

THE COLD WAR IN POST-SOVIET INTERPRETATIONS: THE CASE OF UKRAINIAN AND BELORUSSIAN SCHOOL HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

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Abstract. *The paper aims to explore Cold War in history textbooks. I study whether Soviet perceptions or way of thinking are still present in the post-Soviet history school textbooks. Drawing on Ukrainian and Belarusian school history textbooks, I focus on three main issues: what was the ‘Cold War’, who started it, and what were its consequences.*

I note that the definitions of the Cold War are very similar in both countries’ school textbooks and they are close to current interpretations of the Cold War. But there exist some differences: Belarusian evaluation of the bipolarity as a ‘socialism—capitalism’ dichotomy is closer to the Soviet tradition compared to the prevailing Ukrainian variant, which considers tensions along the line of totalitarianism—democracy. I discover two main interpretations of the beginning of the Cold war: the one which de-facto repeats the Soviet interpretation—that the main initiator of the rivalry was the West, and another one, which pointed mutual responsibility on the beginning of the confrontation. The first one is present in one of the reviewed Ukrainian and Belarusian textbooks, while the second variant is a dominant version for the rest of the reviewed Ukrainian schoolbooks. I find that Cold War is important in the school narratives of the world history of the 20th century.

Even a superficial review shows the remnants of the Soviet narratives and appraisals. Among them I consider the following: the evaluation of the bipolarity as the dichotomy between socialism and capitalism; the fact that the main initiator of the bipolar rivalry was the West (the USA, Western countries, capitalist bloc); in the evaluation of the reasons and consequences of the different events of the Cold War the main criticism is aimed at the USA. The Soviet past is still having a significant effect on the post-Soviet Ukrainian and Belarusian societies. The existence of the abovementioned features originating from the Soviet narratives, proves the presence of the archaic aspects in post-Soviet historical education. In case these perceptions dominate, they can influence on the political imagination of post-Soviet educators and their students and led to the formation of the basis for a pro-Russian/pro-Soviet outlook and a good soil for Russian cultural and educational politics as a part of the policy which is aimed on the spread of the Russian ideas and reintegration of the former Soviet republics and reconstruction of the Soviet Union in a new form.

Key words: *Cold war, History textbooks, Ukraine, Belarus*

Introduction

History has often been used as a tool of ideology, especially in totalitarian and authoritarian societies. In the Soviet educational system, history and ideology were intertwined. The system of education was geared towards constructing a new identity—the Soviet one (*New Soviet Man*), which supposed to play a historical role in the development of the whole mankind. The Soviet official historical narrative was subordinated to the general ideological mainstream focused on the world's evolution to the Communist future, the eternal struggle between the exploiters and the exploited, the antagonism of the democratic/communist/socialist (*we*) and capitalist/imperialistic/bourgeois (*they*) 'camps'. During the Cold war, ideology had an unprecedented impact on the system of the Soviet historical education and studies, where the white-and-black dichotomy (East-West, Communism-Capitalism, USSR-USA, we-they) determined both national (mostly Soviet Union's) and world history interpretations.

The first systematic knowledge about the world outside the country of birth is mostly formed by the school lessons of history and geography. The description of the main historical events and interpretations of the development of the international relations influences on the general outlook and perception of the history of one's own homeland. School and textbooks play a key role in the construction of the national identity and propose a certain frame of the attitudes towards the other nations. I agree with the statement that textbooks are intended to promote a culture of mutual understanding and peace (Williams 2014: vii). But Soviet textbooks were based on the East-West dichotomy and were focused on the "enemy image" and anti-Western/anti-American sentiments. Such an approach influenced the outlook and perceptions of the other nations, especially those of them that were formerly considered as representatives of the "enemy camp".

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and proclaiming independence, Ukraine as many other nations received a great opportunity to re-investigate own national history and replace the universal Soviet narratives with her own. The great majority of the formerly forbidden topics and issues became an object of research. This led to radical changes in interpretations of both national and world history, which mirrored in school textbooks. The renunciation of the Soviet paradigm and the reconstruction of the national identity needed a deep transformation of the system of education, the teaching of social sciences and history in particular.

The Soviet past still affects the post-Soviet societies, even the ones where real or declared de-communization takes place. The majority of the authors of new history textbooks have Soviet background so the remnants of the past appear in certain archaic aspects in post-Soviet historical education even in new political circumstances. School textbooks allow us to find out the most vivid of them and to evaluate the evolution of the textbook writing.

