh syl za narodnu osvitu na Ukraini v 60–90-rokakh XIX st.*, Kyiv 1980, p. 3.

³⁷ V. Yaremchuk, *Khto pysav ukrainskyi radianskyi istorychnyi naratyv?. Deiaki mirkuvannia pro sutnist ukrainskoho radianskoho istoriopyssannia*, “Istoriografichni doslidzhennia v Ukraini” 2012, no. 22, pp. 181–182.

³⁸ Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy, m. Kyiv, f. 1720, op. 1, spr. 6, ark. 1.

³⁹ M. Nizhynskyi, *Radianskyi patriot A. S. Makarenko v borotbi z burzhuaznoiu pedahohikoiu*, “Radianska shkola” 1949, no. 2, p. 16.

⁴⁰ Derzhavnyi arkhiv Odeskoi oblasti, f. R-7510, op. 1, spr. 35, ark. 82.

⁴¹ V. Terentiev, P. Babko, *Rozvytok vyshchoi tekhnichnoi shkoly URSR v roky pershoi piatyrychky*, “Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal” 1959, no. 6, p. 40.

ace to Borys Mityurov’s monograph on pedagogical ideas in Ukraine in the 16th and 17th centuries (1968), Oleksandr Mazurkevych argued that research on the educational activities of fraternities and the history of fraternal schools remains truly scientific only if it elucidates their participation in the class struggle in the Ukrainian nation⁴².

For class theory to be introduced to research on the history of education, a consensus had to be established with the national discourse in Ukrainian historical science that became dominant in the second half of the 19th century. In the process of introducing the Marxist doctrine and the Bolshevik ideology, Ukrainian scholars attempted to apply class theory to the characterization of national processes. Thus, in his essays on the history of ancient education (1926), Zhurakivskyi focused more on the national features of school systems and pedagogical thought than class. Obviously, in line with the spirit of Marxism, he declared the universality of the class struggle: “Class struggle, the influence of character and means of production on the life of society are universal phenomena. Despite the above, these factors have a distinctive character and a unique background in each country and in every era”⁴³. Therefore, Zhurakivskyi clearly indicated that the “original background” was the subordinate, secondary meaning of the national factor.

In 1934, Andrii Zilbershtein published an article about Lenin’s views on the cultural revolution and the goals of education. In particular, Zilbershtein postulated that the Bolshevik leader’s claim that the national question should be addressed through social class (the national question should be subordinated to the goals of the class struggle) pointed to the need to create a culture that is proletarian in content and national in form⁴⁴. In the same year, Oleksandr Dzeverin published an article about Lenin’s ideas on national education for young generations, and he emphasized that for Marxists, the leading issue was not the nation, but class struggle. According to Marxists, a nation could not exist outside class and class struggle in history, and no nation could be placed in the category of supra-class or supra-historical nations⁴⁵. Dzeverin also cited Stalin who asserted that culture was socialist in content and national in form⁴⁶. Oddly enough, this ideological premise became a methodological tool for reverting the concept of a nation to class discourse in historical science.

In the late 1930s, the national discourse initiated by Soviet ideologues and Stalin himself was revived (and the class rhetoric was preserved) with the aim of laying the

⁴² B. Mytiurov, *Razvitie pedagogicheskoi mysli na Ukraine v XVI–XVII vv.*, Kyiv 1968, p. 6.

⁴³ H. Zhurakovskyi, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

⁴⁴ A. Zilbershtein, *Lenin pro kulturnu revoliutsiiu ta zavdannia osvity*, “Komunistychna osvita” 1934, no. 1, pp. 11–13.

⁴⁵ O. Dzeverin, *Lenin pro natsionalne vykhovannia molodykh pokolin*, “Komunistychna osvita” 1934, no. 4, p. 9.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

foundations for the emergence of “Soviet patriotism”⁴⁷. This was manifested by the introduction of ideological and propaganda categories (for example, the “great Russian people” and the “Soviet people”) into the scientific apparatus, which were used by scholars until the collapse of the USSR.

