

UDC 37.014.5(091)(477):329.7(477)(092)
DOI 10.24919/2519-058X.29.292943

Fedir TURCHENKO

PhD hab. (History), Professor, Head of the Modern History of Ukraine Department, Zaporizhzhia National University, 66 Zhukovskoho Street, Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, postal code 69600 (fturchenko@ukr.net)

ORCID: 0000-0001-9408269X

Researcher ID: H-1803-2019

Serhii TERNO

PhD hab. (Education), Professor of the Ukrainian History Department, Head of Training and Research Laboratory of Modern History of Ukraine and Innovative Educational Technologies, Zaporizhzhia National University, 66 Zhukovskoho Street, Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, postal code 69600 (sergiy.terno@gmail.com)

ORCID: 0000-0002-6753-3130

Researcher ID: I-2457-2018

Федір ТУРЧЕНКО

доктор історичних наук, професор, завідувач кафедри новітньої історії України Запорізького національного університету, вул. Жуковського, 66, м. Запоріжжя, Україна, індекс 69600 (fturchenko@ukr.net)

Сергій ТЕРНО

доктор педагогічних наук, професор кафедри історії України Запорізького національного університету вул. Жуковського, 66, м. Запоріжжя, Україна, індекс 69600 (sergiy.terno@gmail.com)

Bibliographic Description of the Article: Turchenko, F. & Terno, S. (2023). Ukrainian Education in the Political Concept and Practical Activities of Mykola Mikhnovsky. *Skhidnoevropejskyi istorychnyi visnyk [East European Historical Bulletin]*, 29, 68–79. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.29.292943

**UKRAINIAN EDUCATION IN THE POLITICAL CONCEPT
AND PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES OF MYKOLA MIKHNOVSKY**

Abstract. *The purpose of the research is to analyse the place of the educational factor in the political concept and practical activity of Mykola Mikhnovsky, who at the beginning of the 20th century initiated an independent trend in Trans-Dnieper Ukraine. The research methodology is based on the principle of historicism and the psychological approach, which allow analysing the connection between the language issue and national identity. The scientific novelty of the research consists in the analysis of the education system in the Russian Empire as a means of assimilation of the Ukrainian population into the Russian ethnos. It has been determined that opposition to the assimilationist policy became a means of consolidating the Ukrainians in their struggle for the Ukrainian identity, formation of a modern European nation, and revival of an independent Ukrainian state. The Conclusion. M. Mikhnovsky concluded that the national liberation of Ukraine was impossible without a radical*

political and socio-cultural break with Russia. One of the most important means of achieving this goal was an effective system creation of the Ukrainian public education. It was education that was to become a powerful factor in the transformation of the Ukrainians into a modern nation capable of the Ukrainian independent building. A century of searches and bloody tragedies had passed before the Ukrainian society realized that the future of Ukraine is impossible without its radical de-Russification, decolonization, socio-cultural distancing from Russia and civilizational reorientation towards Europe. Today, the format of cultural and educational relations between Ukraine and Russia, which was proposed by M. Mikhnovsky, turned out to be quite appropriate. The “window of opportunity” for this opened during the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in February of 2022.

Key words: independence, autonomy, assimilation, Russification, national school, Ukrainization, nation building, Ukrainian revolution.

УКРАЇНЬСКА ОСВІТА В ПОЛІТИЧНІЙ КОНЦЕПЦІЇ І ПРАКТИЧНІЙ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ МИКОЛИ МІХНОВСЬКОГО

Анотація. *Мета роботи* – проаналізувати місце освітнього фактора в теоретико-політичній концепції та практичній діяльності Миколи Міхновського – видатного діяча українського національно-визвольного руху, який на початку ХХ ст. започаткував на Наддніпрянській Україні боротьбу за самостійність. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципі історизму та психологічному підході, які дають змогу проаналізувати зв'язок мовного питання та національної ідентичності. **Наукова новизна дослідження** полягає у підході до національної освіти як до засобу консолідації українців у їх боротьбі за українську ідентичність і як важливого фактора формування модерної європейської нації та відродження незалежної Української держави.

Висновки. М. Міхновський дійшов висновку, що національне визволення України неможливе без радикального політичного і соціо-культурного розриву з Росією. Одним із важливих засобів досягнення цієї мети було створення ефективної системи української народної освіти. Саме освіта мала стати потужним фактором перетворення українців на модерну націю, яка здатна побудувати незалежну Україну. Пройшло століття пошуків і кривавих трагедій, перш ніж українське суспільство усвідомило, що майбутнє України неможливе без радикальної дерусифікації, деколонізації, соціо-культурного дистанціювання від Росії та цивілізаційної переорієнтації на Європу. Сьогодні виявився цілком слушним формат культурно-освітніх відносин України з Росією, що його запропонував М. Міхновський. “Вікно можливостей” для цього відкрилося у ході повномасштабної російсько-української війни, яка почалася у лютому 2022 р.

Ключові слова: самостійність, автономія, асиміляція, русифікація, національна школа, українізація, націотворення, Українська революція.

