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Fundamental principles for the formation of the newest historical policy in the context of the escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war

Principios fundamentales para la formación de la nueva política histórica en el contexto de la escalada de la guerra ruso-ucraniana

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Abstract

The Russian aggression against Ukraine and its historical accompaniment (which is used for propaganda) made the question of the answer relevant. The purpose of the article is to analyze the fundamental principles for the formation of the latest historical policy in the context of the escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war. To implement this task, general scientific and special historical research methods were used (content analysis, prognostic method, comparative, typological, and systemic methods. The results considered the development of historical policy in Ukraine until 2022 and the main aspects of the formation of the current situation of this field and its future prospects. It was determined that at the state level, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory forms the policy of memory. Young Ukrainian historical policy, however, has always been under the pressure of Russian influence, which

Resumen

La agresión rusa contra Ucrania y su acompañamiento histórico (que se utiliza con fines propagandísticos) hicieron pertinente la cuestión de la respuesta. El propósito del artículo es analizar los principios fundamentales para la formación de la última política histórica en el contexto de la escalada de la guerra ruso-ucraniana. Para llevar a cabo esta tarea se utilizaron métodos de investigación histórica generales y especiales (análisis de contenido, método de pronóstico, métodos comparativos, tipológicos y sistémicos. Los resultados consideraron el desarrollo de la política histórica en Ucrania hasta 2022 y los principales aspectos de la formación de la situación actual de este campo y sus perspectivas de futuro . Se determinó que a nivel estatal, el Instituto Ucraniano de la Memoria Nacional forma la política de la memoria. Sin embargo, la joven política histórica ucraniana siempre ha estado bajo la presión de la influencia rusa, que dirigió a una

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directed a part of society against the decommunization and de-Sovietization of the historical past. In the future, it is important to review the existence of former Soviet institutions and their socio-cultural activities. An important stage is the official registration of decolonization processes at the legislative level. The conclusions draw attention to the importance of not only contemporary events getting into Ukrainian historical politics.

Keywords: historical politics, Russian-Ukrainian war, decommunization, history of Ukraine.

parte de la sociedad contra la descomunización y la desovietización del pasado histórico. En el futuro, es importante revisar la existencia de las antiguas instituciones soviéticas y sus actividades socioculturales. Una etapa importante es el registro oficial de los procesos de descolonización a nivel legislativo. Las conclusiones llaman la atención sobre la importancia de que no sólo los acontecimientos contemporáneos se introduzcan en la política histórica ucraniana.

Palabras clave: política histórica, guerra ruso-ucraniana, descomunización, historia de Ucrania.

Introduction

The formation of historical policy in Central and Eastern Europe has been actualized since 1991, when, after the fall of the Soviet Union, new opportunities for independent work of historians opened up. This led to the actualization of old problems and the emergence of a new dimension - the search for historical dialogue between neighboring states that had long been part of the socialist bloc or even directly part of the USSR. Ukraine, as one of the largest republics of the former Soviet Union, also developed certain aspects of the phenomenon of "historical policy," but due to the general state of the state as a mechanism, the effective results of this process were already tangible at the beginning of the twenty-first century (for example, the first textbooks on the history of Ukraine written during the period of independence appeared only in 1994-1995, indicating inertia in perceiving the realities of the collapse of the unified Soviet world). The main role among the state institutions responsible for formulating historical policy belongs to the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, which was established only in 2006. At the same time, all other historians at the private level are also involved in the formation of historical policy, but they conduct dialogue with colleagues only on their own behalf or on behalf of the institutions they represent. Under such circumstances, Ukrainian historical communities have lost significantly to the Russian model of shaping historical memory, which, after a brief democratization, returned to the ideals of forming a unified state at the beginning of the twenty-first century. A practical manifestation of this trend was the events of 2014, when the Kremlin authoritarian regime decided to occupy Crimea and launch separatist movements in eastern Ukraine. The continuation of anti-Ukrainian hysteria in Russian historical scholarship was also intended to justify Russia's aggression in 2022.

The purpose of the article is to explore the fundamental principles of the formation of modern historical policy through the prism of analyzing the escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Accordingly, the key issues addressed in the article are:

1. Historical policy in Ukrainian realities until 2022.
2. Fundamental principles of the formation of the newest historical policy of Ukraine.