The fact that historical discourse relied on contradictory methodologies (class *vs.* nation) often forced historians to extrapolate the notion of “class” to people/nation. Most often, people were referred to as the “common people”, namely the exploited social class. In an article written in 1935, Andrii Khvyliia referred to T. Shevchenko as the son of the “enslaved Ukrainian people” who was highly familiar with the life of the “enslaved masses”⁴⁸. Therefore, the entire Ukrainian population belonged to the category of the exploited masses, which contradicted Lenin’s theory about two nations and two national cultures (two classes) within one nation and national culture.

The introduction of national connotations into class-centered analyses of the history of education is especially visible in the work of Sava Chavdarov who advocated for schooling in western Ukrainian lands (1939). In the spirit of Romanticism, Chavdarov brought “the people” (rather than “the class”) to the historical stage by introducing the concept of “the people of Western Ukraine”. The researcher applied the categories of national discourse and argued that “the people of Western Ukraine had to defend their culture and language against both Poles and Germans”⁴⁹. Obviously, he equated the “people of Western Ukraine” with the exploited class: “Socio-economic oppression was closely linked with national oppression. Poles regarded Ukrainians and Belarusians as disenfranchised nations”⁵⁰. Emphasizing the fact that Polish landlords, priests, and aristocracy opposed the Ukrainian people in their struggle for Ukrainian-language schools, Chavdarov probably realized that social demarcation was based largely on nationality. The identification of social forces (lords, landlords, clergy) did not resolve the problem because these forces had a national marker (Polish). These Polonophobic observations testified to national, or rather chauvinistic, anti-Polish discourse that existed in Soviet political and scientific language in the interwar years.

During the Second World War and in the first years after the war, the national concept within the framework of the class approach used by Ukrainian education historians in the Soviet era sometimes took on distinctive attributes. In her study of I. Franko’s views on education (1946), Lviv researcher Halyna Paperna argued that “(...) in addition to social oppression, the people of Halychyna also suffered national oppression from the Polish

⁴⁷ See: S. Yekelchuk, *Imperiiu pamiati. Rosiisko-ukrainski stosunki v radianskii istorychnii uiavi*, Kyiv 2008, pp. 38–53.

⁴⁸ A. Khvyliia, *T.H. Shevchenko*, “Komunistychna osvita” 1935, no. 2, pp. 5, 7.

⁴⁹ S. Chavdarov, *Shkola v Zakhidnii Ukraini*, “Komunistychna osvita” 1939, no. 11, p. 21.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 22.

nobility”⁵¹. The use of the whimsical designation “the people of Galicia”, who remained under the influence of the Polish nobility, once again denotes a semantic combination of the concepts of the people and the exploited class. Paperna narrowed down the list of exploiters according to a single nation – the Poles: “The landed aristocracy of Galicia consisted of Poles”⁵². She was criticized by O. Dzeverin who regarded her views as a departure from the class approach⁵³. National approaches prevailed in Paperna’s narrative because she seldom wrote about class stratification among the Ukrainian people and included the entire Ukrainian people in the exploited class.

However, during the “Zhdanovshchyna” period, the concept of a patriotic superstate within the class approach was somewhat undermined, especially after S. Maslov and E. Kyryliuk had received criticism for their *Essay on the history of Ukrainian literature* (1946). The authors were accused of twisting the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the history of Ukrainian literature and presenting it in a bourgeois-nationalist spirit that was out of touch with the class struggle. Soviet ideologues reproached these scholars for ignoring the class struggle as the main prerequisite for the development of a class society, placing the emphasis on the “national moment”, downplaying the contradictions between reactionary and progressive currents in the literature, and promoting the theory about a classless and bourgeois Ukrainian society, which constitutes the essence of the bourgeois–nationalist concept in Hrushevsky’s school of thought⁵⁴.

As part of this criticism, the following methodological guidelines were laid down for all Ukrainian humanitarian studies in the Soviet regime. Historians of education were expected to: a) emphasize the class struggle as the driving force behind the development of a class society, b) analyze two cultures and, consequently, two systems of education and pedagogy in the past; c) refrain from making references to national moments and M. Hrushevskyi, d) emphasize the class-centered character of the Ukrainian people and the class struggle in their history. An analysis of subsequent works by Ukrainian historians of education in the Soviet era indicates that they attempted to adhere to the party-driven ideology in their writing.