The Problem Statement. In 1991, after the collapse of the USSR, the Russian Federation continued the traditional imperial policy of Russification of the educational sphere in Ukraine. At the same time, the development of the national education system took place (Ihnatenko et al., 2022). The issue of protecting the Ukrainian national identity in the education system of Ukraine became especially acute in the context of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war that began in February of 2022. In this context, the views of M. Mikhnovsky on the development of the education system and formation of the national identity among the Ukrainian youth, which he formulated at the beginning of the 20th century, are extremely relevant. The research is dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Mykola Mikhnovsky's birth.

In the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries, education began to acquire a mass character and turn into a tool for accelerating modernization of the society. At the same time, it became the most important factor in the formation of state ideology. As for multinational states, such as the Russian Empire, education was transformed by their ruling regimes into a means of assimilation of national minorities, in particular, the Ukrainians. It is natural that

this policy caused discontent among the Ukrainian intelligentsia, who accepted the native language and national education as a means of national self-preservation and the formation of modern nations. National liberation movements are formed, in the programmes of which the national cultural revival, native language and school occupy a central place. Gradually, these movements, which initially were of a purely cultural character, rise to the level of political demands. Conviction grows that a normal development of the nation is impossible without achieving its sovereignty in various forms – from cultural and national autonomy to complete independence. This general rule had its own specifics in each individual case. In particular, the representatives of the Ukrainian liberation movement, defending the fact of the historical separateness of Ukraine, had to overcome the Russian imperial myth about the ethnic, political and cultural unity of the Ukrainians and Muscovites-velykorosy.

Under the conditions of Trans-Dnieper Ukraine, which was part of the Russian Empire, the national movement began to acquire a political character at the end of the 19th – the beginning of the 20th century. One of its prominent representatives was Mykola Ivanovych Mikhnovsky, who advocated a radical socio-cultural break with the Russian society. In his famous work “Independent Ukraine”, he initiated the slogan: “One, united, indivisible, free, independent Ukraine from the Carpathian mountains to the Caucasus”. All multifaceted theoretical and practical activities of M. Mikhnovsky, in particular, in the educational sphere, were devoted to the achievement of Ukraine’s independence.

The Analysis of Recent Researches and Publications. Before the declaration of Ukraine’s independence, few researches were done on M. Mikhnovskyi’s life and activities and only by representatives of the Western Ukrainian diaspora. After 1991, various aspects of his activities became the subject of analysis by domestic historians (Turchenko, 2023). Monographic studies, etc. appeared (Kolesnyk & Cheberiaiko, 2022; Pyrih, 2023). But the issue of M. Mikhnovsky’s understanding of the role of an educational factor in the Ukrainian liberation movement was not considered specifically. Under the conditions of the systematic ideological war of the Russian Federation against the Ukrainian national identity, the views of M. Mikhnovsky on the role of education in the formation process of national consciousness become especially relevant. In 2015, the collection of works by M. Mikhnovsky was published (Mikhnovskyi, 2015b). The publication contained his main work “Independent Ukraine”, in which the programme principles of the Ukrainian liberation movement, aimed at achieving independence, were formulated. In the collection there are also other programmes “The Programme of the Ukrainian People’s Party”, “Workers’ Issues in the Programme of the UNP”, “The Issues of the Ukrainian Intelligentsia in the Programme of the UNP” and other articles, notes, appeals, leaflets written by M. Mikhnovsky personally and a co-author. The basis of our article is the above-mentioned works, which allow us to do research on the theoretical views and practical activities of M. Mikhnovsky in the field of national education and related processes of the Ukrainian nation-building.

The Results of the Research. As a Ukrainian politician, Mykola Mikhnovsky began to form at the beginning of the 1890s, having been educated in Ukrainophile student circles and in “The Tarasivtsi Brotherhood”. In the programme document of the Brotherhood “Profession de foi young Ukrainians”, among the co-authors of which M. Mikhnovsky was, the objective was set: “... To devote all strength to freeing the nation from the oppression in which it is now and to give one more free-spirited unit for the benefit of humanity” (Profession de foi molodykh ukrainsiv, 1983, p. 20).

The political views of “young Ukrainians” were based on the national concept of Ukraine’s historical past, which boils down to the postulate: “The science and life of the Ukrainian people

prove to us that Ukraine was, is, and will always be a separate nation”. This formula denied the official imperial version of history, which presented the past of Ukraine as a fragment of the all-Russian historical process. In particular, this concerned one of the main issues in the programme – preservation of the Ukrainian language and creation of a native school “with Ukrainian as a language of instruction”. Emphasizing the importance of this issue, the authors of the programme cited, in addition to purely historical arguments, the conclusions of related sciences: “On the basis of ... psycho-physiology¹, we know that language is one of the most important signs that best reveals the inner meaning of nationalism, that language is an organ of the spirit and an indicator of national psychology. People without writing in their native language do not constitute the nation” (Professione de foi molodykh ukraintsiv, 1983, p. 23).

In the first half of the 1890s, M. Mikhnovsky was a witness to a discussion between M. Drahomanov, who at one time considered “the Russian literature as the alpha and omega of all Ukrainian ideals” and “considered Ukrainian literature to be a part of Moscow literature”, and B. Hrinchenko, an active member of “The Tarasivtsi Brotherhood”, who, on the contrary, claimed that “The Ukrainian literature was not, is not, and will not be a part or outgrowth of Muscovite, but was, is, and will be an independent literature that the Ukrainian people strive to express their mental life” (Hrinchenko & Drahomanov, 1994, p. 22). But at the same time, B. Hrinchenko was sure that, politically, the Russian state would eventually transform into a federation of equal states, in which Ukraine would be provided with conditions for the development of independent Ukrainian literature and culture in general.