The role of school textbooks (history in particular) in education and nation-building has been investigated by scholars. There are a lot of publications and debates in

the field of constructing new (post-Soviet) identities by new texts. School textbooks in the post-Soviet space (and Ukraine in particular) have been studied, for example, by Sergii Terno (2006), Olexandr Tomachenko (2012), Kateryna Kisel (2018), Tatyana Ostrovskaiia (2010), Jan Germet Janmaat (2000), Abel Polese (2010), and Karina Korostelina (2010). Traditionally these observations and analysis are concentrated on studying national narratives, especially dealing with the nation-building topics or descriptions of some important events in world history (e.g. World War I and II). Another popular topic in this field is controversial narratives and interpretations of both national and Soviet history as well as politics of memory and memory wars in post-Soviet countries. The image of the neighboring nations and the own nation by the eyes of the neighbors are also topical.

It is also worth mentioning that post-Soviet historiography in Cold War studies also evolved from the ideological frame of the critical attitudes towards the representatives of the opposite side (their domestic and foreign policy, economic development, social problems were condemned) towards a more balanced evaluation of mutual responsibility of both sides of the rivalry and the impartial coverage of internal life, international and bilateral relations; for example, Thomas R. Maddux (2002), Anatolii Tumashov (2003). Thus, the description of Cold War in new school textbooks supposed to mirror these developments.

This paper is an attempt to make a retrospective overview of the school textbooks on the example of the narratives about selected events of the bipolar confrontation of 1946-1991 known as the Cold War. This research is based on the comparative analysis of the history textbooks of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods on the one hand, and on the other hand—of post-Soviet Ukrainian and Belarusian textbooks with each other. Such an approach is aimed at the investigation of how far Ukraine and Belarus evolve from the mutual Soviet heritage. That is why there is also proposed a brief overview of the school textbooks' history in post-Soviet Ukraine and Belarus and the main dimensions of the Soviet approaches towards Cold War history. The main focus is made on the perceptions in all mentioned textbooks of the definition of the "Cold war"; on the findings what international actor is described as the initiator of the bipolar rivalry; on evaluation of the consequences of the Cold war. The images of the USA as the main enemy, negative attitudes towards the NATO, critical perception of the West as the main political, economic, ideological opponent are also considered.

The selection of the Ukrainian and Belarusian history textbooks for this research was caused by a few reasons: (1) two mentioned nations with their clear ethnic specifics have more common features in history, traditions, and religion than the other post-Soviet nations, so it is possible to compare their views on the events of the close past; (2) in both Ukraine and Belarus, the Russian cultural and language component is very significant, so it is important to find out whether this influences historical perceptions in independent Ukraine and Belarus.

Textbooks revised

Prior to the analysis of the Ukrainian and Belarusian textbooks, I provide a brief overview of the post-Soviet development and current state of the history schoolbooks writing.

Schooling is important instrument of nation-building. As the school textbook usually offers official narratives of the nation's history in domestic and international dimensions, radical changes in state's development should lead to a revision of school texts, aimed at the representation of these changes, consolidation of a new identity and the construction of the collective memory.

In the Soviet Union, textbook production was strictly centralized and there was no opportunity to find unapproved textbooks. There was only one textbook for each grade all over the Soviet state. Such a system fostered the formation of a unified outlook, because regardless of the place of birth, all Soviet schoolchildren got the same information about the history of the state, about the world outside the USSR, as well as about other nations and international relations. Many of these books are still present online, scanned and posted on many (mostly Russian) websites. There are even cases that some Soviet schoolbooks are still used as "an additional study guide" (the incident found in one of the boarding schools for hearing-impaired children, in Kazakstan, by special republican monitoring group established under the Agency for Civil Service Affairs in 2018 (Matrekov 2018)).

After the collapse of the USSR, (re)writing history textbooks became vital for the newly independent states. As Williams notes, "a new nation would, on gaining independence, revise its textbooks to reflect its own understanding of history rather than that of the colonizers" (2014: 1).