The application of the methodological premise postulating the existence of two cultures (the exploiters and the exploited) in every national culture, which had to be explicitly used in all scholarly works on the history of education and culture, led to specific interpretations. An example of the above can be found in U. Kraglyk’s article on the development of education in the Ternopil Region (1954). Kraglyk commented on the class

⁵¹ H. Paperna, *Ivan Franko pro narodnu osvitu*, Lviv 1946, p. 4.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 5.

⁵³ O. Dzeverin, *Pro broshuru Halyny Papernoї „Ivan Franko pro narodnu osvitu”*, “Radianska shkola” 1947, no. 3, p. 60.

⁵⁴ TsK KP(b), *U pro perekruhennia i pomylky u vysvitlenni istorii ukrainskoi literatury*, “Radianska shkola” 1946, no. 5, p. 1.

character of two private Ukrainian gymnasiums that had operated in the region in the interwar period, noting that “the students were the children of a handful of Western Ukrainian bourgeoisie and kulaks”. Kraglyk was citing statistical data: in 1930–1931, more than 80% of gymnasium and seminary students in Ternopil Oblast came from the families of industrialists, merchants, government officials, landowners, and kulaks, whereas Ukrainians accounted for only 20% of the students⁵⁵. Despite the platitude concerning “western Ukrainian bourgeoisie and kulaks”, Kraglyk misquoted statistical data (the enemy class was the majority, whereas the Ukrainians were the minority), which points to his intention to include all Ukrainians in the exploited class.

In the years of the “thaw” (*vidlyha*) which marked the beginning of revisionist tendencies in Soviet historiography, the national discourse manifested itself more clearly in the works on the history of education. For example, Mykhailo Hrytsenko in his study of the history of the Soviet school in Ukraine (1958), mentioned the class struggle, but continued to regard the Ukrainian people as a factor in the historical transformation process. According to Hrytsenko, it was the Ukrainian people who “initiated the great campaign of building Ukrainian culture – national in form and socialist in content” after the October Revolution⁵⁶. In a study of the educational activities of Yov Boretskyi (1963), Fedir Naumenko emphasized that “the Ukrainian people evolved into a nation” in the late 16th and early 17th centuries⁵⁷. The situation in Ukrainian historiography changed once again under the influence of political events. During the period of the “Brezhnevsky stagnation”, attempts were made to downplay the national factor in the history of education and conceal it in class rhetoric, which is evident in the work of M. Hrytsenko⁵⁸, O. Zavadska⁵⁹, A. Zilbershtein⁶⁰, and the collective monograph entitled “National education and pedagogical science in the Ukrainian SSR (1917–1967)”⁶¹. Similarly to the 1930s, the phrase “class struggle” was also used in the titles of scientific works on the history of education⁶².

Similarly to other Soviet historians of education (E. Medynskyi, V. Shokotko, O. Dziuba), Borys Mitiurov wrote about educational processes in Ukraine in the 16th and 17th centuries. Mitiurov discussed the national movement from the point of view of

⁵⁵ U. Krahlyk, *Rozvytok narodnoi osvity v Ternopilskii oblasti, Radianska shkola* 1954, no. 5, p. 45.

⁵⁶ M. Hrytsenko, *Rozvytok radianskoi shkoly na Ukraini*, Kyiv 1958, p. 7.

⁵⁷ F. Naumenko, *Pedahoh-humanist i prosvitytel I. M. Boretskyi*, Lviv 1963, p. 3.

⁵⁸ M. Hrytsenko, *Narysy z istorii shkoly v Ukrainskii RSR (1917–1965)*, Kyiv 1966.

⁵⁹ O. Zavadskaia, *Razvitie obshcheobrazovatelnoi shkoly Ukrainy v period stroitelstva kommunizma (1959–1968 gg.)*, Kyiv 1968.

⁶⁰ A. Zilbershtein, V. Povkh, *Z istorii rozvytku systemy narodnoi osvity v Ukrainskii RSR*, [in:] *Narysy z istorii rozvytku pedahohichnoi nauky na Ukraini (1917–1967)*, vol. 5, Kyiv 1968, pp. 57–67.

⁶¹ *Narodna osvita i pedahohichna nauka v Ukrainskii RSR (1917–1967)*, ed. A. Bondar, Kyiv–Kharkiv 1967.

⁶² N. Leshchenko, *Borotba klasiv i partii navkolo pytan narodnoi osvity na Ukraini naperedodni Velykoho Zhovtnia*, Kyiv “Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal” 1974, no. 2, pp. 62–68.