In this discussion, M. Mikhnovsky supported B. Hrinchenko’s views, but he drew purely political conclusions from the correspondence of two prominent Ukrainians. During the period of his membership in “The Tarasivtsi Brotherhood”, M. Mikhnovsky formed himself as a supporter of Ukraine’s independence. According to his conviction, the preservation and development of the Ukrainian language, culture and the Ukrainians as a separate ethnic group is possible only under conditions of a complete political independence of Ukraine from Russia. In the pamphlet “Independent Ukraine” (1900), he depicts a dramatic perspective of Ukraine’s further stay within the Russian Empire: “A black flag hangs above us, and on it is written: “Political death, national death, cultural death for the Ukrainian nation?” These are not the words only: the meaning corresponds to them” (Mikhnovskyi, 2015a, p. 70).

Let’s return to education as one of the main factors of cultural development and self-preservation of the nation. M. Mikhnovsky knew about its condition in Trans Dnieper Ukraine – from primary school to university – from his own experience. Let us quote the words from a speech he delivered at a meeting of the Kharkiv Society for the Promotion of Literacy among the People in 1901: “At school the language of instruction is Russian... A velykoruska child, coming to school, hears from the mouth of a teacher and finds in a book his native and familiar language from home... A maloruska child is in a completely different situation in this same school: From home, from this bright paradise, – writes K. Ushynsky about maloruska school, – where everything is clear, understandable, close to the heart, a maloruska child falls into a dark hell, where everything is dark, foreign, incomprehensible”. Then M. Mikhnovsky asks: “... What did the school do?”. And he answers in the words of K. Ushynsky: “Worse than nothing: it delayed a child’s natural development for several years... Such a school does not develop a person’s soul, but spoils it” (Mikhnovskyi, 2015a, pp. 298, 299).

¹ There are meant the results of scientific research of a famous Ukrainian scholar-linguist, psychologist, philosopher and literary critic, Professor of Kharkiv University Oleksandr Potebnia (1836 – 1891). He developed the concept of an organic connection between language and psychology, culture and lifestyle. He initiated the psychological direction of linguistics, proved the correlation between language and national issues.

Anti-Ukrainian policy was pursued by Russia quite consciously. M. Mikhnovsky briefly formulated the imperial policy goal in the field of education: "... The Ukrainians go to moscow schools, become completely moskalized and join the Russians" (Prohrama, 2015, p. 293).

Often among Ukrainian children, verbal violence caused an internal psychological conflict. The world of children's harmony was divided: on the one hand, there was what was said (often in an incomprehensible language) at school and what should be studied under the threat of punishment; on the other hand, it was close and well-understood, which grew out of the stories of parents, acquaintances, legends, folk songs, but which was not mentioned at school.

Many intellectuals of Ukraine went through a similar psychological torture. These psychological features were an important factor in the formation of their Ukrainian identity. Hence the desire to approve and protect it from outside encroachments.

M. Mikhnovsky was well aware that the purposeful denationalization of the Ukrainians had also negative social consequences to them. In this regard, M. Mikhnovsky noted the following: "Darkness is a way of keeping our nation captive" (Mikhnovskyi, 2015a, p. 171). If education for Russian-speaking residents of Ukraine, in particular secondary and higher education, was a springboard for climbing to the higher rungs of the social pyramid, it left the Ukrainians at the social bottom: "A nation that does not have its own school must naturally be dark, uncultured; it forms the lower classes, the classes of rural and urban proletariat, and thus descends into a service role to other nations, more cultured, a nation performs servile duties to the latter" (Prohrama, 2015, p. 282).

Having no illusions about the imperial regime educational policy, M. Mikhnovsky nevertheless, in his speech at the meeting of the Kharkiv Literacy Society, proposed to raise a petition before the Minister of Public Education about "the introduction of the malorosiyiska language as a means of teaching subjects of the school curriculum and the Russian state language at malorosiyiski schools in Kharkiv province, and about the admission of malorosiyiski textbooks adapted to the geographical, climatic, and living conditions of the local population to these public schools ..." (Mikhnovskyi, 2015b, p. 301).

Taking into account the pro-Russian composition of the society, M. Mikhnovsky submitted an extremely moderate draft of the resolution, which, in addition to the subjects of the school curriculum, provided for the effective teaching of the Russian state language to the Ukrainian children. At the same time, he recalled a positive experience of teaching in the Ukrainian language in Ukraine in the early 1860s, when the language bans of 1863 and 1876 were not yet in effect. At that time, the Ukrainian specialists, who were aware of the shortcomings of the Russian school in Ukraine, prepared a whole series of textbooks and manuals, with the help of which they conducted a pedagogical experiment with two groups of children. In one group, training was conducted according to the Ukrainian textbooks, and in the other – according to Russian textbooks. It turned out that the Russian language is ineffective for teaching literacy to the Ukrainian children, and they learned literacy "amazingly fast" in their native language (Mikhnovskyi, 2015b, p. 301). However, M. Mikhnovsky's arguments did not affect the pro-Russian members of the society. The Russian liberals who were the members of the society did not agree to support the project.