Theoretical Framework or Literature Review

The study of historical politics is a relatively new phenomenon for European social science. The term "historical politics" (or Geschichtspolitik (Udod, 2018) appeared in Germany during the so-called "battle of the historians" of the 1980s and 1990s in connection with the development of the policy of "moral and political turn" by Minister Gerhard Kohl to define the main actions aimed at imposing a specific version of the historical past on society. Subsequently, it expanded in Poland, gaining mostly negative connotations in the politics of the right-wing forces of this country.

The space of new research on the formation of historical policy is very broad and difficult to cover and interpret. If we analyze the most significant trends of the last quarter century, they can be characterized as follows:

1. Characterization of the European civilizational orientation towards the rapprochement of peoples. Contained in the works of the following modern prominent researchers.
2. The study of tolerance, multicultural processes (Frazer, 2018).

3. Analysis of globalization processes and the impact of historical conditions on its development (Scott, Le Goff & Gauthier, 2023).

It is worth noting that, according to contemporary research, globalization has clearly come into conflict with nationalism with its phenomenon of identity and separateness, sometimes even intolerance towards other cultures. A modern factor in the entry of politics into history and its use has been the irreversible increase in the importance and role of information and its dissemination capabilities (Jacques, 1992). We are talking about the so-called "information revolution," which contributes to the emergence of broad manipulative mechanisms for manipulating the consciousness of individuals, groups, or the entire society (Skotheim & Fischer, 1971). Nowadays, historical politics is characteristic of almost all countries of the world, and its study has significantly intensified in recent years.

Blau (2020), in his paper "How (Not) to Use the History of Political Thought for Contemporary Purposes," explored the key aspects of using historical ideas in contemporary processes. This paper discusses in detail the various ways in which historical ideas can gain new contemporary relevance. The connection between politics and history is presented in the monographic study by Geuss (2001). Kuo & Marwick (2021) characterized the power of history in modern political processes, proving that modern political forces or individual politicians speculate on the past, especially during election campaigns. Similar conclusions are contained in Bello Hutt (2018). At the same time, Frazer (2018) described the role of intellectual historical thought in the development of modern politics, and the researcher characterized their connection to the development of modern socio-cultural processes. Zaretsky (2013) outlined the theoretical foundations of the phenomenon of historical politics and described the key mechanisms of its formation. The methodological basis of the article is also formed by works that characterize the peculiarities of the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation through the centuries. In particular, Kuzio (2022) study highlights the key aspects of the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation and describes its historical background. The transformational changes in the national consciousness of Ukrainians were described by Kulyk (2017). This researcher described changes in the key national identification attitudes of the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine. The results of Kulyk (2017) demonstrate that the predominantly Russian-speaking population of Ukraine, as a result of the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation, has become "fully Ukrainian" and rejected the Russian (or Soviet) vision. The work of contemporary historians is also important for this study. In particular, Gromenko (2022) studied the peculiarities of implementing the strategy of historical policy and analyzed the key areas of its development. On the other hand, the work of Morozov (2019) is valuable, characterizing the peculiarities of the constitutional formation of the Ukrainian state. Parshyn (2018) describes key aspects of the development of medieval Ukraine in the context of its diplomatic relations. Yakovenko (2009) studied the formation of Ukrainian statehood from ancient times to the end of the eighteenth century. However, the process of forming historical policy in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war is still poorly understood. Therefore, an important task of modern studies is to outline the basic principles and foundations of its formation, on the basis of which subsequent research will be modified.

Methodology

The work uses special historical and general scientific research methods. A detailed analysis of the latest studies by Ukrainian and European researchers was carried out using content analysis. The application of the prognostic research method allowed to identify possible ways and directions for the implementation of further historical policy, taking into account the impact of Russian aggression. Among the historical research methods used were comparative, typological, and systematic. In particular, the historical-comparative method was used to revise some generally accepted views on the peculiarities of interpreting and studying past events in Ukraine. The historical and typological method was used to describe the basic principles of future historical policy with a Ukrainian-centered (or decolonization) orientation. The paper also uses the principles of systematicity and objectivity.