The details of the development of the school textbook in independent Ukraine and Belarus are not the subject of the research within this paper, so I limit myself to a general outline here. The experts in the field of schooling and textbook writing claim that already there are a few generations of post-Soviet history textbooks. The appearance of these generations was caused by the following main reasons: the renunciation of the Soviet paradigm; the (re)construction of the national identity; school reforms (proclaimed transition from eleven to twelve years of secondary education and back). Ukrainian researcher Oleksandr Tomachenko proposes his version of four periods of the development of Ukrainian history textbook writing, which were singled out according to the progress in the methodical and methodological approaches: Ukrainian school texts show the transition from the 'formation' to the 'civilization' concept (Tomachenko 2012: 135–136). His colleague from Belarus Tatiana Ostrovska highlights the stages of the evolution of Belarusian textbooks by focusing on the political development in the country: from attempts to reject old colonial myths and to construct a new identity on the base of democratic principles and universal values, through the partial restoration of the Soviet approaches, to the formation of the new ideology of Belarusian state (Ostrovska 2010: 3, 6–7). In both Ukraine and Belarus, history textbook writing started in early 1990s

as the evolution from the unified Soviet narratives to the nation-oriented ones. But by the end of the 2010s, this evolution finished differently.

In general, Ukrainian schoolbooks evolved from the revision and renunciation of the Soviet perceptions towards the creation of a national narrative, with the emphasis on the nation-building process and including the history of Ukraine into a global context. Since the early 1990s, alternative textbooks emerge: the Ministry of education approves multiple textbooks to choose from. Such an approach was enshrined in the number of Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Orders of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, which support competitive textbook writing and publishing, as well as possible use of several books in the learning process (Postanova 2003; Nakaz Ministerstva 2003). For example, the official website of the electronic library of the Institute for the Modernization of the Content of Education (subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine) at the time of writing of this paper offers six Ministry-approved world history textbooks for the eleventh grade (*Vsesvitnya istoriya 11 klas* 2019).

Since 2015 in Belarus there was also announced a competition for the textbooks writing. The National Educational Internet Portal offers full texts of schoolbooks from 2008 till 2019, with new textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education. Among the textbooks of world history with the description of events of the 20th–the beginning of 21st cent., there are only two approved: in 2012 (for the 11th grade) and 2019 (for the 9th grade) (*Spisok uchebnikov* 2019). This provides no choice of textbook. In Belarus, the narrative introduced through textbooks still largely relies on the Soviet past and shows the increase the degree of politicization (Kisel 2018: 17). I also have to mention that there is an idea of creating a textbook for teachers of two states on Belarusian-Russian history and the single textbook of the history of Russia and Belarus as they both form the Union State (e.g. such an idea was expressed in the interviews by Valentina Leonenko, member of the Standing Committee of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus on International Affairs (Moskalenko 2015) and by Vyacheslav Danilovich, Director of the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (Danilovich 2019).

For the analysis within this paper, I selected mostly textbooks approved by the Ministries of Education of each country. According to the traditions of historical education, which were formed at Soviet times, history in secondary schools is divided into two segments: the “world history” (history of the foreign countries) and “national history” (history of Ukraine and history of Belarus respectively, formerly it was history of the USSR). Events of the Cold War era are traditionally described in Grade 11 textbooks, which are dedicated to the world history of the second half of the twentieth and of the beginning of the twenty-first centuries. That is why this paper only considers textbooks of “world history.” I analyze Ukrainian textbooks for Grade 11 and Belarusian textbooks for Grade 9 and 11 (the Grade 9 textbook, published in 2019, covers the events of the whole twentieth century up to the beginning of the twenty-first century and includes the Cold War). This research is focused on the investigation of the general features in the Cold War narratives in history textbooks—there were selected schoolbooks of the last 10 years

(2009–2019), that are available online. Both Ukrainian and Belarusian textbooks are represented by few co-authors and single-authors versions. The majority of the authors are university-level educators. A list of the quoted textbooks is in the bibliography. Further research in this field should be focused on the correlation of the changes in the textbooks writing with the developments of the political situation in both countries, international relations, and should be based on more editions of the world history textbooks from each country, teaching guides, as well as “national history” narratives.

Soviet interpretations of the Cold War

Before analyzing post-Soviet perceptions on the Cold War, I provide a general overview of Soviet interpretations. As it was mentioned above, in the Soviet educational system history and ideology intertwined. History and other social studies in the Soviet school were directed towards the creation of the new society and the “*New Soviet Man*” (Kahanov 2019: 68–89).