M. Mikhnovsky understood that it was impossible to change the content of educational policy in Ukraine under the conditions of the imperial regime. Instead, M. Mikhnovsky and his like-minded people made it a rule to communicate and address their like-minded people exclusively in the Ukrainian language. One of the ten commandments of the UNP ran: "Use

the Ukrainian language everywhere and always. Let neither your wife nor your children curse your home in the language of foreign oppressors” (X zapovidiv UNP, 2015, p. 212).

Criticism of the anti-Ukrainian content of humanitarian policy in the empire, as well as the educational process at Ukrainian schools, was closely intertwined with various illegal political actions carried out by the independents under the leadership of M. Mikhnovsky. In particular, the Statement of the Ukrainian People’s Party on the Russo-Japanese War, which was distributed like a postcard, ran: “Muscovites force us to speak in Muscovite everywhere: at school, at the post office, in court, and even in church. They teach our children humility and it seems that they are also “Russian” (Vidozva, 2015, p. 294).

This was also the case during the dynamite attack on the monument to O. Pushkin, which was carried out by members of the UNP in Kharkiv in October of 1904. In the postcard found at the scene of the explosion, O. Pushkin is characterized as “a moscow writer who portrayed the figure of our patriot Hetman Ivan Mazepa in his works vilely and falsely”. O. Pushkin’s poem “Poltava” was meant, which was written on the order of Nicholas I, in which Mazepa is represented as a thief, about whom

Few people may know...
That he is ready to shed blood like water,
That he despises freedom,
That there is no homeland to him.

According to special instructions of the Imperial Ministry of Education, students of secondary schools in Russia had to learn these words by heart. The author of the postcard was indignant that the national genius of Ukraine, Taras Shevchenko, “still does not have any monument in his native Ukraine, and the government on taxes, collected from the Ukrainian population, erects monuments to people hostile or indifferent to the interests of this population. T. Shevchenko is our Great Poet, and O. Pushkin is yours, so who should have a monument in Ukraine sooner??? – the author of the postcard addresses “Moscow society and government” (Lystivka, 2015, p. 309).

In its struggle against the Russifying policy of tsarism, the Ukrainian national intelligentsia sought allies among representatives of other peoples of the empire. Many Ukrainians hoped that the Russian people would become such an ally mediator. But it turned out to be an illusion. M. Mikhnovsky constantly emphasized that in the confrontation between the tsarist government and the Ukrainian movement, the Russian liberal intelligentsia and Russian socialists, as a rule, supported with the Russifiers. In the programme of the Ukrainian People’s Party (UNP) it was stated: “The Russian government and society hope that the Ukrainians can be transformed into Muscovites, and therefore eliminate everything that can arouse the national consciousness of the Ukrainians”. Concreting the position of “society”, the authors of the programme ask a rhetorical question: “Was it voting for the Ukrainian language to be used at the Ukrainian schools, courts, and administration, or was it voting for the ban on the Ukrainian press and literature to be cancelled?” (Prohrama, 2015, p. 227).

M. Mikhnovsky understood that the requirement of the native language and education permission went far beyond the purely educational mission. Constantly he emphasized the role of the Ukrainian education as a powerful factor of mass national education and neutralization of non-national assimilationist influences: “The Ukrainian free school will be for the Ukrainian people the light that will dispel thick darkness with which they were enveloped by various uninvited educators-moskalizers, polonizers, madiarizers; the Ukrainian free school will be the light that will illuminate the path to freedom, will be the fire that will be tempered a free spirit that melts away our eternal chains”.

The UNP programme also points out the Ukrainian education as a factor in the education of a new generation of the Ukrainian intelligentsia: “The Ukrainian free school will give the people a Ukrainian intelligentsia, will give them organizers, agitators; this intelligentsia will enlighten the Ukrainian people, develop the national and class consciousness of the worker and farmer – organize them” (Prohrama, 2015, p. 196).

Before the revolution of 1905, M. Mikhnovsky focused on the work among the Ukrainian workers and farmers. After the defeat of the revolution, the spectrum of his social views expanded. This expansion was connected with the departure from the populist view on the Ukrainian society, which involved the assessment of society as classless and democratic, and a gradual transition to the platform of a moderate conservatism (Turchenko, 2020, pp. 268–269).

This evolution was especially vividly reflected in the pages of “Snip”, the Ukrainian weekly published by M. Mikhnovsky in Kharkiv in 1912. “A nation, in a modern sense of word, – it was noted in the front page of the periodical dated October 21, – consists of many social layers, and when a people does not have one or more layers, it is not a people, but an ethnographic mass” (Snip, 1912, October 21).

Analyzing the lessons of the elections to the State Duma, M. Mikhnovsky concludes that one of the reasons for the failure was insufficient development of the national bourgeoisie, crafts, and the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Hence there were the conclusions: “it is necessary to Ukrainize the bourgeoisie”, “it is necessary to develop the intelligentsia of the highest levels, to focus on small-scale fishing and handicrafts” (Snip, 2012, October 21).