Results

Historical Policy in Ukrainian Realities until 2022

Today, historical politics is a characteristic feature of all developed countries, as modern governments cannot stand aside from the trends of cultural conflict that have become more acute in European countries that have pursued a course

of multiculturalism and interethnic tolerance (Zaretsky, 2013). But the old "historical scores" between neighbors have a particularly rich conflict potential (Skotheim & Fischer, 1971). There is practically no country in Europe that does not have "old" historical wounds with its neighbors (Frazer, 2018). Such situations have already been analyzed in many publications, including the well-known international work "Europe and its painful pasts". Most researchers interpret historical politics as a type of policy intended for the purposeful formation and practical application of "historical memory" and other types of collective forms of perception of the past and its representation in politics (Geuss, 2001). First of all, we are talking about representatives of professional historiography. Historical politics can be implemented on behalf of political, cultural, ethnic, and social leadership of social groups in the course of confrontation for power, its retention, or division. Researchers also identify the important essence of memory policy, which is seen as part of historical policy (Kasianov, 2014). The policy of historical memory is a somewhat narrower concept that combines commemorative practices and is primarily related to the formation of collective historical perceptions. It does not require intervention in the services of professional historians, didactics, and pedagogy (Gorinov & Mereniuk, 2022). Such theoretical statements have long dominated in Ukrainian realities, given the foundations of the formation of certain governing bodies and institutions that implemented historical policy (in particular, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory), their interaction with academic and university institutions engaged in historical science.Misunderstandings between academic historians and the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory arise from a failure to take into account the differences between historical policy and its specific forms of implementation. The Ukrainian situation is complicated by the late establishment of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory-fifteen years after Ukraine's independence-and the even later start of a massive decommunization policy in April 2015. At the same time, while historical scholarship was decommunized in 1988-1992, decommunization measures (renaming, glorification of the deeds and activities of the OUN and UPA, dismantling of Soviet-era monuments, banning of communist and Soviet symbols in general, etc.) were introduced only in 2015.European historical science is characterized by the functioning of certain components of historical policy (Jacques, 1992; Still, 2020). They may differ from country

to country and context to context, but in general, we can summarize them as follows:

1. Historiography policy is the determination of which historical events and figures are subject to research and interpretation and which are not. One example of such a policy is certain prohibitions on the study and role of Nazi leaders, their documentary, biographical, literary, and research heritage, etc.
2. Commemorative policy is the determination of which historical events and figures deserve to be honored and remembered through monuments, monuments, museums, and other symbolic forms. For example, in the United States, there are no monuments to the English kings who ruled the land for a long time.
3. Educational policy is the definition of how history is taught in schools and universities, which historical events and figures are included in the curriculum, and which aspects of history are most emphasized in the educational process.
4. The multiple politics of memory is the definition of how different groups and communities of memory have the right to express their views and interpretations of history and how these rights are realized in practice (Bello Hutt, 2018).
5. The transnational politics of memory is the determination of how countries interact with each other in understanding history, what mechanisms of cooperation between international organizations and states are used to resolve historical issues (Kuo & Marwick, 2021).

In particular, we can point to the formula "we forgive and ask for forgiveness," which became expressive in the French-German reconciliation of the second half of the 20th century.

In the Ukrainian reality, only a few elements of the historical policy were implemented since the actual start of the policy in 2006, which is also characterized by a certain incompleteness of the relevant reforms (Ostrovyy, 2022). In particular, emphasis was placed on the Ukrainian centrality of historical studies, the coverage of Ukrainian historical figures, and the rehabilitation of those stigmatized by the Soviet regime. The Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance devoted a great deal of work to uncovering the genocide of Ukrainians in 1932-1933, and to covering the politics of the interwar period and the Second World War. Decommunization (commemorative policy) began only in 2015, when, after the

occupation of Crimea and support for separatists in eastern Ukraine, it was decided to abandon a number of old communist names and monuments. This direction, even though it was partially implemented, was then perceived by a part of society as openly hostile. The reason for this was the opposition to Russian propaganda, Russian influence on Ukrainian political life, and the inertia of a part of Ukrainian society (Moseiko, 2022) that did not accept the realities of the undeclared war.

The educational policy in the field of history has probably been quite effective. The educational sector developed on the basis of the modern achievements of Ukrainian historians so that during lectures or other classes, teachers were able to provide relevant information to the general student population without interference from the authorities. The relevance of this information was that by 2014 it had been largely decommunized and de-Russified (Kulyk, 2017). Based on independent research, an idea of the history of Ukraine was formed as a separate field of study that examines events in a particular country through the prism of centuries. As a result, even the rather conservative field of school textbooks has undergone certain transformations, although they have accelerated significantly since 2014.