We can completely agree with the statement that textbooks provide official knowledge a society and state want its children to acquire. Official school textbooks provide a rich source of material for those seeking to understand the greater social effects of schooling and the larger social and political contexts of education (Williams 2014: vii). The Soviet school system was a complex of measures focused on the construction of the Soviet identity and relevant worldview. As in its own historical narratives the Soviet Union was interpreted as the new type of state—socialist one—it was considered that from the very beginning it was surrounded by hostile capitalist countries. As an example we can quote the Soviet textbook of the initial military training (a course taught in all Soviet schools):

“The world of exploiters met with fierce hatred the birth of the state of workers and peasants” (Naumenko 1987: 5).

This dichotomy “socialist—capitalist” was one of the main approaches in the explanation of Soviet history, foreign policy and international relations. Being in a “camp,” surrounded by the enemies, was the dominant feature of the outlook, which was focused on the expectations of the beginning of a new war. As illustration from the Soviet history textbook:

“The USA surrounded the USSR with military bases” (Kim 1980: 125).

In the introduction of the already mentioned Soviet textbook on military training it was explained that

“As long as imperialism persists with its reactionary, aggressive policies, the danger of aggressive wars remains. The imperialists of the United States and NATO seek to unleash a new world war, and above all against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries” (Naumenko 1987: 3).

After the World War II, the United States personified the main enemy for the Soviet Union. The idea that “the Cold War was provoked by the policy of the United States and other imperialistic countries towards socialist states, first of all towards the USSR”

(Diplomatičeskij slovar 1986: 536) was generally spread by means of official rhetoric and educational materials. Finally, it formed the basis for the dominance of the anti-Western and anti-American attitudes which determined research, teaching, and schooling.

Soviet explanations of the background of the Cold War were presented as following: the Cold War was an attempt of the United States to change the results of the World War II; the USA had plans to dominate in the entire world; all US post-war foreign policy doctrines were aimed against socialism; Western countries (with the US) first started the Cold War confrontation (Bessonova 2010: 44–48). In all Soviet historical textbooks, the first event of the bipolar rivalry that started of the confrontation between the East and the West was Winston Churchill 'Iron Curtain' speech in Fulton, MO (March 1946).

Traditionally, events in the international relations after the World War II were interpreted by two ways: all Soviet foreign policy acts were seen as peaceful even if that was military intervention; American foreign policy was interpreted as aggressive and militaristic. From secondary school until university, Soviet children and youth were informed about the main events of domestic and international affairs, with the special accent on American imperialism, counterrevolutionary forces, world capitalism and their aggressive plans to destroy socialist system (Bessonova 2010: 50–51). Even at the level of academic research in the field of American studies, everything was subordinated to the demonstration of the negative aspects of bourgeois society in the USA and American imperialistic foreign policy. We can name the following features of the Soviet viewing of the American policy towards the USSR: (1) the American post-war policy was aimed on blocking Soviet peaceful initiatives; (2) the United States initiated and forced the arms race; (3) the USA de-facto blocked the normal activity of UN; (4) all aggravation of the international situation were caused by the US policy (Bessonova 2010: 51). On the other hand, the Soviet policy was viewed as the opposite. Propaganda, brainwash and agitation at schools and all over the Soviet society made it possible that even in the cases when USSR were demonstrating aggressive and tough policy—it was justified as necessary and indispensable in the conditions of struggle for the better world. The case of Afghanistan is a bright example when the Soviet invasion was interpreted as an international duty—to assist the brother nation to build a socialist state.

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union opened the possibilities to discover new facts due to the declassification of the formerly secret documents. The lessening and finally vanishing of the political and ideological pressure caused a boom in the field of Cold War studies, American studies, textbook writing and teaching. A number of complex researches as well as different case studies already is based on the new approaches towards the Cold War (e.g. Tumashov 2003; Poklyats'ka 2017).

The material below presents some generalizations of the Cold War narratives in post-Soviet history textbooks.

The definition of the Cold War

In the great majority of the school textbooks the Cold war, in general, is defined as a global geopolitical, economic and ideological confrontation between two blocs, headed by the USSR and the USA.