Friedrich Engels' *The peasant war in Germany*, which, according to the author, provided a basis for understanding the history of Ukraine during that period. Citing the German philosopher's views on the class struggle between the German clergy and nobility in the 16th century, which took place under the guise of a religious conflict, Mitiurov quoted several parallels from Ukrainian history and argued that “the class struggle took place under the facade of religious beliefs”⁶³. The scholar suggested that the national movement was a form of class antagonism. On the other hand, Mitiurov examined the pedagogical ideas of Ya. A. Comenskyi (1970) and claimed that his views were rooted in the historical educational experience of the Czech people⁶⁴. Mitiurov did not describe Comenskyi's views as class-based, on the contrary, he emphasized that they were based on the concept of a nation. This example clearly shows that education historians were inconsistent or even relativistic in their interpretations of the class factor.

The application of the class struggle theory in the Soviet historical narrative had other consequences. Above all, historians used the Marxist category of “progressive class” to denote the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, especially during bourgeois revolutions. However, the bourgeoisie was rarely regarded as the progressive element when the class theory was applied less dialectically and more schematically. Most often, scholars were critical of the bourgeoisie and its educational activities. Since the proletariat was interpreted as the pinnacle of the social development of humanity, it was declared the rightful successor of all progressive achievements of humanity, in particular in the field of education and science. This opinion was most clearly expressed in A. Khvyliia's article on the history of Kyiv University (1936): “It is clear that the proletarians (...) are the sole heirs of the great scientific heritage created by mankind”⁶⁵.

Over time, the proletariat became sacralized in historical works as the liberating class, the guide and bearer of the most advanced ideas, morals and interests inspired by the Bolshevik ideology. Similarly to the Romantic period, when scholars regarded human beings as righteous creatures, the same attributes were attached to the class of proletarians. In historical research conducted at the time, the proletariat was endowed with infallibility. Moreover, the proletariat that was considered the most patriotic class because all other classes “betrayed their fatherland”⁶⁶. The only true patriots were the exploited proletarians who, beginning from the late 1930s, were considered not only internationalists, but also the “loyal sons of the motherland” in the Soviet ideological and scientific discourse.

In the studied period, researchers interpreted the views, ideas and activities of historical educators from the point of view of their class origin and environment. This approach

⁶³ B. Mytiurov, op. cit., pp. 54–55.

⁶⁴ B. Mytiurov, *Pedahohichna systema Ya. A. Komenskoho*, “Radianska shkola” 1970, no. 11, pp. 55.

⁶⁵ A. Khvyliia, *Sto rokiv*, “Komunistychna osvita” 1936, no. 3 (supplement), p. 4.

⁶⁶ M. Kruhliak, *Politychne vykhovannia na urokakh istorii*, “Komunistychna osvita” 1939, no. 2, p. 84.

received support from Ukrainian scholars already in the first years of the Soviet regime which witnessed the establishment of the theory of class struggle. In 1926, H. Ivanytsia wrote that his goal was to “uncover the social roots of this theory and determine to what extent and in what form the experiences, interests and hopes of a social group regarding the education of the younger generation were reflected in theory”⁶⁷.

Soviet historians of education generally relied on a rather schematic approach in their analyses of historical figures’ class views. For example, H. Zhurakivskyi identified direct links between historical figures’ views and their class origin. This was manifested in Zhurakivskyi’s observation that the Cynic school of philosophy “founded by Antisthenes, the son of an Athenian and a Phrygian female slave had to adopt a democratic character due to its founder’s origin (...)”⁶⁸. Zhurakivskyi applied the same formal logic in his analyses of the views of Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero.

A similarly schematic approach can be identified in the works of many Soviet historians of education, in particular in studies on the history of pedagogical ideas in the ancient world because biographical information about educators in antiquity is often incomplete. For example, B. Mitiurov (1968) made frequent references to Ukrainian teachers Kyrylo Stavrovetskyi, Stefan Zyzanii, and E. Slavynetskyi, but he made no attempts to link their views with their class due to the lack of detailed information about the teachers’ social background. Mitiurov was forced to make a different reference to class “ties”, and he observed that Zyzanii and Stavrovetsky, who worked as teachers in fraternal schools “were systematically persecuted by the higher clergy and secular magnates”⁶⁹. As a result, fraternal teachers were directly included in the oppressed class, which enabled the author to posit that the ideas developed by these historical figures had a class-based character. The class-centered nature of the views expressed by 19th and 20th century thinkers and education activists (T. Shevchenko, I. Franko, K. Ushynskyi, etc.) was much easier to prove because their social circumstances were described in many reliable sources.