At the same time, for a long time, the multiple politics of memory and transnational politics of memory were hardly addressed at all. Attempts to establish contacts with Polish historians were extremely slow. There was no development of a common vision of the past with Russian historical scholarship (Kuzio, 2022), primarily due to the reluctance of Russian scholarship to build common lines of understanding.

Fundamental Principles of Formation of the Modern Historical Policy of Ukraine

Ukraine is a young democratic country trying to overcome the post-Soviet legacy. In any democratic state where freedom of thought and speech prevails, there cannot be a single correct "official history" developed by the relevant executive body. Therefore, it is necessary to gradually abandon "historical policy" and deepen the study of "public history" and its role in preserving historical memory and national identity (Scott et al., 2023).

Scientists and researchers, including the Institute of History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and the Institute of Ukrainian Archaeology and Source Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, in cooperation with many other researchers, are actively working on the study of "public history" in Ukraine, publishing popular science books on highly specialized topics (Gromenko, 2022). The key promising areas of state policy for the development of public history and the preservation of historical memory are as follows:

1. revision of state requirements for the humanitarian component of the training of higher education students;
2. review of commemorative events at the state level, i.e. those that emphasize the importance of history for modern development and security of society;
3. mandatory involvement of a wide range of representatives of the academic community in the development and testing of legislation, projects, and research by executive authorities, in particular, in the work of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory;
4. expanding state funding for events and commemorative dates, local government programs that help improve the image of provincial territories, their tourist attractiveness, and thus stimulate economic development in the regions;
5. opening or at least expanding public access to sources of information of national historical significance;
6. regulatory, organizational, and material support for organizations involved in the preservation of cultural heritage, centers for tourism and patriotic education, and non-governmental organizations;
7. expanding the network of training of specialists in public history and promoting their international professional development.
8. decommunization and decolonization aspects of historical policy.

We believe that in formulating historical policy, the focus should be on the decommunization aspects of historical policy (Gromenko, 2022). Although an active stage of street renaming is currently underway, the main attention should be paid to revising the Soviet institutional principles of socio-cultural activity. Obviously, such a step will help to eradicate Soviet principles of organizing any activity from many government institutions. At the same time, an important step will be the formalization of decolonization processes, as it is important to remove from public space certain monuments or street names, or certain institutions associated with the Ukrainian lands being part of a particular empire. However, in this context, it is important to create

new monuments in honor of modern-day heroes of Ukraine, heroes of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This will influence the consolidation of the national idea and remind ordinary Ukrainians of the honor and dignity of Ukrainian defenders (Gromenko, 2022).

Contemporary researchers consider political and ideological instrumentalization, the use of history and historical memory for certain unscientific purposes, to be an important feature of historical policy. Public authorities, as the main actors of historical policy, must keep all elements of collective (national) memory under control, including historical science, in order to fulfill their own political goals. This organic feature is relevant for historical policy, and it has become the only one and decisive in the formation of both scientific and civic positions among professional historians.

Discussion

Many scholars have been interested in the formation of historical policy and its interpretation. Gromenko (2022) described in detail why modern Ukraine needs an effective historical policy. Wood et al., (2015) outlined the basic principles of humanitarian policy formation based on an analysis of the historical features of its formation.

Although these works mention certain decolonization aspects, they are analyzed in a purely general practical way. Today, contemporary Ukrainian historians are faced with an extremely difficult task, first of all, not of "nationalization" but of "decolonization" of the Ukrainian past itself. Obviously, much can be written about the main issues of such decolonization. We will limit ourselves to the primary proposal and several major "gaps" in the history of Ukraine that require a thorough methodological and subject-historical rethinking. In particular, modern Ukrainian society today needs a scientific academic history of Ukraine. It is not so much a multi-volume history as a multi-sense one.

An important aspect is also the subject research, in particular, the emphasis on the events of the XX and XXI centuries. Undoubtedly, in the context of Russian aggression, the priority study of the "painful" problems of the Soviet colonization of Ukraine is extremely relevant. At the same time, the roots of the problem (which led to the Soviet enslavement of Ukrainian lands) are much deeper, at least going back to early modern times or even the Middle Ages

(Yakovenko, 2009; Parshyn, 2018). The current historical policy of Ukraine does not mention the importance of studying Rus, although this medieval country with its capital in Kyiv, ruled by a grand duke, is ruthlessly exploited by Russians for their propaganda. They even emphasize the consonance between the Latin versions of the current name Russia and the Latin names Ruscia and Russia, which were used by medieval chroniclers to describe the possessions of the Rurik dynasty. The inactivity of Ukrainian historical policy in this area has led to the fact that in many European academic publications of the twentieth and even the twenty-first centuries, the history of Kievan Rus is associated with Moscow. Only in recent publications have researchers begun to use the designation "Rus'ians" rather than "Russians." Obviously, "pre-communist times" should also become an object of Ukrainian historical policy, especially against the backdrop of Russian military aggression.