In Ukrainian history schoolbooks we can find such variants of this term as “global rivalry of the USSR and the USA which manifested in arms race, diplomatic, propagandistic, external economic activities” (Burakov, Kyparenko & Movchan 2005: 319–320), “rivalry of two superpowers” which had military and political character (Ladychenko 2011: 45), “a tough confrontation between two poles of powers” (Shchupak 2011: 229). In the most recent Ukrainian textbook it is determined the exact chronology of the Cold war: from 1947 till 1991 (Polyanskij 2019: 17), while in the most of other schoolbooks it is mentioned as the period from the mid-1940s by the end of 1980s or the beginning of the 1990s. The most often is an interpretation of the Cold War as the period of confrontation and tensions between ‘democratic’ (the West) and ‘totalitarian’ (the East) parts of the world.

In Belarusian textbooks the “Cold war” is interpreted as a confrontation and conflicts between two hostile socio-political systems—“socialist” (the East) and “capitalist” (the West). The world and system of international relations after the World War II were described as being split into mentioned two systems, where the great influence had two superpowers—the USSR and the USA (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 4), (Koshelev 2009: 159), (Koshelev, Krasnova & Kosheleva 2019: 129). More detailed version is proposed in the vocabulary of the historical definitions in the schoolbook by Gennadij Kosmach, Vladimir Koshelev, and Maryna Krasnova. In this vocabulary the Cold War was explained as a global geopolitical, economic and ideological confrontation between the USSR and its allies, on the one hand, and the United States and its allies, on the other, which lasted from the mid-1940s to the early 1990s (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 258).

In general, the definitions of the Cold War are very similar in both countries’ textbooks and they are close to current scholar interpretations of the Cold War. They differ, however, in that the Belarusian evaluation of the bipolarity as the “socialism—capitalism” (the East/positive—the West/negative) dichotomy is closer to the Soviet tradition compared to the prevailing Ukrainian variant which considers tensions in the line of “totalitarianism—democracy” (the East/negative—the West/positive).

Who started the Cold War?

The majority of history textbooks, which are overviewed in this article, named the same event as the beginning of the Cold War. It is the famous Winston Churchill’s Fulton speech in March 1946. But Ukrainian and Belarusian perceptions of the causes and reasons of that speech and the beginning of the bipolar confrontation differ.

In Ukrainian history textbooks one can find the following interpretations of the beginning of the Cold War. Yurii Burakov, Gennadii Kyparenko, and Stepan Movchan in their collective textbook stressed that Western countries were provoked by the Soviet propaganda machine, which started a campaign against the West (Burakov, Kyparenko & Movchan 2005: 320). Ihor Shchupak emphasized that Churchill's Fulton speech was caused by the fact that the leaders of Western countries were alarmed by the open establishment of the Soviet system in Eastern Europe (2011: 229). That is why the Truman doctrine was a reaction on Soviet post-war policy in Eastern Europe.

Tetyana Ladychenko also underlines that the Soviet Union can be interpreted as the initiator of the post-war confrontation. In her depiction of the changes in the world after the World War II, she shows that both countries—the USSR and the USA started a political and military contest (Ladychenko 2011: 45). Ladychenko views the USSR as the initiator of the Cold War: Soviet leadership saw its aim to supervise Eastern Europe, which made the West respond to prevent East European countries from moving under the Soviet control (Ladychenko 2011: 180). The West was aware of spreading the communist totalitarianism on the new territories. Therefore, Churchill's speech in Fulton seems to be forced by the necessity to fight against international communism.

To the contrary, Ladychenko and Zablotskij depict the USSR as a potential victim of the Western countries which after the World War II “were hoping to capture leading positions in the world” (Ladychenko & Zablotskij 2011: 78). In this textbook, one can find a combination of modern interpretations with the old Soviet rhetoric: on the one hand, the USSR and the USA are described as countries which tried to provide military superiority (implying a shared responsibility), on the other hand in the same sub-chapter there is an accent on the American doctrine of the “Cold War” (so the United States are responsible for the tensions with the Soviet Union, because they already had a special doctrine) (Ladychenko & Zablotskij 2011: 276, 278).