M. Mikhnovsky’s appeal to the need to unite all social groups of Ukraine with different social interests through a sense of national unity also testifies to his understanding of the process of the latest nation-building. In order for the Ukrainians to turn from an ethnographic mass into a nation, M. Mikhnovsky writes, “one must have common, so to speak, national ideas or an ideal. But they affect the masses only when, after a long, slow evolution, they have turned into feelings. Then they are completely protected from disputes and it takes a very long time for them to disappear. And then they have enormous power. Such basic ideas are extremely strong in the collective soul of the nation. Reduced to one idea or ideal, they appear as an invincible moral force. This is the moral force that constitutes the main meaning of the nation” (Snip, 1912, March 25).

This approach of M. Mikhnovsky to the formation of the Ukrainian nation corresponds to modern scientific ideas about modern nation-building. If ethnic consciousness is formed spontaneously through the native language, folk creativity and the circumstances of a common life, then the feeling of national community is brought to the masses by the intelligentsia through education, the press and other forms of influence on the mass consciousness. It is worth noting that the most recent aggression of the Russian Federation began, including with ideological sabotage – attacking Ukrainian historical education in the 2010s with the aim of emasculating Ukrainian identity (Terno & Turchenko, 2022; Sytnyk & Sytnyk, 2020).

M. Mikhnovsky calls the sense of community “a healthy Ukrainian nationalism”, which unites the Ukrainians of different social groups. But in the article published in the censored “Snip” periodical, M. Mikhnovsky does not dare to use this word. The reader who followed M. Mikhnovsky’s publications will find the word in the article “Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism”, published in 1906 in the first and only issue of the newspaper “Slobozhanshchyna”: “... Avoiding the national chauvinism of the ruling nations, it is necessary to nurture the healthy nationalism of the enslaved peoples, because it is a source of creativity, and only in that are hidden the seeds of national freedom and a new future”

(Slobozhanshchyna, 1906, March 25). At the same time, M. Mikhnovsky calls the main misfortune of our nation “the lack of nationalism among the general public” (Sprava, 2015, p. 260).

Thus, the Ukrainian school was considered as a guarantee of preservation of the Ukrainians as a separate ethnic community capable of transforming into a modern, socially stratified nation. And the emerging nation will be able to create its own state.

However, there were no drastic changes in the educational sphere of Ukraine during the imperial times. In February of 1917, autocracy finally fell in Russia, and a national and democratic revolution began in Ukraine. The Central Rada (TSR) emerged, which demanded that the Provisional Government of Russia recognize the autonomy of Ukraine. But the Russian liberals and socialists in the Provisional Government refused to meet the demands of the Ukrainians.

M. Mikhnovsky was an active participant in the revolution, he was one of the leaders of its independent wing. He was one of the first Ukrainian politicians to make a disappointing conclusion in the summer of 1917: “All the people of Moscow, regardless of party or faith, from the far right to the far left, from the minister to the worker – all the people of Moscow are united in the opinion that they are the heir of the tyrant and master of Ukraine. ... All Russians want a unitary (unifying) Democratic Republic... The people of Moscow, not one or another party, but the whole nation wants to be the master of the Ukrainian people ... One is fighting for liberation, the second – for domination over the first” (Mikhnovskyi, 2015b, pp. 321–322). The Ukrainians became convinced of the correctness of M. Mikhnovsky’s conclusion when, during the military operations of 1918 – the 1920s, Ukraine was under the control of either the Bolsheviks or the White Guards. The national policy of these diametrically opposed Russian political forces was similar towards Ukraine. The only difference was that the Bolsheviks far surpassed the White Guards in their demagoguery and populism.

Eventually, in the early 1920s, Ukraine came under the control of the Bolsheviks. However, the Bolshevik regime did not manage to completely destroy the achievements of the Ukrainian revolution completely. In 1917 – 1921, crucial changes took place in the Ukrainian society: the Ukrainians who survived the periods of the Central Rada, the Ukrainian state of P. Skoropadsky and the Directorate of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, were internally reborn and began to feel like a nation that has the right to its own state, language, and education. The Bolsheviks could not ignore these changes and were forced to mask their purely unitarist intentions by agreeing to the slogan of the Soviet Federation. They came to this not of their own free will, but under the influence of national movements on the outskirts of the Russian Empire. “... Both Lenin and his colleagues were most impressed by the development of the Ukrainian movement” (Hrytsak, 2011, p. 60).

Under these conditions, the Bolsheviks went for the formation of Soviet Ukraine as a separate administrative and territorial entity within the borders of the all-Soviet state with its center in Moscow. “Ukrainization” was even proclaimed. This meant recognition of the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian national culture, art, and education, but users were required to provide them with a “socialist content”. They even agreed to recognize the existence of the Ukrainian nation. However, in accordance with the provisions of Marxism, it was clarified that the Ukrainian nation, as well as other nations of the Soviet Union, has a long history of formation – through nationalism and a bourgeois nation to a socialist one. The “perspective” was also outlined – the rapprochement and merger of the “socialist Ukrainian nation” with other “socialist nations” of the USSR. Although Ukrainization was a forced step, and the

Soviet Federation was considered only as a temporary option, the communists never dared to openly declare unitarism during all the years they were in power. The Ukrainian SSR as a quasi-state entity continued to exist until the end of the collapse of the USSR.