The discussion on the formation of such a synthesis has been active since 2012, in particular on the pages of the Ukrainian Historical Journal. The key authors of the discussion propose to define the history of Ukraine not only in the context of the history of struggles between different strata, confessions, ethnic groups, or states but also as a territory of interaction and mutual enrichment of cultures and civilizations. A striking example is the work of Parshyn & Mereniuk (2022), which characterizes the peculiarities of Muslim life in medieval Lviv. Thus, under such conditions, we are talking about the history of the "lands" and "territories" occupied by modern Ukraine, about the civilizational processes of the peoples who inhabited it. However, even in this context, a significant problem arises: whether we are talking about Ukraine or a certain conglomerate of cultures in this context.

Obviously, the legitimizing, identifying principles of such a narrative can also have a destructive impact on the formation of social consciousness. Therefore, in this context, we agree with Gromenko (2022) that the historian should remember that the narrative to some extent shapes a person who is trying his best to create himself and is not inclined to refuse the opportunity to make history. For this reason, we believe that the history of Ukraine should be based on the subjectivity of a modern country and political nation (Morozov, 2019). However, at the same time, it should be a story about people and their interaction on the territory of Ukraine. Modern history should not be a history of

statehood or one ethnic group, as they are only manifestations of the social interaction of humanity. At the same time, we should agree with the researchers that Russian aggression against Ukraine has actualized interest in history. Primitive Russian manipulations (for example, repeated statements about the "artificiality" of Ukraine, its creation by Vladimir Ulyanov-Lenin, coming from the highest Kremlin authoritarian leadership) do not stand up to any criticism from the point of view of objective scientific history. At the same time, they were directed to the Russian audience as an element of the formation of the inferior Russian imperial myth and modern imperialism. For the Ukrainian audience, these appeals had the opposite effect. They led to an interest in the past, including the development of public history (for example, the formation of YouTube channels covering events in Ukrainian and world history), the emergence of modern monographs and individual scientific and journalistic studies, etc. Awareness of the separateness of the Ukrainian people has become a trend that will require further development.

Conclusions

Therefore, in the context of Russian aggression and the active propaganda that accompanies this aggression, the issue of Ukrainian historical policy has become much more active. It has been determined that in general, this field is quite new in Ukrainian realities. The Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance was officially established only in 2006. Moreover, this state institution has focused on researching the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, while other periods of the Ukrainian past, which also require decommunization and rethinking, have been left out of the attention of scholars. Some of the reforms that were introduced in the Ukrainian context were only partially successful and were not followed up with appropriate measures. In particular, the Ukrainian centrality in historical research was emphasized, Ukrainian historical figures were highlighted, and names erased by the Soviet regime were rehabilitated. Decommunization (the policy of restoring memory) was launched only in 2015 after the occupation of Crimea and support for separatists in eastern Ukraine. This process, even with its partial implementation, was perceived by a part of society as hostile due to the opposition of Russian propaganda, Russian influence on Ukrainian political life, and the inertia of a part of Ukrainian society that did not realize the realities of the undeclared war. However, the history education policy was probably quite successful. By 2022, it was mostly decommunized and de-Russified. However, for a long time, the politics of memory and transnational memory politics were hardly addressed at all, including due to the reluctance of Russian scholarship to establish common lines of understanding.

Further development of historical policy should focus on de-communization and aspects of historical policy. Although street renaming is currently underway, the main focus should be on revising Soviet institutions for socio-cultural activities. This step will contribute to the eradication of Soviet management principles in many government institutions. In addition, an important step will be the formalization of decolonization processes, including the removal of certain monuments, street names, and institutions associated with the Ukrainian lands being part of former empires. In this context, the creation of new monuments in honor of new heroes of Ukraine, in particular the heroes of the Russian-Ukrainian war, will be important for the consolidation of the national idea and will remind ordinary Ukrainians of the honor and dignity of Ukrainian defenders.

A further area of research can be considered the formation of effective mechanisms for establishing historical policy and expanding it beyond the twentieth century, using the tools of public history and oral history to record contemporary events.

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