In Belarusian textbooks, one can see an attempt to show both sides of the future conflict, but the main accent on the responsibility of the start of new international tensions just after the end of the World War II lies on the West, which was accused of the beginning of the new confrontation. Certain disputes and disagreement between countries of the anti-Hitler coalition became vivid during the Potsdam conference in 1945 since the US was afraid of the growing influence of the USSR, which at that time de-facto controlled the countries of Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the West sought to prevent the penetration of socialist ideas beyond the boundaries of East European states (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 4). Churchill's speech was interpreted as an appeal to creation of the union of Great Britain and the US for the mutual struggle against the influence of the USSR (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 4). At that time, the US had a monopoly on the atomic bomb—an important factor in international relations—that the USSR had to oppose. In general, Belarusian textbooks explain that the USSR was forced to start the confrontation due to the circumstances (the politics of the West and necessity to ruin American monopoly on atomic bomb) (Koshelev 2009: 160).

Two main versions of the beginning of the Cold War emerge: the one which de-facto repeats the Soviet interpretation in its light form (i.e. that the main initiator of the

rivalry was the West) and another one, which assumes mutual responsibility of the USSR and the West for the beginning of the confrontation.

The Cold War: Main points

The structure of the material, dedicated to the events of the Cold war, is similar in all textbooks. There are special chapters or sub-chapters, which describe the situation in the international arena just after the World War II; facts about Cold War events are traced in the paragraphs about the foreign policy of the certain countries; many history schoolbooks have special chapters about the Cold War.

All reviewed Ukrainian textbooks have special chapters or sub-chapters on the World after the World War II and World in the second half of the twentieth—at the beginning of the twenty-first centuries, where selected parts are dealing with certain stages of the Cold War. For example, Burakov divided the Cold War into four main stages: “Division of the world into two hostile camps”, “Bloc confrontation of the states”, “A course on détente of international tensions and its failure”, “The end of the Cold War and formation of the new system of international relations” (Burakov, Kyparenko & Movchan 2005: 413). Other authors are presenting two main stages—like “The emergence and deployment of the Cold War” and “The end of the Cold War” (Ladychenko 2011: 3; Shchupak 2011: 4).

The traditional events of the Cold War in textbooks include the formation of the NATO and Warsaw pacts, the Berlin crisis, Korean and Vietnam wars, events in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Caribbean (Cuban) crisis, etc. In general, Ukrainian textbooks are noticeable critical of the politics of the Soviet Union and at the same time more or less equally critical of the United States. Both superpowers are mentioned in the explanation of the economic, political, internal and external reasons of the bipolar confrontation. One more feature of Ukrainian schoolbooks is that the Cold War is also interpreted as the struggle between democracy and totalitarianism (Ladychenko 2011: 181), that is more traditional for Western perceptions. But among the reviewed materials, Ladychenko and Zablotiskij textbook is closer to the Soviet tradition in its critical evaluation of the US (Ladychenko & Zablotiskij 2011).

In Belarusian textbook, published in 2009, the period and main events of the Cold War are described in a chapter titled “The World in the second half of the twentieth century: general characteristics.” Among the main issues of that chapter, the majority is connected to the Cold War, and they are named according to the main stages of it. Let's name them: “The beginning of the Cold war”, “The German Question”, “The Caribbean Crisis”, “Détente of international tensions”, “The turn from detente to confrontation”, “The end of hostile confrontation”, “The collapse of the USSR and the socialist camp”, and two last parts are dedicated to “The deepening of integration and disintegration processes” and “Chinese experiment” (Koshelev 2009: 159–169). In other chapters, there are only a few mentions of the Cold War era—mostly in the material about the USSR and East European countries. More attention to the Cold War is paid in the chapter dedicated to the collapse of the colonial system and the problems of the development of the Third

World countries, and in the conclusions (Koshelev 2009: 198–222). It is interesting that there is no chapter or even sub-chapter about the development of the US in the second half of the twentieth century in that history textbook.

Another Belarusian textbook, published in 2012, proposes similar main points of the times of the bipolar confrontation. The period of the Cold War is mentioned in the majority of the paragraphs, dedicated to the history of the selected countries, but the focus on it is made in the introduction and the last chapter. The introduction outlines the main trends of world development since World War II, focusing on the evolution of the Cold War (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 262). The titles of the sub-chapters (also the main stages of the Cold war) are the same as in the textbook of 2009, the only difference is that material about the collapse of the USSR and the socialist camp is named “The collapse of the socialist camp”. The last chapter focuses on “International relations and the global problems of the world”, where two paragraphs out of four are dedicated entirely to the Cold War—“The formation of a bipolar world (1945–1950s)” and “Confrontation between East and West (1960–1970s)”. The end of the Cold War is depicted in the paragraph “International relations in 1980s—at the beginning of the twenty-first century” (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 263).