In the last years of his life, M. Mikhnovsky witnessed and even participated in the beginning of “Ukrainization” in Kuban, where he moved. This period of his life is described by us on the basis of the documents of the State Archive of Krasnodar Region of the Russian Federation (SAKRRF), which we got acquainted with then, when the Ukrainian researchers had access to them. Oddly enough, M. Mikhnovsky lived under his own name at that time. One of his contemporaries, Ivan Marchenko, with whom M. Mikhnovsky had friendly relations during his stay in the Kuban, wrote in his memoirs that “the local bodies of the Soviet government and the ChK directed all their focus on the fight against the remnants of the Denikin region, against the “cadets”. They were not familiar with the Ukrainian movement. We could say with a clear conscience that we are against the “cadets” and that we are implementing the Soviet national policy” (Marchenko, 2012, pp. 84–85). An important direction of this policy was the “Ukrainization” of education in the region.

At the beginning of January of 1921, M. Mikhnovsky moved to one of the largest stanytsia of the region – Poltavska, where he became a teacher at the Ukrainian Pedagogical College, established on the basis of the former teacher’s seminary, and later its director (SAKRRF, f. 365, c. 574, p. 65).

The authorities did not have a clear idea of M. Mikhnovsky’s past. According to archival materials, he did not mention his pre-revolutionary and revolutionary years, but offered an incomplete and half-true version of his biography. M. Mikhnovsky hid his true views, skilfully using a typical political rhetoric for representatives of the new government.

M. Mikhnovsky’s work, according to contemporaries and his students, was diverse and had significant consequences. He taught various subjects, including the Ukrainian language, the Ukrainian literature, History, History and Theory of Cooperation; was the head of the office of the Ukrainian studies; headed a literary circle. A model school operated at the college, the Ukrainian language was the language of instruction. Many students became teachers and later fondly recollected M. Mikhnovsky. He turned the college into a centre of the Ukrainian life in the region. In his memoirs, I. Marchenko wrote that M. Mikhnovsky made the college “the centre of the national revival in the Kuban” (Marchenko, 2012, p. 85).

From the first days of his tenure as the head of the college, M. Mikhnovsky had to overcome the resistance of opponents of Ukrainization both among the staff and representatives of local authorities. In April of 1923 Chekurov, the inspector of the department of national minorities in region, came to the college. In his speech he stated that although the Ukrainian education was approved by the decisions of the party and the government, this decision was short-sighted and wrong. Therefore, it is better to voluntarily give up the Ukrainian education and merge with the Russian culture, and abandon the Ukrainian language”. This speech provoked a protest by the staff and students. But the very next day, the issue of the Ukrainian language was brought to the meeting of the local stanytsia council. Its executive committee approved the decision “to stop the Ukrainization at schools”. At the meeting Chairman Zhadkov made a speech and described the dire prospect that awaits supporters of Ukrainization: “1. A train will be sent and all teachers-the Ukrainians will be taken to the place where they used to take us; 2. Ukrainization will lead to the fact that guns will be brought to destroy Poltavska stanytsia” (SAKRRF, f. 365, c. 1091, pp. 117a–118).

This chauvinistic action by the opponents of “Ukrainization” took place just in the days of work of the 12th Congress of the RCP(b) in Moscow, at which there was declared a course

for indigenization. It is difficult to say whether M. Mikhnovsky believed in the sincerity of the decisions of the congress, but he decided to take advantage of them immediately. In a letter addressed to the head of the Ukrainian Central Bureau in Moscow, Hadzynsky, he considered the events in Poltavska stanytsia as “the 1st episode of the struggle against the resolutions of the 12th Congress of the RCP(b)”. M. Mikhnovsky asked to send an authoritative commission to the stanytsia, which would inspect the situation there and protect the collective from massacre (SAKRRE, f. 365, c. 1091, p. 117).

The complaint was “sent” to local Ukrainophobic officials. In the spring of 1923, an inspection was carried out. Its result was a secret information of the head of the district executive committee to the head of the region. It ran that the task of Ukrainization at schools in the Kuban was entrusted to people who “usually belong to the extreme independentists, or Petliura’s, or (which is also harmful), the Vynnychenko’s direction”. The surnames of two “wolves in sheep’s clothing” were mentioned – an instructor H. Dobroskok and head of the college M. Mikhnovsky. As for Dobroskok, it was stated, that he “does not stop before threats or violence against teachers and children in his desire to carry out Ukrainization to the extreme”. It was mentioned about M. Mikhnovsky that he “is a bit more sophisticated and political, acts cautiously, but consistently follows the same line”. It was suggested: “these two subjects must be fired, and it would be good “to send them far away””. “The spirit of Petliura hovers over them, and maybe even the spirit of pious Pavlo Skoropadsky...” (SAKRRE, f. 365, c. 1091, pp. 111–114).

According to the results of the inspection, it was decided to transfer the college to the nearby district centre under the supervision of the local district party committee. In October of 1923, M. Mikhnovsky left stanytsia for Krasnodar, and at the beginning of 1924 he arrived in Kyiv, where his earthly journey ended in May of the same year.

The Conclusion. M. Mikhnovsky studied the state of Russian education issue in Ukraine thoroughly. He concluded that the imperial policy was based on the Russian official version of history and threatened the very existence of the Ukrainians.