Education historians relied on the class-based approach in analyses of the biographies of teachers with a proletarian background, above all A. Makarenko. In a biography of Makarenko, M. Luppol devoted considerable attention to his childhood and family from a social and moral perspective. He described A. Makarenko’s father as a “conscious, advanced worker” and his mother as an intelligent woman who kept the family’s household in exemplary order⁷⁰. Luppol observed that Makarenko’s family lived in poverty, but he painted a glorified portrait of the Soviet teacher’s early life. According to the biographer, Makarenko’s family lived in harmony, mutual love and respect. By endowing the working family with high virtues (which were the characteristic virtues of the proletariat),

⁶⁷ H. Ivanytsia, op. cit., p. 11.

⁶⁸ H. Zhurakovskyi, op. cit., p. 72.

⁶⁹ B. Mytiurov, *Razvitie pedagogicheskoi mysli...*, p. 55.

⁷⁰ M. Luppol, *Biohrafia Antona Semenovycha Makarenka*, “Radianska shkola” 1948, no. 2, p. 6.

the author gradually developed the image of a class-conscious innovator who, after 1917, was able to implement his views and ideas in the Soviet educational system.

In addition, the idea of education (schooling, teaching and upbringing) and pedagogy as a tool (means, weapon, tool) of class struggle emerged in the Ukrainian historical science of the Soviet era under the influence of the class struggle theory. In 1926, H. Zhurakovskiy noted that: “In the analyzed period, the Roman plutocracy had not yet realized that the school was a powerful weapon in the hands of the ruling class”⁷¹. Zhurakovskiy observed that schools were a means of class confrontation, and he even criticized the Roman “bourgeoisie” for neglecting the importance of schooling.

Class-centered concepts led to the emergence of the myth that the ruling classes had no interest in educating the “working people”, which prevented the organization of comprehensive public education in an exploitative society. In *Under capitalism* (1957), O. Severin wrote that “the school was an instrument of bourgeoisie class rule. Bourgeoisie ideologues preached the hypocritical slogan that “schools are not a political issue”, and the more cultured the bourgeois state was, the more subtly it propagated the idea that schools should not be a part of social political struggle. The bourgeoisie has always tried to make the school not an institution for the education of the human personality, but a tool for training the slaves of capital”⁷².

Therefore, Ukrainian historians who published their works in the 1920s during the Soviet totalitarian regime had a rather inconsistent and eclectic approach to introducing Marxist theories about the primacy of the economic factor in the history of education, and generally gave preference to political, social, cultural and ideological factors. However, the view that education was a “superstructure” over the “base”, i.e. the economic aspects of social life, became firmly established in the work of Ukrainian historians of education in the 1930s. Class struggle was regarded as the essence of and the driving force behind history; therefore, the historical evolution of education was considered a field where the interests of progressive and reactionary classes manifested themselves. Analyses of past education practices were regarded as scientifically sound only when they were conducted through the lens of the class approach. The application of the theory of class struggle in research on the history of education was characterized by the following features: 1) historians relied on the class struggle theory to determine national differences in the development of education, and the late 1930s witnessed a short-lived return to the national discourse; 2) historians used the concept of a “progressive class” in studies on the development of education; 3) in biographical studies, historians of education analyzed the views, ideas and activities of famous historical figures based on their class origin

⁷¹ H. Zhurakovskiy, *Ocherki po istorii...*, p. 161.

⁷² O. Dzeverin, *Rozvytok istoryko-pedahohichnoi nauky v URSR*, “Naukovi zapysky Naukovo-doslidnoho instytutu pedahohiky URSR” 1957, vol. VI, pp. 137–138.

and environment; 4) under the influence of the theory of class struggle, historians postulated that education (schooling, training and education) was a tool of class struggle; 5) class-centered concepts led to the emergence of the myth that the ruling classes had no interest in educating the “working people”, which prevented the organization of comprehensive public education in an exploitative society.