Both Belarusian textbooks for Grade 11 describe the main events of the Cold War assume both Soviet and American responsibility for the escalation of tensions between them. For example, the failure of the detente at the end of the 1970s was accounted for the rigidity of the political course of the then Soviet leadership. The authors named such vectors of the Soviet policy as the accelerated development of military programs, the deployment of new medium-range Soviet missiles in Warsaw Pact countries, military assistance to a number of Third World countries. They also named the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, martial law in Poland in December 1981 (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 6–7). On the other hand, the authors also described main steps of the American policy which led to the rise of confrontation: Carter doctrine, Reagan’s large-scale arms race program, which included the production of neutron weapons, new ballistic missiles, etc. (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 7). Authors mentioned that both superpowers were fighting for the dominance in the world, so they both proposed economic and military aid to the developing countries, prompting them to perceive its ideology and model of development: capitalism or socialism (Koshelev 2009: 201). Instead, the Belarusian textbook for Grade 9 returns to more open anti-Western rhetoric. For example, Western “fierce anti-Soviet campaign” at the beginning of the 1980s was explained as the reaction on the “defeat of the US foreign policy” (caused by decolonization; formation of revolutionary democratic governments in Angola and Mozambique in 1975; revolution in Afghanistan in 1978; anti-monarchist revolution in Iran in 1979), but not a word was said about the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, which caused the aforementioned anti-Soviet campaign (Koshelev, Krasnova & Kosheleva 2019: 131).

Cold War events occupy an important place in the school narratives of the world history of the 20th century. The great majority of the main events of more than 40-years of the bipolar confrontation are depicted in all textbooks. But as it was discovered in the

previous issues—the accents in the evaluation of the reasons and consequences of these events depend on the general line of the certain textbook: in the number of books the main criticism is aimed on the USA, so it makes such approach closer to the traditional Soviet interpretation. In other cases (mostly in Ukrainian textbooks), the textbook authors stress on the parity of the USA and USSR in the involvement and responsibility on the certain stages of the Cold War.

The consequences of the Cold War

As the majority of Ukrainian and Belarusian textbooks touch upon historical events till the beginning of the twenty-first century, all of them included perceptions of the influence of the end of the Cold War on the further developments.

Positive evaluations of the end of the bipolar tensions, the collapse of the Soviet Union and dissolution of the socialist bloc dominate the reviewed Ukrainian textbooks. For example, the textbook published in 2005 interprets the collapse of the Soviet bloc as a positive event, because the controversial bipolar system of international relations was changed by the international cooperation (Burakov, Kyparenko & Movchan 2005: 348). The main person who caused these processes was Mikhail Gorbachev, whose activities and attempts to reform the Soviet Union were characterized mostly positively. Gorbachev's New Political Thinking is interpreted as the main reason which led to the end of the Cold War and exit from the state of division and confrontation (Ladychenko 2011: 190). Shchupak emphasizes the fact that the US remained as the only superpower, but it was emphasized that there are other countries that can balance the American influence on international relations (Shchupak 2011: 236).

Among the reviewed Ukrainian texts, Ladychenko proposes a different attitude towards the end of the Cold War (very critical towards the USA). In one of the sub-chapters dedicated to the end of the Cold War and its lessons and consequences, it is declared that the United States de-facto are not going to fold the Cold War, which at the beginning of the twenty-first century is reoriented towards the war on terrorism (Ladychenko & Zablotskij 2011: 291).

As it was already mentioned, Belarusian textbooks are very similar. But the interpretation of the end of the Cold War features a small nuance. In his textbook, Vladimir Koshelev wrote that the war ended by *the destruction of the USSR and the collapse of the socialist system* (2009: 159), while in the textbook which was published in 2012, he noted that the Cold War ended with *the collapse of the USSR and the entire socialist system* (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 4). Democratic revolutions in the East European countries and the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989), signing the Charter for the New Europe (1990), dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and collapse of the Soviet Union (1991) are named as the symbols of the end of the Cold War.