Therefore, the Ukrainians risked losing their national identity completely. Under such conditions, the Ukrainian people were doomed to ethnic disintegration and social pauperization. According to M. Mikhnovsky, only the political independence of Ukraine can protect the Ukrainian people from national and cultural nonexistence, and the Ukrainians from assimilation into the Russian ethnic group. In the discussion between M. Drahomanov and B. Hrinchenko in the early 1890s, M. Mikhnovsky not only supported B. Hrinchenko’s course for complete independence of the Ukrainian literary process, but also extended the idea of independence to the political sphere. M. Mikhnovsky was sure that the government and the Russian society would not agree to the solution of the “Ukrainian issue” by granting Ukraine national-state autonomy. And this is exactly what the majority of Ukrainophiles waited for at that time. The only way to save Ukraine from being absorbed by Russia, in his opinion, is a complete political and socio-cultural break with it. The independent course provided for the support of the Ukrainian language and development of the Ukrainian education. The Ukrainian education, in turn, was supposed not only to raise the cultural level of the Ukrainians, but also to form a new generation of the national intelligentsia. It is the new generation of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, according to M. Mikhnovsky, who should be able to develop a national idea, promote it among the masses, and lead the people to fight for independent Ukraine.

According to M. Mikhnovsky’s strong belief, the Ukrainian education should contribute to the formation of nationally oriented social elites who would materially support the Ukrainian

national movement. In the final analysis, M. Mikhnovsky received national education as a powerful factor in the formation of a full-fledged Ukrainian nation capable of creating its own independent state. In the first half of the 1920s, working under the conditions of “Ukrainization” in public education in the Kuban, once again M. Mikhnovsky became convinced that the Russian state, regardless of its socio-political system and political forces dominating it, remains the enemy of the Ukrainian identity. He saw the only way to preserve Ukrainianness in the complete political and socio-cultural independence of Ukraine from Russia. As the experience of the modern Russian-Ukrainian war shows, the ideas of M. Mikhnovsky proved to be extremely relevant a century later. Therefore, they turn into beliefs of the Ukrainian society.

Acknowledgement. We express our sincere gratitude to all members of the editorial board for consultations provided during the preparation of the article for publishing.

Funding. The authors did not receive any financial support for the research, authorship and / or publication of this article.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Derzhavnyi arkhiv Krasnodarskoho Kraiu Rosiiskoi Federatsii [State Archive of Krasnodar region of Russian Federation – SAKRRF]

Hrinchenko, B. & Drahomanov, M. (1994). *Dialoghy pro ukrainsku natsionalnu spravu* [Dialogues about the Ukrainian National Cause]. Kyiv: In-t ukrainskoi arkheohrafi. [in Ukrainian]

Hrytsak, Ya. Y. (2011). *Ukrainska revoliutsiia 1914 – 1923: novi interpretatsii* [Ukrainian Revolution 1914 – 1923: New Interpretations]. *Hrytsak Ya. Y. Strasti za natsionalizmom: stara istoriia na novyi lad: esei – The Passions of Nationalism: An Old Story Made New: Essays*, (pp. 46–66). Kyiv: Krytyka. [in Ukrainian]

Ihnatenko, N., Moskaliuk, M. & Kostiuk, L. (2022). *Istoryko-retrospektyvnyi analiz derzhavnoi osvithoi polityky v Ukraini (1991 – 2020 rr.)* [Historical and Retrospective Analysis of State Educational Policy in Ukraine (1991 – 2020)]. *Ukrainskyi istorichnyi zhurnal – Ukrainian historical journal*, (2), 203–215. doi: <https://doi.org/10.15407/uhj2022.02.203> [in Ukrainian]

Kolesnyk, V. & Cheberiaiko, O. (2022). *Ukrainski partii v Rosiiskii imperii na pochatku XX st.: radianska istoriografiiia 1920-kh rr.* [Ukrainian Parties in the Russian Empire in the Early Twentieth Century: Soviet Historiography of the 1920s]. *Ukrainskyi istorichnyi zhurnal – Ukrainian Historical Journal*, (2), 128–138. doi: <https://doi.org/10.15407/uhj2022.02.128> [in Ukrainian]

Lystivka. (2015). *Lystivka z pryvodu vybukhu bilia pamiatnyka Pushkinu v Kharkovi 31 zhovtnia 1904 r.* [A postcard about the explosion near the Pushkin monument in Kharkiv on October 31, 1904]. In I. Hyrych, O. Protsenko, & F. Turchenko (Eds.), *Mykola Mikhnovskyyi. Suspilno-politychni tvory* [Mykola Mikhnovskyyi. Socio-political works], (pp. 309–310). Kyiv: Smoloskyp. [in Ukrainian]

Marchenko, I. (2012). *Koreni moho natsionalno-patriotychnoho samovyznachennia* [The roots of my national and patriotic self-determination]. Kyiv: Ukrainska vydavnycha spilka im. Yu. Lypy. [in Ukrainian]

Mikhnovskyyi, M. (2015a). *Samostiina Ukraina* [Independent Ukraine]. In I. Hyrych, O. Protsenko, & F. Turchenko (Eds.), *Mykola Mikhnovskyyi. Suspilno-politychni tvory* [Mykola Mikhnovskyyi. Socio-political works], (pp. 165–174). Kyiv: Smoloskyp. [in Ukrainian]