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Education between “class” and “nation”: the influence of the theory of class struggle on Ukrainian educational historiography (1920s–1980s)

Summary: The article examines the introduction of the theory of class struggle to the Ukrainian historical narrative (on the example of studies on the history of education) which evolved in the totalitarian conditions of the USSR. Class struggle was considered the essence of and the driving force behind history; therefore, the historical development of education was regarded as an area where the interests of progressive and reactionary classes were manifested. By relying on the theory of class struggle, scholars attempted to describe the national character of the development of education at various historical stages, which led to incorrect conclusions. Historians used the “progressive class” concept in studies on the development of education. In biographical research, historians examined the worldview, ideas and activities of education advocates based on their social class. Under the influence of the theory of class struggle, historians developed the concept of education as a tool for class struggle. Class theories led to the emergence of the myth that the ruling classes have no interest in educating the “working people”.

Keywords: Ukrainian historiography, history of education, theory of class struggle, nation, Marxism, Bolshevik ideology, Soviet totalitarian regime

Die Erziehung zwischen "Klasse" und "Nation" – der Einfluss der Klassenkampftheorie auf die ukrainische Geschichtsschreibung. Geschichte der Erziehung (1920–1980)

Zusammenfassung: Der Artikel befasst sich mit der Einführung der Theorie des Klassenkampfes in die ukrainische Geschichtsschreibung (am Beispiel der Bildungsgeschichte), die unter den totalitären Bedingungen der UdSSR entstand. Der Klassenkampf wurde zum Inhalt und zur treibenden Kraft der Geschichte erklärt, und daher wurde die historische Entwicklung des Bildungswesens als ein Bereich betrachtet, in dem sich die Interessen der fortschrittlichen und reaktionären Klassen manifestierten. Mit Hilfe der Theorie des Klassenkampfes versuchten die Wissenschaftler, den nationalen Charakter der Entwicklung des Bildungswesens in den verschiedenen historischen Phasen aufzuzeigen, was zu falschen Aussagen führte. Es wurde festgestellt, dass die Historiker in ihren Studien über die Entwicklung des Bildungswesens den Begriff "progressive Klasse" verwendeten. In biografischen Studien betrachteten Bildungshistoriker die Weltanschauung, die Ideen und die Aktivitäten von Persönlichkeiten des Bildungswesens durch das Prisma ihres Klassenhintergrunds. Beeinflusst von der Klassenkampftheorie formulierten die Historiker eine Vision von Bildung als Instrument des Klassenkampfes. Klassenvorstellungen beeinflussten die Bildung des Mythos, dass es nicht im Interesse der herrschenden Klassen lag, das "arbeitende Volk" zu erziehen.

Schlüsselwörter: ukrainische Geschichtsschreibung, Bildungsgeschichte, Klassenkampftheorie, Nation, Marxismus, bolschewistische Ideologie, totalitäres Sowjetregime

Wychowanie między „klasą” a „narodem”: wpływ teorii walki klas na ukraińską historiografię, historia wychowania (lata 1920–1980)

Streszczenie: Artykuł dotyczy wprowadzenia teorii walki klas do ukraińskiej narracji historycznej (na przykładzie studiów nad historią oświaty), która ukształtowała się w totalitarnych warunkach ZSRR. Walka klas została ogłoszona jako treść i siła napędowa historii, dlatego historyczny rozwój edukacji uznano jako dziedzinę manifestującą interesy klas postępowych i reakcyjnych. Za pomocą teorii walki klas uczeni próbowali ujawnić narodowy charakter rozwoju edukacji na różnych etapach historycznych, co doprowadziło do błędnych twierdzeń. Odkryto, że historycy używali pojęcia „klasa postępową”. W badaniach biograficznych rozpatrywano światopogląd, idee i działalność postaci oświatowych przez pryzmat ich klasowego pochodzenia. Pod wpływem teorii walki klas historycy sformułowali wizję edukacji jako narzędzia walki klas. Wizje klasowe wpłynęły na ukształtowanie się mitu o tym, że w interesie klas panujących nie było kształcenie „ludu pracującego”.

Słowa kluczowe: historiografia ukraińska, historia edukacji, teoria walki klas, naród, marksizm, ideologia bolszewicka, sowiecki reżim totalitarny