According to Belarusian textbooks, M. Gorbachev was the main initiator of the normalization of relations with the West which led to the end of the bipolar world. Gorbachev's politics of New Thinking that refused the idea of confrontation of the socialist and capitalist systems is considered to be key for his relations with the West and

the USA in particular (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 121). The destruction of the bipolar international system was named as the main consequence of the Cold War on the global scale. In the textbook of 2009, authors accented that after the collapse of the Soviet Union the bipolar system had turned to the unipolar system headed by the US, while the world is becoming multipolar (Koshelev 2009: 222). In the other Belarusian textbook, the authors underlined on the post-Cold War dominance of the USA and American intervention into the internal affairs of other states, wars against disadvantaged regimes, the striving of the establishment control over the energy resources of the planet (Kosmach, Koshelev & Krasnova 2012: 10). The most recent Belarusian textbook states that the collapse of the USSR has dramatically changed the geopolitical situation in the world for the benefit of the US and its allies (Koshelev, Krasnova & Kosheleva 2019: 131). In general, this book evaluates Gorbachev's policy as disastrous because it was aimed on the establishment of an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding with the Western countries and "as a result, such a policy led to the collapse of the USSR and the socialist camp as a whole" (Koshelev, Krasnova & Kosheleva 2019: 131).

While both Ukraine and Belarus got their independence due to the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, their history textbooks illustrate different attitudes towards these events. In the majority of Ukrainian textbooks, the end of the Cold War is seen as a positive development, which led to the creation of a number of new states and transformation of the system of international relations. But in Belarusian textbooks there is clearly critical and even negative evaluation of the consequences of the Cold War because the USA remained as the only superpower. Such interpretation seems to be built on the Soviet tradition, so in the post-Soviet Ukraine and Belarus, Soviet narratives are still present in the textbooks and teaching.

Conclusions

A brief analysis of the development of history textbooks in post-Soviet Ukraine and Belarus shows that both countries have already made a great progress in historical education and textbooks writing and distanced themselves from the Soviet traditions. We can name a number of positive changes in this field: competitions as an instrument of providing a choice in selection of the best textbook; online platforms with full texts of school books and teaching guides; publicity of the Ministries of Education; few generations of school textbooks, which proves the ability to react to the new tasks and the readiness to transform education; changing programs aimed at improving teaching methodology and formation of new qualities of both teachers and students; new narratives focused on (re)constructing national identity.

But a more detailed overview on the example of the Cold War narratives opens another perspective. The author of this article does not pretend to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Cold War in all history textbooks. The research within this material was aimed at discovering whether Soviet perceptions or way of thinking are still present in the post-Soviet history school textbooks. Even a superficial review shows the presence (in Belarusian textbooks more vivid, in Ukrainian—less) of the remnants of the Soviet narratives and appraisals, which has clear shadow of the anti-Western and anti-

American sentiments. This includes the evaluation of the bipolarity as the dichotomy “socialism—capitalism” (where “socialism” has a positive meaning and “capitalism” negative); the main initiator of the bipolar rivalry was the West (the USA, Western countries, capitalist bloc); in the evaluation of the reasons and consequences of the different events of the Cold War the main criticism is aimed at the USA. The Soviet Past is still having a significant effect on the post-Soviet Ukrainian and Belarusian societies. The existence of the abovementioned features and concentration of the negative observations towards the West (and in particular to the United States), which originated from the Soviet narratives, proves the presence of the archaic aspects in post-Soviet historical education. On the one hand, at the beginning of the twenty-first century in both Ukrainian and Belarusian societies criticism towards the West still present in nowadays politics, but is caused by other reasons than during the Cold War. On the other hand, open or hidden negative attitudes to the West, which are proposed by the authors of the current textbooks, in fact repeat Soviet traditions. And such a legacy is directed to the future because of influence on the outlook of new generations of Ukrainian and Belarusian youth. We also can talk about outer political impact: anti-Western and anti-American rhetoric is more characteristic for today’s Russia and even considered by some experts as one of the pillars of Russian state politics. In case these perceptions will dominate in Ukraine and Belarus, this can lead to the similarity with current Russian outlook and Russian perceptions towards other countries and nations, and create a good soil for Russian cultural and educational politics as a part of the policy which is aimed on reintegration of the former Soviet republics and reconstruction of the Soviet Union in a new form with possible new Cold War with the West.

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