Mikhnovskyyi, M. (2015b). *Suspilno-politychni tvory* [Socio-political works]. I. Hyrych, O. Protsenko, & F. Turchenko, Eds. Kyiv: Smoloskyp. [in Ukrainian]

Profession de foi molodykh ukraintsiv. (1983). *Profession de foi molodykh ukraintsiv. Symvol viry dlia molodykh ukraintsiv* [Profession de foi young Ukrainians. A symbol of faith for young Ukrainians]. (1983). In T. Hunchak & R. Solchanyk (Eds.), *Ukrainska suspilno-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti* [Ukrainian Social and Political Thought in the 20th Century], (pp. 19–15). Kyiv: Suchasnist. [in Ukrainian]

Prohrama. (2015). *Prohrama Ukrainskoi narodnoi partii* [Program of the Ukrainian People’s Party]. In I. Hyrych, O. Protsenko, & F. Turchenko (Eds.), *Mykola Mikhnovskyyi. Suspilno-politychni tvory* [Mykola Mikhnovskyyi. Socio-political works], (pp. 263–279). Kyiv: Smoloskyp. [in Ukrainian]

Pyrh, R. (2023). The Hetmanate of Pavlo Skoropadskyi: the Little Russian Complex of the Ruling Elite. *Ukrainskyi istorichnyi zhurnal – Ukrainian Historical Journal*, (4), 59–84. doi: <https://doi.org/10.15407/uhj2023.04.059>

Slobozhanshchyna. (1906). *Slobozhanshchyna* [Slobozhanshchyna. Kharkiv newspaper]. [in Ukrainian]

Snip. (1912). *Snip* [Sheaf. Kharkiv newspaper]. [in Ukrainian]

Sprava. (2015). Sprava ukrainskoi intelihentsii v prohrami UNP [The case of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the program of the Ukrainian People's Party]. In I. Hyrych, O. Protsenko, & F. Turchenko (Eds.), *Mykola Mikhnovskiyi. Suspilno-politychni tvory* [Mykola Mikhnovskiyi. Socio-political works], (p. 260). Kyiv: Smoloskyp. [in Ukrainian]

Sytnyk, J. & Sytnyk, O. (2020). Revival of a language national consciousness of the ukrainians of donetsk region under conditions of “perestroika” and during the first years of independent Ukraine. *Skhidnoievropeyskyi istorychnyi visnyk – East European Historical Bulletin*, (15), 196–207. [in English]

Terno, S. O. & Turchenko, H. F. (2022). Boi za Ukrainu v shkilmomu kursi istorii v konteksti peredumov suchasnoi rosiisko-ukrainskoi viiny [Battles for Ukraine in the school history course in the context of the prerequisites of the modern Russian-Ukrainian war]. In *Transformatsii istorychnoi pamiaty*, (pp. 148–153). Donetskyi natsionalnyi universytet imeni Vasylia Stusa. <https://hist.donnu.edu.ua/iii-mizhnarodna-naukovo-praktychna-konferenciya-transformaciyi-istorychnoyi-pamyati/> [in Ukrainian]

Turchenko, F. (2020). *Mykola Mikhnovskiyi: “Odna, yedyna, nerozdilna, vilna, samostiina Ukraina ...”* [Mykola Mikhnovskiyi: “One, unified, indivisible, free, independent Ukraine ...”]. Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrainy. [in Ukrainian]

Vidozva. (2015). Vidozva Ukrainskoi narodnoi partii z pryvodu rosiisko-yaponskoi viiny [Appeal of the Ukrainian People's Party regarding the Russo-Japanese War]. In I. Hyrych, O. Protsenko, & F. Turchenko (Eds.), *Mykola Mikhnovskiyi. Suspilno-politychni tvory Mykola Mikhnovskiyi. Suspilno-politychni tvory* [Mykola Mikhnovskiyi. Socio-political works], (p. 293). Kyiv: Smoloskyp. [in Ukrainian]

X zapovidiv UNP. (2015). X zapovidiv UNP [Ten Commandments of the Ukrainian People's Party]. In I. Hyrych, O. Protsenko, & F. Turchenko (Eds.), *Mykola Mikhnovskiyi. Suspilno-politychni tvory* [Mykola Mikhnovskiyi. Socio-political works], (p. 212). Kyiv: Smoloskyp. [in Ukrainian]

Z lystiv. (1978). Z lystiv suchasnykiv pro Mykolu Mikhnovskoho (Z kolektsii Z. Knysha) [From the letters of contemporaries about Mykola Mikhnovsky]. In *Kalendar-almanakh “Novoho shliakhu”*, (pp. 69). Winnipeg: New Pathway Publishers Limited. [in Ukrainian]

Turchenko, F. (2023). Mykola Mikhnovskiyi: uroky dlia nashchadkiv [Mykola Mikhnovskiyi: Lessons for Posterity]. *Ukrainskyi istorichnyi zhurnal – Ukrainian Historical Journal*, (4), 85–97. doi: <https://doi.org/10.15407/uhj2023.04.085> [in Ukrainian]

The article was received February 27, 2023.

Article recommended for publishing 14/11/2023.